
***Ayashi* and *Ayadokoro*: Organization of *Kogogushiki* for Handicraft Production**

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In the Nara period, the office for serving the Empress in household ministry (*Kogogushiki* 皇
后宮職) had some bodies for manufacturing and processing in various subordinate bodies. This
is proved by Empress *Komyo* (光明皇后) in the *Tenpyo* era. One of the subordinate bodies had the
organization called *Ayashi* (綾司) bearing *Aya* (綾) which was an expensive silk fabrics in ancient
times. Furthermore, it was established by wooden documents (*mokkan* 木簡) of Heijo-kyu Palace (平
城宮) that *Kogogushiki* had the organization called *Ayadokoro* (綾所) for *Fujiwara no Otomuro* (藤原
乙牟漏) to be Empress in 782.

Accordingly, *Ayashi* and *Ayadokoro* is positioned as a specific organization of *Kogogushiki*.

However, historical materials that directly back up the existence of the detailed activities have not
remained, *Ayashi* and *Ayadokoro* have assumed the responsibility of weaving *Aya*.

In the organization of central administration, the administration which produced expensive silk fabric
such as *Aya* and brocade had been an Office of Textiles (*Oribe-shi* 織部司) attached to the Ministry of
Finance and a Bureau of Skilled Artisans (*Takumi-ryo* 内匠寮) attached anew to the Ministry of Central
Affairs (*Nakatsukasa-sho* 中務省) in 728. It is a matter of ancient family property organizations and
handicraft productions, identically *Takumi-ryo* close to Emperor, whether Empress has also had the
organization of taking responsibility to weave expensive silk fabrics or not. This article describes the
activities and the subsequent developments of *Ayashi* and *Ayadokoro*, subordinate bodies of *Kogogushiki*. It
is possible that *Ayashi* of *Kogogushiki* assigned by Emperor *Komyo* has been weaving *Aya* for Buddhism-
related work such as donating to temples and Sutra copying. The core labor was imperial household
servants (*toneri* 舍人), and the structure was mostly inherited the tradition of independent Empress.

This structure had changed and the subordinate bodies of *Kogogushiki* had reduced when *Tatibana
no Kachiko* (橘嘉智子) ascended to be Empress. The production administration, the Bureau of Palace
storehouses (*Kura-ryo* 内蔵寮), the Bureau of Wardrobe and Court Ladies (*Nuidoro-ryo* 縫殿寮) and
the Bureau of Skilled Artisans (*Takumi-ryo* 内匠寮), reorganized in the Heian period charged with the
function instead of subordinate bodies for manufacturing and processing.

Key words: *Kogogushiki* (Office for serving the Empress in household ministry), An Expensive

silk fabrics called *Aya*, Empress Komyo, Handicraft production