

Located off Kunisaki Peninsula's coast, the tiny island of Himeshima is home to a small community of mostly fishermen and shrimp farmers. Despite its small size—just under seven kilometers long—Himeshima is a historically important island. Its existence was first recorded in the *Kojiki*, an eighth century text that recounts a predominant Japanese origin myth. According to this legend, the two gods Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto came together to create the islands of Japan. Himeshima is mentioned as their twelfth creation.

This creation myth is supplemented by another legend regarding the island's name. Legend has it that a distraught princess from the Korean mainland fled to Himeshima (literally, "Princess Island") to avoid marriage to a Korean prince. Folk stories describing her time on the island have been passed down through generations. In one story, she would regularly blacken her teeth (a common cosmetic practice in pre-modern Japan) on a stone known as Kanetsukeishi, eventually creating an indentation in the shape of her brush and inkwell. This site is included among the Seven Wonders of Himeshima, a set of places that appear in the myths about the princess and that are connected to Himeshima's unique history and geography. Other sites include the Hyoshimizu spring and an unusual-shaped willow tree.