

A Fundamental Study on *Urushigamimonjo*

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Urushigamimonjo ("lacquer paper documents") were a kind of wrapping paper (*Futagami*) used to preserve lacquer sap in good condition. Official documents were often recycled to make this wrapping paper, as lacquer sap adhered to the paper over the years, this preserved the paper underground.

Since *Urushigamimonjo* were found at the ruins of Taga castle in Miyagi Prefecture in 1978, they have been excavated at 23 ruins in the country. Compared with *Mokkan* (Wooden Tablet) the careful study of *Urushigamimonjo* as historical materials has been neglected. *Urushigamimonjo* were documents written on paper and so there is no difference between them and documents such as *Shōsōin monjo* ("the documents of Shōsōin"). On the other hand, *Urushigamimonjo* are excavation historical material that were preserved as lacquer soaked into the paper and can not be treated as documents alone. *Urushigamimonjo* were primarily wrapping paper preserved by the lacquer sap and can not be studied independent of the work of the *Urushinuri* (Urushi painting).

The wrapping paper must be studied carefully, taking into consideration. The consideration of the glaze, the form of the wrapping paper and now the old documents were stuck together. For example, wrapping paper was stuck together in three way :

1. Documents were carefully joined by sticking about 0.2 cm. of the edges together.
2. When wrapping paper was made, if one document was not enough for the purpose another document was joined by sticking about 2cm. of the edges together.
3. For the purpose of presentation documents were joined by sticking about 1cm. of edges together.

Even the wrapping papers excavated are fragments, if the way the documents were stuck together are studied, this will reveal more than just the content (written) of the documents. The study of *Urushigamimonjo* could produce clues to the data of the remains from which they are excavated.

If *Urushigamimonjo* are studied in detail, more than just the content of the documents can be understood, and their significance as a historical material will increase. In this paper, it is stressed that study of their fundamental materials is crucial for the *Urushigamimonjo*.