

No.7 Kijimun' s Monologue, October 2017

-The illustrations of *Komonjo*

Keywords: *Eiribon*, *Nishiki-e*, *Sashie*



Hi, everyone! In this month, I am going to introduce the illustrations of *Komonjo*, let's check it out!

A history of *Eiribon* (an illustrated book)

The history of the illustrated book began in *Heian* period when the pictorial scrolls were read by the aristocrats of *Heian*. In later periods, the illustrated books had a popularity among the public. After the technique of woodblock printing had been established in the early modern times (from *Azuchi-Momoyama* period to *Edo* period), a professional publisher appeared and it encouraged the development of *Ukiyo-e* (a genre style painting). In the late *Edo* period, many beautiful block books with multiple color printing were published. The illustrated books which remain today are valuable as antiquarian books or as fine arts and they continue to attract every art lovers in the world.



Image A: "Ryukyujin Gyōretsuzu Nishiki-e"



Image B: *Shinshū Chinsetsuyumiharizuki*

The variety of illustrated book

There are various types of illustrated books, here are some representative examples. Image A is "Ryukyujin Gyōretsuzu Nishiki-e" owned by University of the Ryukyus Library, the *Nishiki-e* (*Ukiyo-e*, a multicolored woodblock print) is originated from an illustration of books. And this is a pictorial scroll of the procession of Tomigusuku Ōji as *Shaonshi* (a Ryukyuan envoy who expresses special gratitude with regards to the enthronement of Ryukyu King) for the inauguration of King Shō Iku to *Edo* Castle in 1832. Image B is an illustration from one of *Yomihon* (a kind of novel in *Edo* period), *Shinshū Chinsetsuyumiharizuki* (issued in 1811) written by Takizawa Bakin. The last one is an example of *Sashie* (an illustration). Image C is "Ryukyu Zatsuwa 11 (written by Ōta Nampo)" of *Ryukyu Nendaiki* from Iha Fuyū collection.



Image C : "Ryukyu Zatsuwa 11 (written by Ōta Nampo)" of *Ryukyu Nendaiki*

I have introduced a little bit that the illustration of *Komonjo* has a close relationship with the development of Japanese books. I hope you have enjoyed this month's column, and I hope you will enjoy the next *Kijimun* too, see you there!



