

From Personal Memory to Cultural Heritage: The case of 1477 Jeju drifters' oral tradition in Yonaguni, an Island near Taiwan

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(Institute for Biocultural Diversity)
With the Late **Wakaranko**
(和歌嵐香) of Yonaguni Island

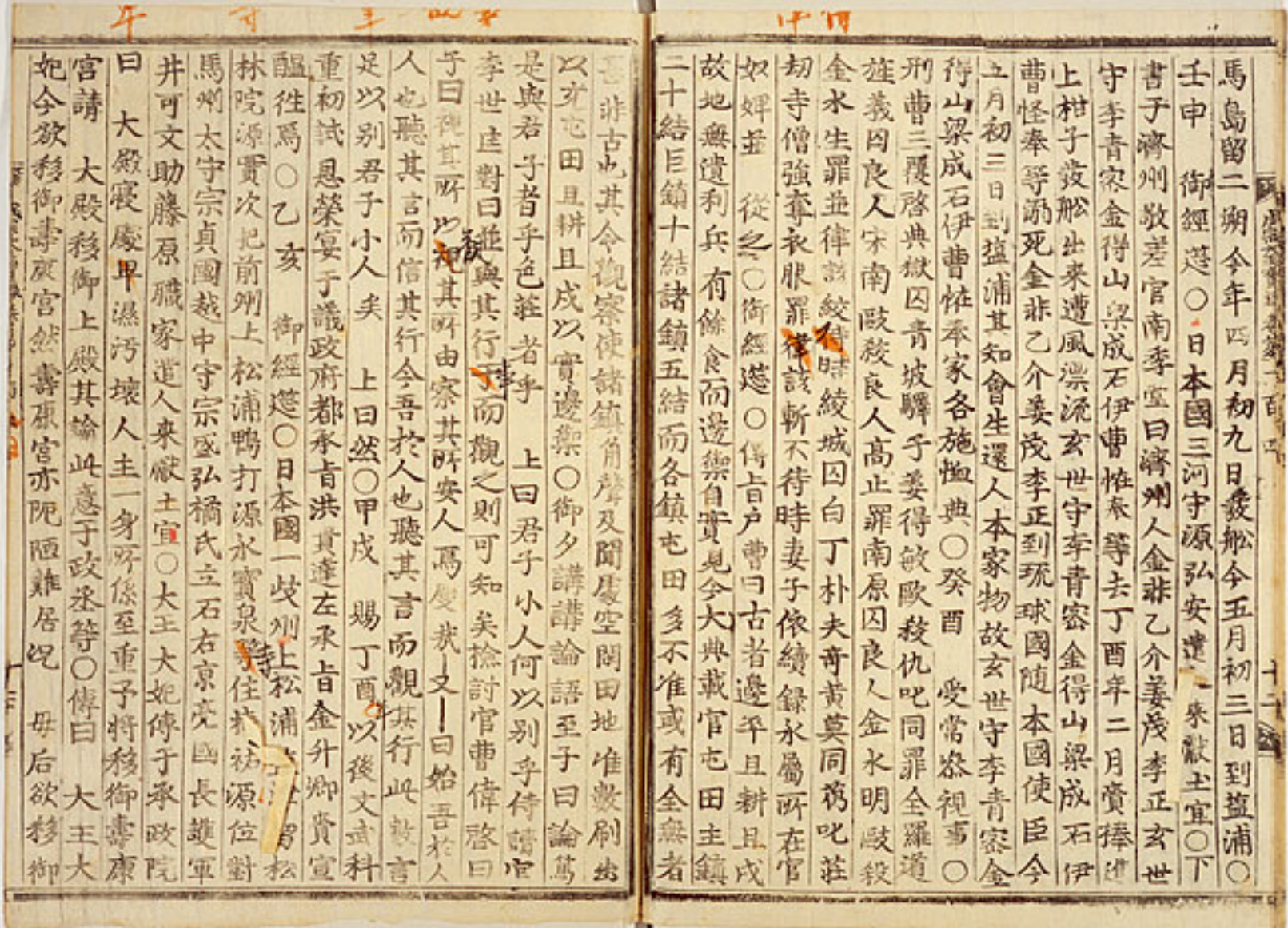


1. We must know history to talk about the future

Three drifters of Jeju returned from the Ryukyus in 1479

『成宗大王實錄』卷
104 (1479年5月16日)
A galley-proof version

伊波普猷, 1927 「朝鮮人の漂流記に現れた尚真王即位当時の南島」 『史学雑誌』 38 (12)



濟州人金非乙介姜茂李正

The Great Journey of 김비의(金非衣) · 강무(姜茂) · 이정(李正)

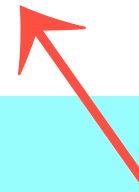
1st Feb. 1477
제주(濟州)



3rd May 1479
염포(鹽浦)

←對馬←壱岐←博多←鹿兒島

多良間→伊良部→宮古→沖繩 ↑



15 Feb. 1477-30 July

与那国島



Yonaguni
Dunan/Yunon
윤이시마

Aug.1477-
Jan.1478

Iriomote
Suneshima
소내시마

Hateruma, Patiruma
포월로마이시마

2月



Kuroshima
Fushima
흘윤시마

4月
3月
Aragusuku, Panari
포라이시마

1700 persons live in Yonaguni Island. Its landscape and fishery (2025)

島名閏伊是磨。【其俗, 謂島爲是磨。】島人男女百餘名



Horses were introduced after 1477 (photo©AnkeiTakako 2025).

A detailed narrative of their 6-month stay in Yonaguni Island

『朝鮮王朝實錄』成宗105 (1479年6月10日)

• "俺等, 丁酉二月初一日, 與현세수(玄世修)·김득산(金得山)·이청민(李清敏)·양성돌(梁成突)·조귀봉(曹貴奉), 陪受進上柑子, 同騎一船, 開洋向楸子島, 忽值東風大起, 西向漂流。自初發至第六日, 海水澄碧, 自第七日至八日, 行一晝夜, 渾濁如泔, 第九日, 又遭西風, 向南漂流, 海水澄碧。第十四日, 望一小島, 未及泊岸, 柁折船毀, 餘人皆溺死, 裝載盤纏, 亦皆滄失, 俺等三人, 騎坐一板。漂蕩間, 適有漁舟二隻, 各有四人騎坐, 見我輩, 收載而去, 到島岸。島名閏伊是麼。【其俗, 謂島爲是麼。】人家, 環島而居, 周回可二日程, 島人男女百餘名, 刈草結廬於海濱, 將俺等住止。俺等自發濟州, 大風激浪過顛, 水滿舟中, 舷不浸者數板。金非衣、李正, 操瓢挹水去之, 姜茂執櫓, 餘皆眩暈而臥, 不能炊爨, 勺飲不入口者, 凡十四日, 至是島人, 將稻米粥及蒜本來饋。自其夕, 始饋稻米飯及濁酒、乾海魚, 魚名皆不知。留七日, 移置人家, 輪次饋餉, 一里饋訖, 輒遞送次里。一月後, 分置俺等於三里, 亦輪次饋餉, 凡饋酒食, 一日三時, 一島人容貌, 與我國同一。其俗穿耳, 貫以青小珠, 垂二三寸許, 又貫珠繞項三四匝, 垂一尺許, 男女同, 老者否。一, 男女, 皆徒跣無鞋。一, 男子絞髮, 屈而疊之, 束以苧繩, 作髻於項邊, 不着網巾。鬚長過臍, 或絞而繞髻數匝。婦人髮亦長, 立則及跟。短者及膝, 不作髻, 環統頭上, 橫插木梳於鬢。一, 無釜、鼎、匙、筋、盤、盂、磁、瓦器, 埽土作鼎, 曝日乾之, 熏以藁火炊飯, 五六日輒破裂。一, 專用稻米, 雖有粟, 不喜種。一, 飯盛以竹筥, 搏而爲丸, 如拳大, 無食案, 用小木几, 各置人前。每食時, 一婦人主筥分之, 人一丸, 先置本葉於掌中, 以飯塊, 加葉上而食之, 其木葉如蓮葉焉。一丸盡, 又分一丸, 以三丸爲度, 能食者不計丸數, 隨盡隨給。一, 無鹽醬, 以海水, 和菜作羹, 器用瓢子, 或剖木爲之。一, 酒有濁而無清, (漬)[漬]米於水, 使女嚼而爲糜, 釀之於木桶, 不用麴蘖。多飲然後微醉, 酌用瓢子, 凡飲時, 人持一瓢, 或飲或止, 隨量而飲, 無酬酢之禮, 能飲者, 又添爵焉。其酒甚淡, 釀後三四日便熟, 久則酸不用, 芻一肴, 用乾魚, 或聶切鮮魚爲膾, 加蒜菜焉。一, 或漬米擣於步臼, 搏而爲餅, 如櫻大, 裹櫻葉以藁束之, 烹食之。一, 其居, 率作一室, 無房奧戶牖, 前面稍軒舉, 後面簷垂地, 蓋用茅, 無瓦, 外無藩籬, 寢用木床, 無衾褥, 藉用蒲席, 所居室前, 別立樓庫, 以貯所收敗之禾。一, 俗無冠帶, 暑則或用櫻葉, 作笠狀, 如我國僧笠。一, 無麻、木綿, 亦不養蠶, 唯織苧爲布, 作衣如直領, 而無領及襞積, 袖短而闊, 染用藍青。中裙用白布三幅, 統繫於臀, 婦人之服, 亦同。但內着裳, 而無中裙, 裳亦染青。一, 家有鼠, 畜牛雞猫, 不食牛雞肉, 死則輒埋之。俺等云: '牛雞肉可食, 不可埋。' 島人唾而哂之。一, 山多材木, 無雜獸。一, 飛禽惟鳩與黃雀而已。一, 昆蟲, 有龜、蛇、蟾、蛙、蚊、蠅、蠅、蝠、蜂、蝶、螳螂、蜻蜓、蜈蚣、蚯蚓、螢、蟹。一, 有鐵冶, 而不造耒耜, 用小錘剔田去草以種粟。水田則十二月間, 用牛踏播種, 正月間移秧, 不鋤草, 二月稻方茂, 高一尺許, 四月大熟早稻, 四月畢刈, 晚稻五月方畢刈。刈後根莖復秀, 其盛愈於初, 七八月收穫。未穫前, 人皆謹慎, 雖言語亦不厲聲, 不蹙口爲嘯, 或有捲草葉吹之以杖擬之, 而禁, 收穫後乃吹小管, 其聲甚微細。一所穫稻, 連稭束之, 置於樓庫, 以竹枚鑷之, 舂以步臼。一, 刈草及禾用鎌, 斫用斧鏵子, 又有小刀, 無弓矢斧戟, 人持小鎗, 於起居不舍。一, 人死則坐置棺中, 置於厓厂下, 不埋之以土, 若厓厂廣, 則并置五六棺。一, 其土溫燠, 冬無霜雪, 草木不彫, 又無冰。島人着單衣二, 夏則只着一, 男女同。一, 蔬有蒜、茄子、真瓜、蹲鴟、生薑, 茄子莖高三四尺, 一種則傳子孫, 結實如初, 太老則中斫之, 又生芽蘖結實。一, 本有烏梅、桑、竹。一, 果有青橘、小栗, 橘四時開花。一, 無燈燭, 夜則束竹爲炬以照之。一, 家無溷廁, 遺矢於野。一, 織布用箴杼, 模樣與我國同, 其他機械不同, 升數麤細, 亦與我國同。一, 掘地作小井, 汲水用瓢罌。一, 舟有柁棹無櫓, 但順風懸帆而已。一, 其俗無盜賊, 道不拾遺, 不相詈罵喧鬪, 撫愛孩兒, 雖啼哭, 不加手焉。一, 俗無酋長, 不解文字, 俺等與彼言語不通。然久處其地, 粗解所言。俺等思念鄉土, 常常涕泣, 其島人, 拔新稻莖, 比舊稻而示之, 東向而吹之, 其意, 蓋謂新稻如舊稻, 而熟當發還也。凡留六朔, 至七月晦, 候南風, 島人十三名, 將俺等齎糧及酒醪, 同騎一船, 行一晝夜半, 至一島。島名所乃是麼, 護送者, 留八九日, 還本島。

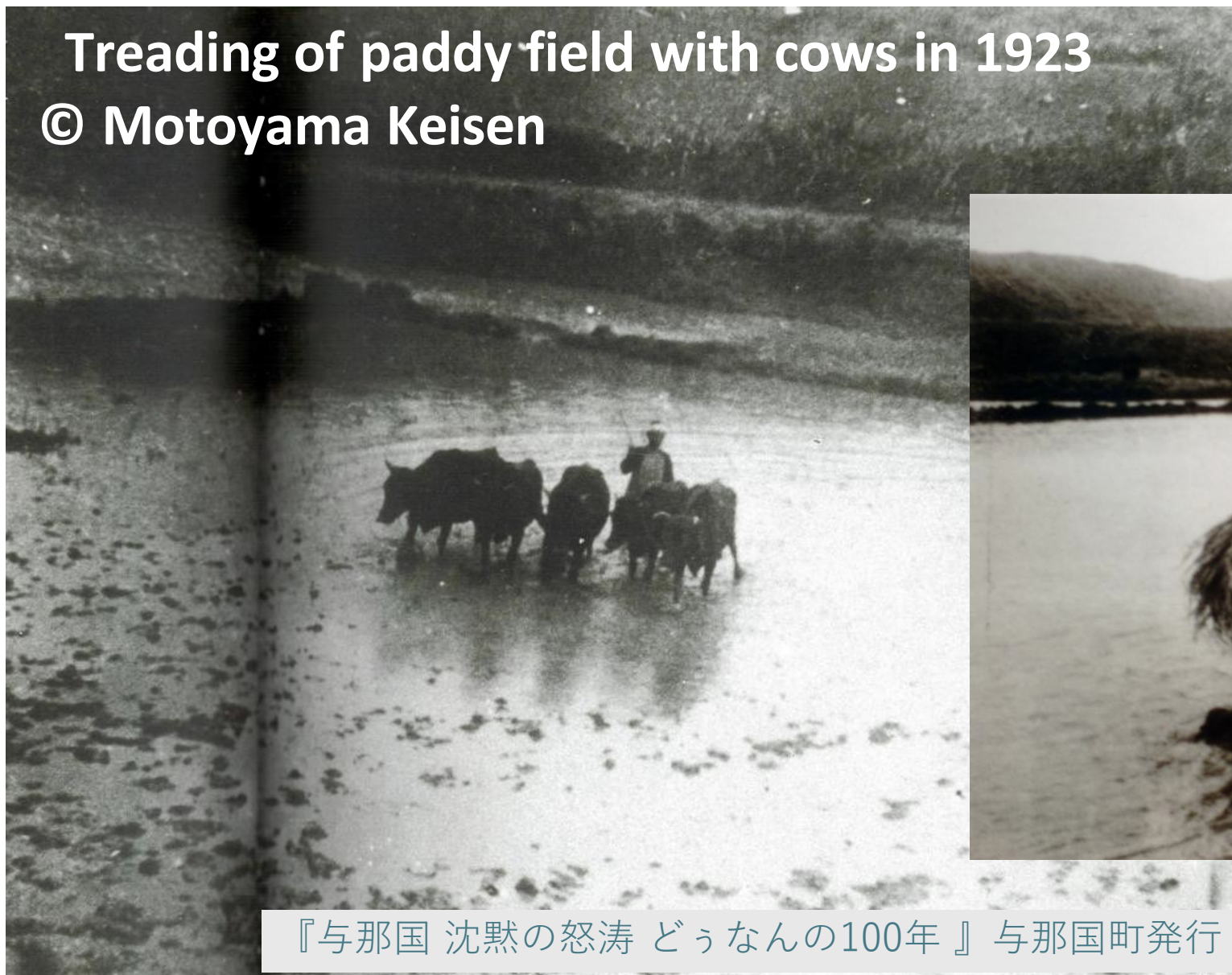
Three survivors' talk on their 2-week drifting and the loss of the 5 fellow sailors <http://sillok.history.go.kr/>

“우리들이 정유년2월 1일에 현세수(玄世修)·김득산(金得山)·이청민(李清敏)·양성돌(梁成突)·조귀봉(曹貴奉)과 더불어 진상(進上)할 감자(柑子)를 배수(陪受)하여 같이 한 배에 타고 바다로 출범(出帆)하여 추자도(楸子島)로 향해 가다가, 갑자기 크게 불어오는 동풍(東風)을 만나 서쪽으로 향하여 표류하였습니다.…제 14일 쯤에 한 작은 섬을 바라보게 되었는데, 미처 기슭에 대이지 못하여 키가 부러지고 배가 파손되어 남은 사람은 모두 다 물에 빠져 죽고, 여러가지 장비도 모두 물에 빠져 잃어버렸으며, 우리들 세 사람은 한 판자에 타고 앉아 있었습니다. 표탕(漂蕩)하는 사이에 마침 고기잡이배 두 척이 있어서 각각 네 사람이 타고 앉아 있다가 우리들을 발견하고는 거두어 싣고 가서 섬 기슭에 이르렀습니다.섬의 이름은 윤이시마(閔伊是麼)라고 ” 【그곳 풍속에 섬을 일컬어 시마라고 한다.】

Detailed description of rice cultivation: planting once and harvesting twice.

Treading of paddy field with cows in 1923
© Motoyama Keisen

用牛踏播種, 正月間移秧, 不鋤
草, 二月稻方茂, 高一尺許, 四
月大熟早稻, 四月畢刈, 晚稻
五月方畢刈。 刈後根菱復秀,
其盛愈於初, 七八月收穫。



Islanders did not steal or quarrel each other. They cherished their children and do not hit them even when they cry. They were illiterate and had no chief. We roughly understood what they said. They tried to sooth our homesick, announcing our departure to the east, showing new and old rice.

一，其俗無盜賊，道不拾遺，不相詈罵喧鬪，撫愛孩兒，雖啼哭，不加手焉。

一，俗無酋長，不解文字，俺等與彼言語不通。然久處其地，粗解所言。俺等思念鄉土，常常涕泣，其島人，拔新稻莖，比舊稻而示之，東向而吹之，其意，蓋謂新稻如舊稻，而熟當發還也。

2. Oral tradition of the *Fuganutu* drifters and its sole inheritor



Wakaranko 和歌嵐香
(Mar. 1954 - July 2025)

We first met in 1990.



フガヌトヨアハナシ ノ01 19

ンカチ ンカチ 9-ランカチ 14又 マニフクシテ

バカラヌ 9-ランカチ マ

ヌヌ 42又 トレテ バカラヌ トクニシタヌ
ビシカシ 42又 スニテ

9マトシ アラシ トレアラシ 7ラシ9アラシ

タイラ アラシ ユートヨアラシ

ウニビ マ

フガヌトヨ シテト

シテフクシトナ
オニハナシ

Text in Yonaguni language with Japanese translation.

Long long ago, nobody knows when it was.

Three men arrived at our island from an unknown place, different from Japan (*Damatu*), China (*Tū*), Europe (*Uranda*), Taiwan or Lan-yu (*Kōtōsho*). Hence they were named ***Fuganutu***, “men from elsewhere.”

Seeing orange blossoms, they burst into tears.
People saw that their home had oranges too.

Fuganutu
RIHN LINKAGE
Artbook 03,
Feb. 2025



Link: Fuganutu
<https://airtable.com/appyjnsQqx0tuy8Gk/shrmT5axgMO1G0m9W/tbl5WkHyUCL24h9eu/viwSV02pid1QxBfE4>

The first meal served for the hungry drifters

始饋稻米飯及濁酒、乾海魚

Dried fish



Turbid liquor
made by
chewing rice



Soup of
vegetables
and beans



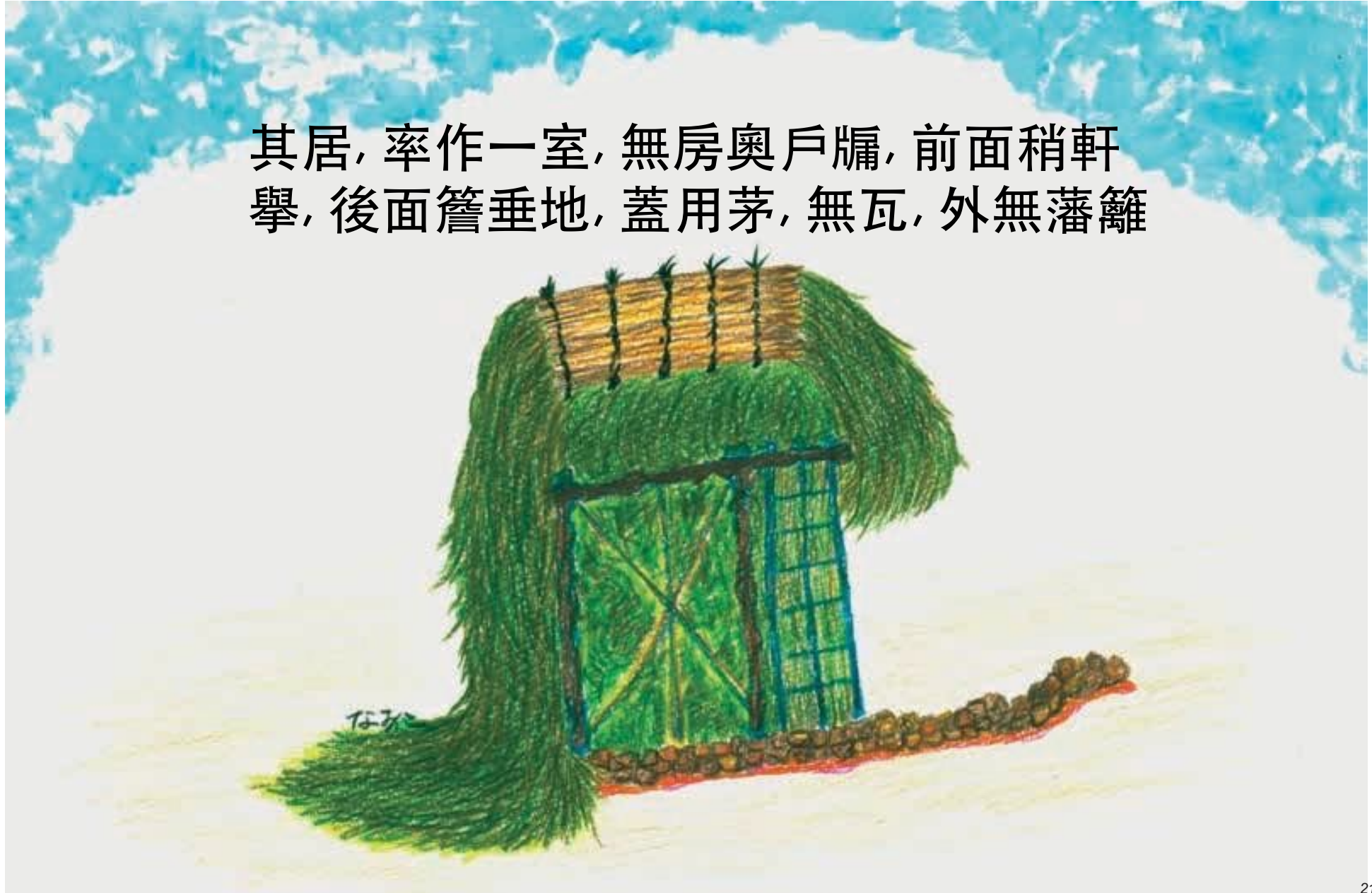
Cooked rice, foxtail
millet, and tubers



10.21

Grass-thatched huts near the seashore

其居，率作一室，無房奧戶牖，前面稍軒
舉，後面簷垂地，蓋用茅，無瓦，外無藩籬



俺等思念郷土，
常常涕泣



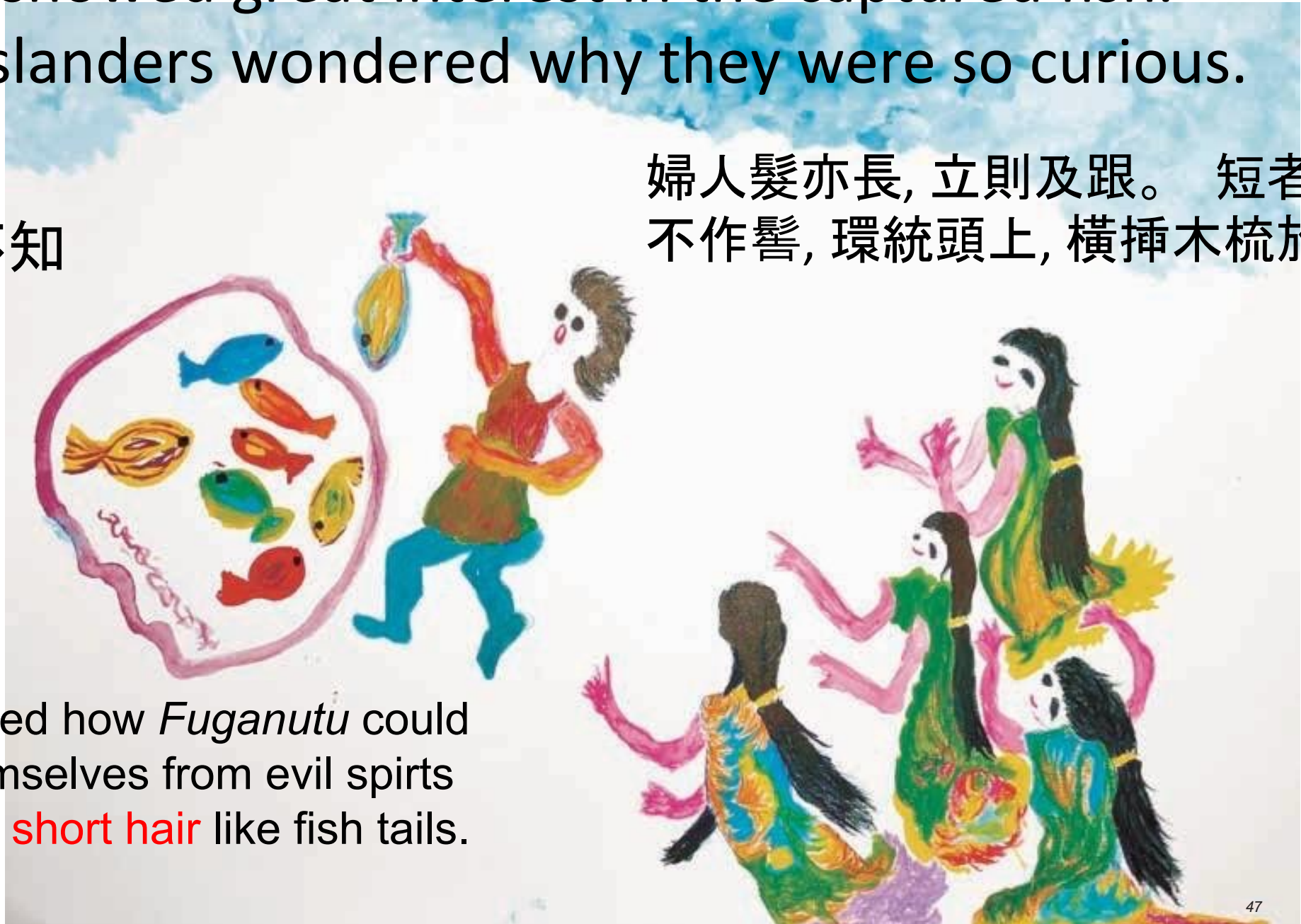
The chief of the island, *Muranuuya* (village parent) was a woman. She soothed their tears for the loss of their 5 sail mates. Probably, Jeju people could not imagine a woman to be a chief (其俗無酋長) .

They showed great interest in the captured fish.
The islanders wondered why they were so curious.

魚名皆不知

婦人髮亦長，立則及跟。短者及膝，
不作髻，環統頭上，橫插木梳於鬢。

We wondered how *Fuganutu* could
protect themselves from evil spirits
having only **short hair** like fish tails.



They hung a tree leaf everyday under the roof probably they were counting the days of their stay.



凡留六朔

Daily, they drew and wrote on the ground, and noted something on a cloth.

They regularly gathered and drew on the ground what they saw. They complained of the fragile clay pots and proposed to make better ones. People **could not understand the crooked symbols** beside the figures.

瓦器，埴土作鼎，曝日乾之，熏以藁火炊飯，五六日輒破裂。



不解文字



Fuganutu pounded fish and various fruits and plants to make a **very badly smelling something**. They used it to spice their food.



一, **無鹽醬**, 以海水, 和菜作羹 They were quiet, well-behaved people who were interested in everything, but they would suddenly become angry when they didn't understand the reason. One day, a young local man visited one of them and threw away something smelly that was in a clay pot, saying, 'This is rotten.' ***Fuganutu* became furious and a violent fight broke out.**

They were good friends of children and taught many games including a **swing**.



Their **sitting posture** was different from locals.

撫愛孩兒，
雖啼哭，不
加手焉。

Good at singing and dancing, they made great friends of the islanders, and youngsters made brotherhood with these wise and hard-working visitors.



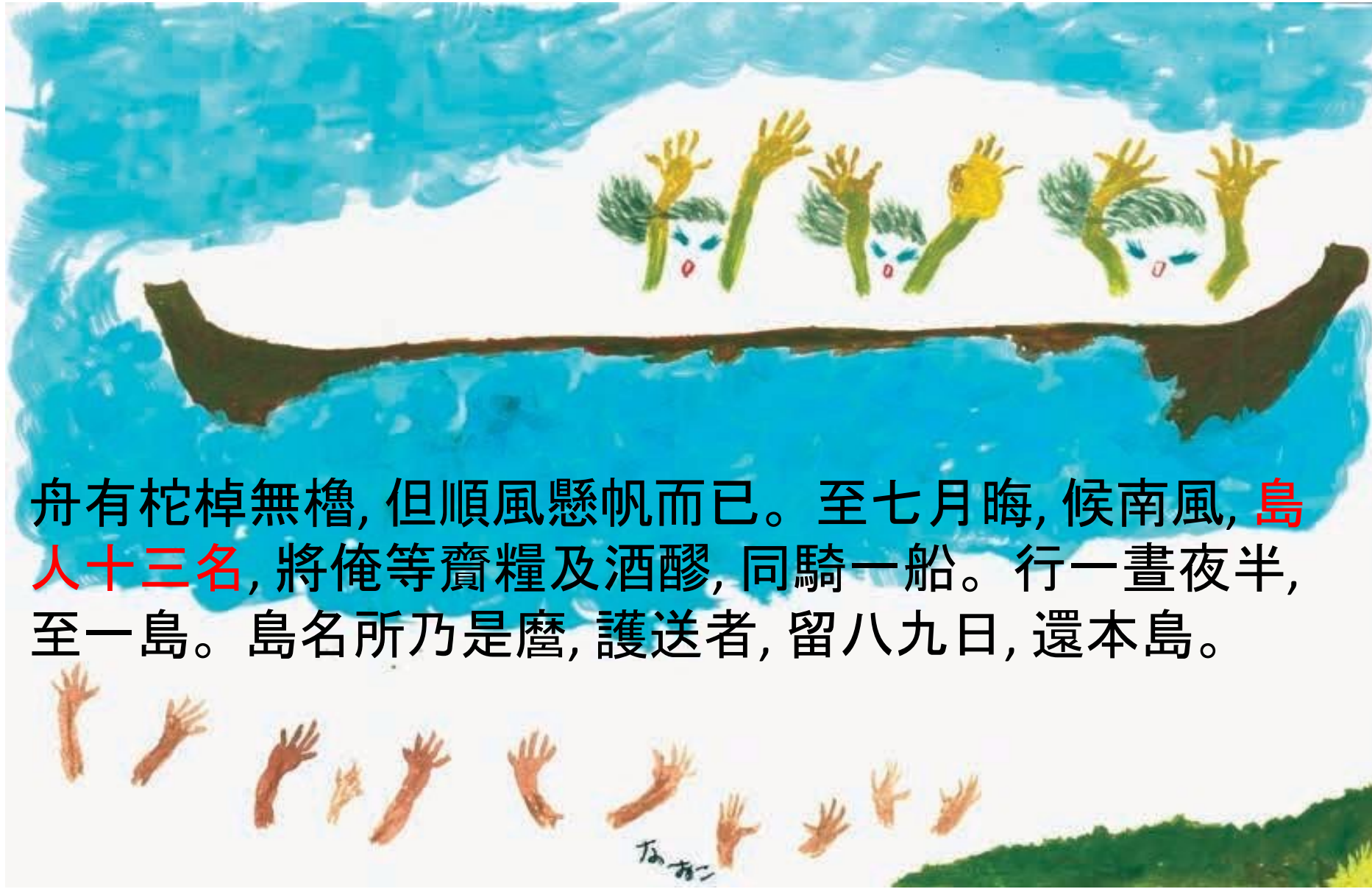
其俗無盜賊，道不拾遺，不相詈罵喧鬪，

“There are so many **ideas of for innovations** in life *Fuganutu* taught Yonaguni people. Counting time and tide, new cooking methods, conservation of food, so many games to play with etc., etc.”

Islanders constructed a big dugout canoe with timber from Iriomote Island. *Muranuuya*, the chief, chose 13 men

to send them to Iriomote, at 70 kms to the east.

Ever since, we have waited for the news that they returned safe in the arms of their parents.



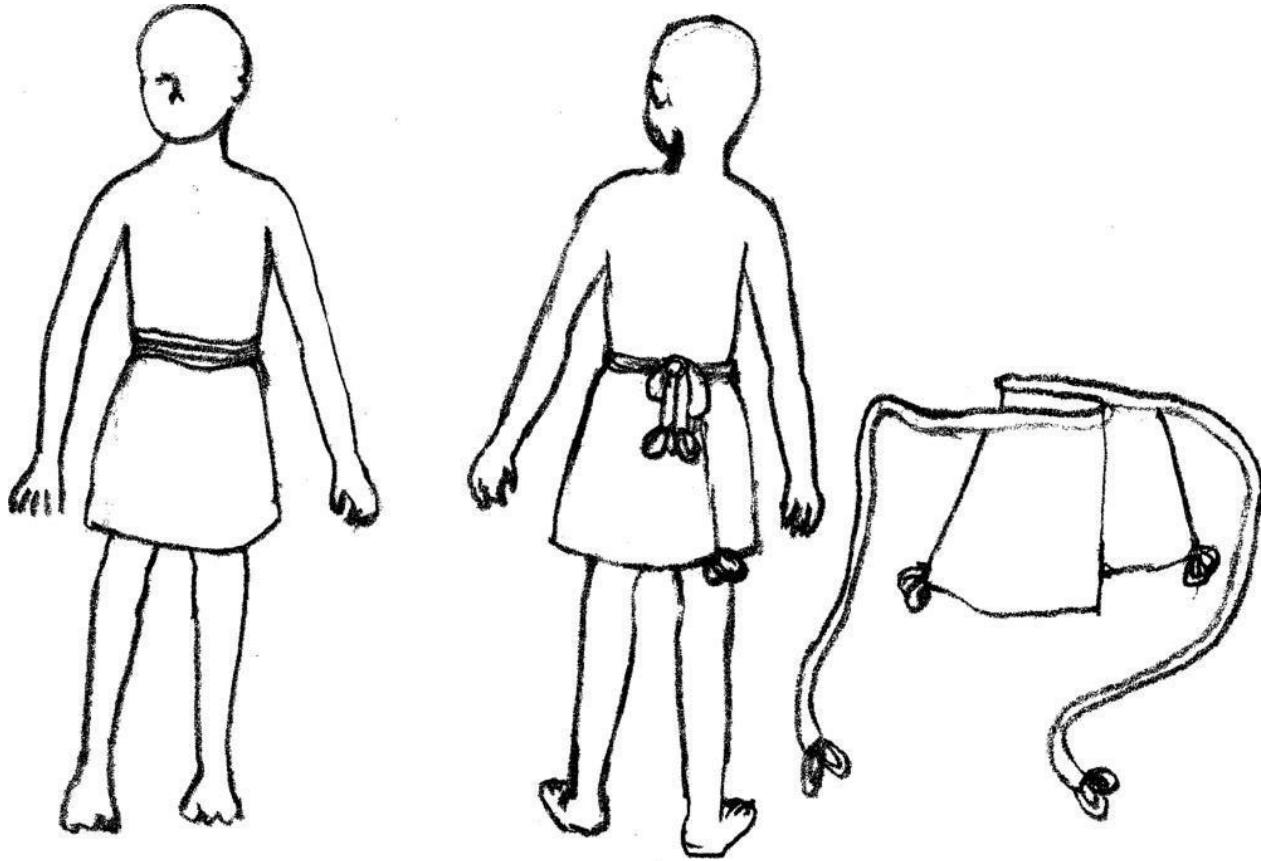
舟有舵棹無櫓，但順風懸帆而已。至七月晦，候南風，島人十三名，將俺等齎糧及酒醪，同騎一船。行一晝夜半，至一島。島名所乃是麿，護送者，留八九日，還本島。

Comparison between oral tradition and the Veritable Records (two versions, concise in May and detailed in June 1479)

Topics	Veritable Records		Oral tradition
	May 1479	Jun. 1479	Feb. 2025
Survivors	3	3	3
Deaths	5	5	5
Sailors to Iriomote	13	13	13
Departure	After 6 months	End of July	End of July
First of the three	金非乙介	金非衣, 操瓠	Mr Slow, judgement
Second	姜茂	姜茂, 執櫓	Mr Tall, skillful
Third	李正	李正, 操瓠	Mr Loud, cheerful

The sole difference is that the oral tradition holds pigs surprised drifters. Pigs and goats were only kept in Okinawa Island.

Women continued to make and wear the underwear “appá” of *Fuganutu* and ordered Wakaranko to master its making along with **all the stories** the old had told her.



(C) ANKEI Takako

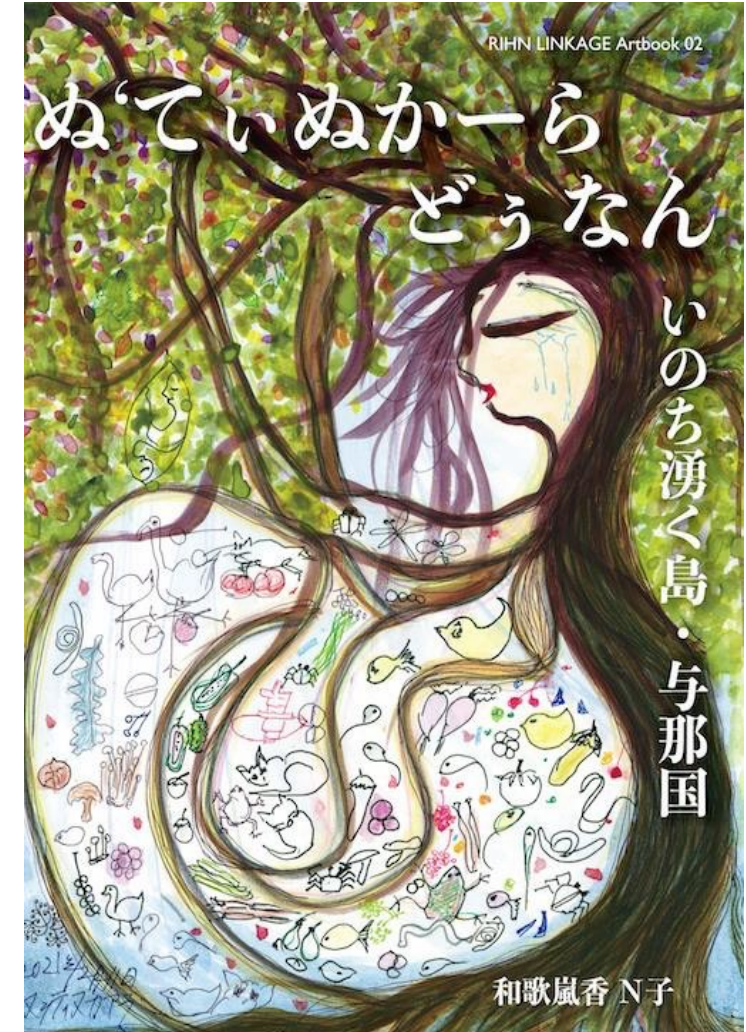


Appá made by Wakaranko

Why was this oral tradition not known until today?

Around 1956, elders decided to raise Wakaranko (2 years old then) as a **leader-shaman in charge of food and resource management** to revive the role of a **traditional *Mutukkahamai*** (see her self-portrait, a deity giving birth to all living things). **The *Fuganutu* legend was a part of her apprenticeship.** Nobody else were thought to master it, and even her parents were ignorant of it in the midst of post-war social, economic, and political turmoil. When elders gradually faded away, she was **left alone as the sole successor of this oral tradition.**

Because of distrust and contempt from around, she had concealed her *Fuganutu* legend. It was just **the day after our first visit to Jeju in 2007**, when she began telling us about the three men drifted from elsewhere...





Successors of *Fuganutu* legend. These figures were added to the *Fuganutu* artbook to convince readers that many elders passed down the oral tradition in detail with deep sympathy until the 1980s.



3. Returning the forgotten *Fuganutu* legend to the islands

Three seminars in Yaeyama with Prof Chun Kyung-soo (Mar 2025)



Ms. Wakaranko has sent us one-meter-thick notebooks, a 1000 drawings, 4000 vocabulary cards and recorded songs.

Beside two artbooks and several scientific papers, they will be published as a **database of Yonaguni, a Heritage for Future Island:**

<https://dunanmunui.wixsite.com/my-site>



Conservation of the original is needed to prepare for “Bit Rot” or data degradation.





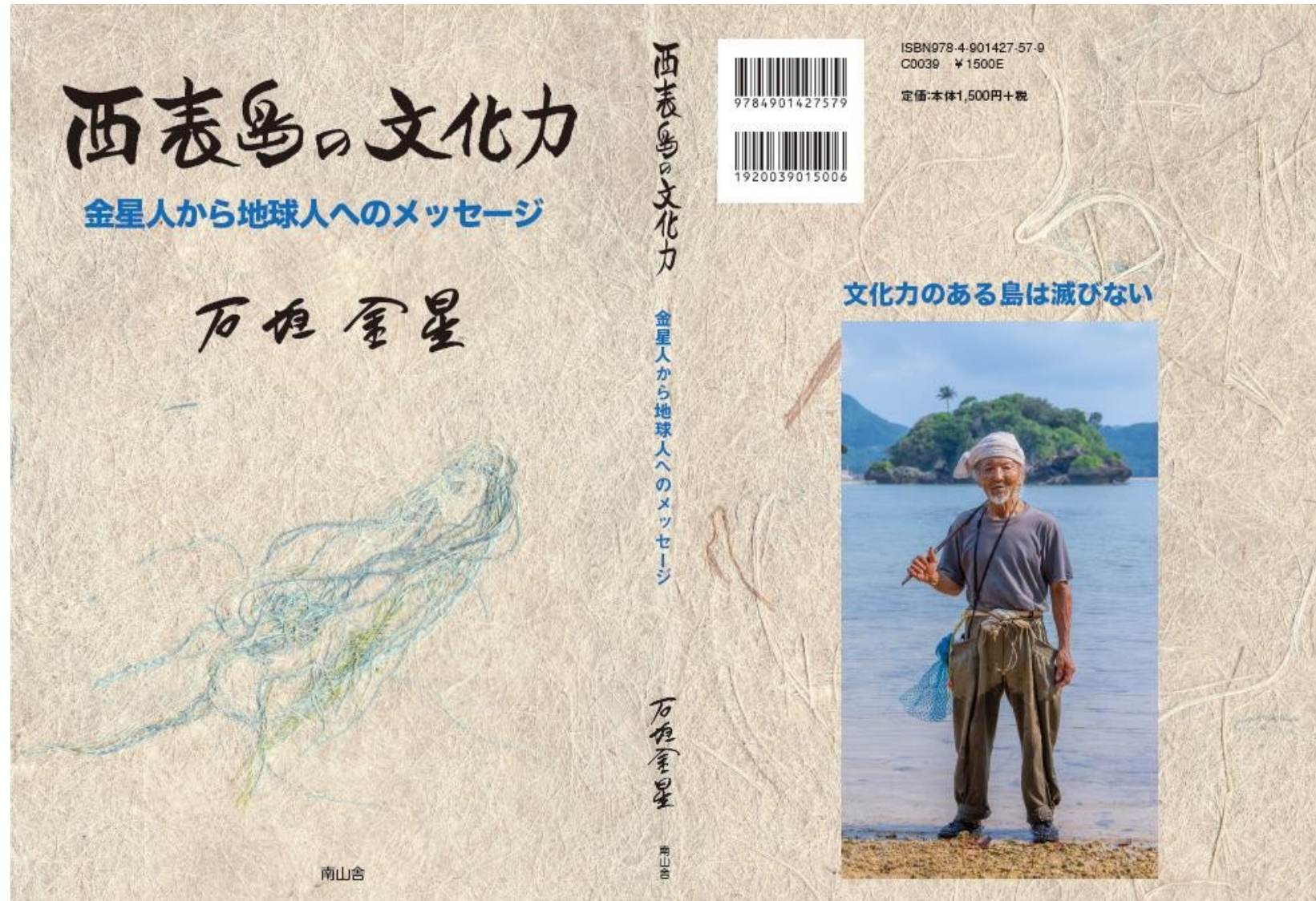
A journey of gratitude and remembrance with Prof. CHUN Kyung-soo, a descendant of Jeju (Feb. 2009 and Mar. 2025).

- In 2025, a new joint study project has begun with three Korean specialists including Prof. CHUN under the sponsorship of the Institute for Jeju Studies. (濟州學研究所)

“An island with cultural competence will never perish.”

(Kinsei Ishigaki, a community leader of Iriomote Island 1946-2023)

Hoshitate was among the 18 villages of Yaeyama at the verge of extinction. An explorer Sasamori Gisuke (笹森儀助) predicted it in 1893 and Hoshitate is the unique exception that has escaped his prediction thanks to welcoming immigrants.



Towards the establishment of a charter to protect and pass on the biocultural diversity of every village

Hoshitate *Yuipitu* Charter's Preamble (2025)

At the foot of Mt. Kanazayama, surrounded by rivers and the sea, lies the village of Hoshitate. We are grateful to nature for sustaining life and nurturing wisdom and culture. We take pride in the heart of unity and traditions passed down by our forerunners, and we are committed to promoting village development. **We will pass on this rich homeland to future generations.**

Local leaders, **mostly immigrants from elsewhere** at their forties created a new Charter of Hoshitate village in Iriomote Island:

1. Participation, 2. **Succeeding traditional culture**, 3. Co-existing with nature, 4. Maintaining the landscape, and 5. Community- based development.



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The southern shore of Yonaguni Island the drifters loved to stay, one of the last sketches by Ms. Wakaranko.