

PICTURES OF AN ISLAND KINGDOM
DEPICTIONS OF RYŪKYŪ IN EARLY MODERN JAPAN

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Abstract

This paper seeks to uncover early modern Japanese understandings of the Ryūkyū Kingdom through examination of popular publications, including illustrated books and woodblock prints, as well as handscroll paintings depicting Ryukyuan embassy processions within Japan. The objects examined include one such handscroll painting, several illustrated books from the Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library, and *Hokusai Ryūkyū Hakkei*, an 1832 series of eight landscape prints depicting sites in Okinawa. Drawing upon previous scholarship on the role of popular publishing in forming conceptions of “Japan” or of “national identity” at this time, a media discourse approach is employed to argue that such publications can serve as reliable indicators of understandings and conceptions of the time, due to the presence of a conception of “Japan,” against which Ryūkyū could be compared and understood.

Examination of the images reveals that early modern Japanese consumers of such materials understood Ryūkyū to be a distinct place with its own distinct culture. Some materials reflect a conflation or confusion of Ryukyuan dress, architecture, and the like (and thus of Ryūkyū itself) with those of China; however, none of the materials surveyed indicate a conflation or confusion of Ryūkyū with Korea, Holland, or a generic conception of “the foreign” as Keiko Suzuki argues was prevalent in early modern Japan.

Ryūkyū is depicted as subordinate to Japan, within a traditional East Asian mode of understanding international hierarchies, in that it sends tribute missions to pay formal respects to the shogun, but the materials surveyed reveal an almost entirely cultural approach; explicit discussion of political matters is all but absent. They represent Ryūkyū as a foreign country, not “Japanese,” but with a very close geographical and cultural relationship to Japan, as well as to China. Though Japanese publications of the 17th to early 19th centuries could not have been particularly thorough in their descriptions of the inner workings of Ryukyuan politics, economics, culture, and society, what was represented, including dress, musical instruments, and other accoutrements carried by Ryukyuan on tribute missions within Japan, were depicted with a high degree of accuracy.

Introduction

The Ryūkyū Islands are today a part of Japan, and information about them, their people, and their culture, is as widely accessible within Japan as information about any other part of the country. However, up until the 1870s, most of the Ryukyus were ruled independently, not by a Japanese government, but by a Ryukyuan one. The Ryūkyū Kingdom was one of only a handful of polities to enjoy a direct diplomatic and trade relationship with early modern Japan, as the Tokugawa shogunate which ruled the Japanese archipelago from 1603-1868 restricted trade and other interactions with foreign peoples. Inhabitants of the archipelago were forbidden from leaving, and direct interactions with people from overseas were extremely limited. Yet, Japanese produced and circulated numerous paintings, prints, books, and other materials depicting or describing Ryūkyū and its people. How, then, did they imagine Ryūkyū and its people? What sort of place did they think Ryūkyū was? What sort of people did they imagine the Ryukyuan to be?

Examination of early modern Japanese illustrated books, popular landscape prints, and scroll paintings depicting Ryūkyū and its people can help to shed light on the answers to these questions. Materials such as these circulated widely across the archipelago, connecting people of all walks of life in their impressions of or understandings about Ryūkyū and its people, and thus allowing these materials to serve for us as indications of the content or flavor of those understandings. The chief sources of information about Ryūkyū for inhabitants of early modern Japan were what they read in published materials, paintings & manuscripts, what they heard from other people, what they inferred from seeing and consuming Ryukyuan goods available at market, and what they saw on the rare occasion of the procession through the streets of a Ryukyuan embassy. Their conceptions, therefore, about Ryūkyū were formed out of their metaphorical “conversations” or interactions with the complex of messages conveyed by these various influences, a phenomenon I refer to as “discourse.”

In this essay, I use the term “discourse” to refer to this aggregate “conversation” that takes place throughout society – through spoken conversations, production and consumption of written and visual media, and other means – in which widely held beliefs, conceptions, or ideas are communicated, and through that communication, are influenced, altered, or reinforced. This use of the term is very similar to that employed by many feminist and gender studies scholars; Monique Wittig, for example, writes that “pornographic images, films, magazine photos,

publicity posters on the walls of the cities, constitute a discourse, and this discourse covers our world with its signs, and this discourse has a meaning: it signifies that women are dominated.”¹ Paraphrasing Wittig, we can apply the same concept to the topic at hand, arguing that “paintings, prints, books, and colorful processions constitute a discourse, and this discourse has a meaning: it signifies that Ryūkyū is a certain type of place.” As products of this discourse, and as the vehicles by which it was perpetuated, materials such as mass-produced and widely distributed books and prints, as well as paintings depicting Ryukyuan subjects, can therefore help to reveal how inhabitants of early modern Japan conceived of Ryūkyū and its people (and, by contrast, themselves).

Of course, early modern Japan (that is, the period of Tokugawa rule, 1603-1868, also known as the Edo period) was a diverse and complex place, not yet as unified or centralized a state – nor the Japanese a people – as it would become in the modern era,² and so we cannot speak of the entirety of the populace participating in this discourse. A great many people remained relatively isolated from access to published materials, or certain other discursive influences, which circulated throughout the archipelago and which began to connect inhabitants of disparate regions into sharing common understandings, attitudes, and cultural knowledge. Yet, a great many other people, though we cannot know how many, including both commoners and samurai, residents of the cities and of remote rural villages throughout many parts of the archipelago, *did* travel, attend the theatre or other entertainments,³ communicate with friends or relatives in distant provinces, consume goods from across the archipelago (or beyond), and enjoy popular books, woodblock prints, and other forms of popularly published media. In this

¹Monique Wittig. “The Straight Mind.” in *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Amelia Jones, pp. 130-135. New York: Routledge, 2003. p. 132.

²Japan is generally considered to have come into being as a nation-state, in the modern/Western sense of the word, in the late 19th century, following the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Through public education curricula and various other programs and policies, the Meiji government promoted the idea of a unified, homogenous “Japanese people,” largely through two concepts coined at this time: the political / national-building concept of *kokumin* 国民 (“citizens”), and *minzoku* 民族 (“a people”), a term more oriented towards a concept of cultural or ethnic identity. These concepts were strongly influenced by 19th century Western ideas, respectively, of citizenship in a nation-state, and of racial / ethnic identity. Kevin Doak examines the emergence and development of these two concepts in: Kevin Doak. *A History of Nationalism in Japan: Placing the People*. Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2007. pp. 164-264.

³ Though scholarship on kabuki, bunraku, and other popular theatrical forms, at least in English, focuses almost entirely on theatre in the major cities of Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto, there were numerous provincial forms of storytelling and theatre as well, along with traveling troupes. Troupes from the major cities occasionally went on tour in the provinces as well, bringing to the provinces the culture and popular discourses of the cities, and vice versa.

way, a peasant in rural Tōhoku (in the far north), a merchant's wife in the shogunal capital of Edo, and a samurai stationed in Nagasaki (in the far south) who read the same book or saw copies of the same prints were exposed to a common body of ideas (i.e. a common discourse) about Ryūkyū, and about any number of other subjects. Discussing the significance of the novel in the Western world, Debra Spitulnik writes that

through both definite description and generic reference (naming familiar places and invoking types of places and types of persons), the 18th century novel constructed a sense of a shared world, a common social and cultural milieu that belonged to both author and reader, and to a collective readership.⁴

The concept is equally applicable to the case of popular publishing in early modern Japan. Some large body of people of all walks of life, from all across the archipelago, in this manner came to share in common ideas about themselves, one another, and the broader world beyond the shores of "Japan."

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One of this essay provides an overview of the Ryukyuan *Edo nobori*⁵ processions, and discusses a pair of handscroll paintings in the Sakamaki-Hawley collection of the University of Hawai'i which depict the 1710 Ryukyuan procession. Many such *Edo nobori* handscrolls were created by court painters in the employ of the shogunate, to serve as official visual records of the processions.⁶ The Sakamaki-Hawley scrolls are unsigned, and their provenance is unknown. Informal elements of the composition suggest the possibility that these scrolls were instead painted by nonofficial artists, commissioned by private patrons, such as wealthy townspeople (*chōnin* 町人), or samurai seeking such a work for their private collection. Individual patrons may have had interests in foreign peoples, or in Ryūkyū more specifically, or may have desired such works for any number of other personal reasons. Along with more affordable and more widely distributed materials, such as books and single-sheet woodblock prints, which are discussed in later chapters, these scrolls provide insights into early modern Japanese popular understandings and conceptions about Ryūkyū and its people, and the degree

⁴ Debra Spitulnik. "The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and the Mediation of Communities." *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 6:2 (1996), p. 164.

⁵ *Edo nobori* 江戸上り, literally "going up to Edo." I briefly discuss the significance and implications of this term in the first chapter.

⁶ Ronald Toby. "Carnival of the Aliens: Korean Embassies in Edo-Period Art and Popular Culture." *Monumenta Nipponica* 41:4 (1986), pp. 418-420.

of accuracy of those understandings. Comparison with extant examples of elements of Ryukyuan court costume, and with paintings by Ryukyuan artists, confirms that these scroll paintings convey to viewers highly accurate impressions of Ryukyuan fashion and appearances otherwise.

In Chapter Two, I turn to examples of Japanese woodblock-printed illustrated books from the 18th and early 19th centuries. More than ninety distinct titles were published over the course of the Edo period containing content about the Ryūkyū Kingdom.⁷ In this chapter, I discuss several of these, which would have been much more widely & readily available than the paintings discussed in the previous chapter, as well as more affordable,⁸ providing further insights into popular (mis)conceptions prevalent at the time concerning Ryūkyū.

Examination of illustrated books about Ryūkyū in the Sakamaki-Hawley collection reveals considerable variety. Some volumes, likely based upon scroll paintings such as those described in Chapter One, or upon the illustrator's first-hand experience viewing the processions, depict and describe the *Edo nobori* processions; other books relate narratives of events in the legends or history of Japanese-Ryūkyū interactions, while yet others include descriptions of the people of Ryūkyū within wider-ranging treatments of the peoples of the world. Some of these

⁷ Yokoyama Manabu 横山学. *Ryūkyūkoku shisetsu torai no kenkyū* 琉球国使節渡来の研究. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1987, p. 185.

⁸ Due to lack of relevant records, fluctuations in prices and in the value of currency, and other factors, scholarship has not been able to pin down the precise cover prices, so to speak, of published materials in Edo period Japan. Prices are not indicated directly in books, nor in advertisements for them. (Peter Kornicki. *The Book in Japan*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2001, p. 185.)

However, some sense of the rough cost of purchasing an illustrated book can be gleaned, relative to the cost of a hand-painted handscroll. Timon Screech estimates that "scrolls by [well-known painters] might cost about 1 *ryō*." This is a rather sizeable amount, nominally equivalent to one *koku* of rice, or the amount of rice it would take to sustain a man for a year. Screech also discusses in the same essay the various denominations of currency, and prices of other types of paintings. (Timon Screech. "Owning Edo-Period Paintings." in *Acquisition: Art and Ownership in Edo-Period Japan*, ed. Elizabeth Lillehoj, pp. 23-51. Warren, CT: Floating World Editions, 2007, p. 29.)

Meanwhile, Eiko Ikegami estimates that a thin, cheap *kibyōshi* book would cost around 8 to 12 *mon*, less than the cost of a bowl of noodles, but more than the cost of a visit to the public bathhouse. (Ikegami Eiko. *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture*. Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 306.) A longer book such as the ones we are discussing, printed on thicker, higher quality paper, would have cost more, though how much more is unclear. Screech suggests that a full multi-fascicle set of illustrated books could have cost up to 90 *momme* of silver (or 1.5 *ryō* in gold)(Screech, p. 26.). This is a hefty sum, roughly 1/6 of the total annual salary of a well-paid laborer (Screech, p26.). But a single volume, especially one printed in monochrome, such as any of the Ryūkyū books discussed below, would have cost merely a fraction of that. Regardless of the precise price of the books in question, we can at least say that printed books, at least of certain genres, had by the late 17th century "become cheap and readily available, and were perceived to be so" (Kornicki. *The Book in Japan*, p186.), especially as compared to commissioning or purchasing a hand-painted unique work.

publications present relatively accurate and well-informed depictions of Ryukyuan costume and appearances otherwise, while others conflate elements of Ryukyuan appearance or identity with those of Koreans, Chinese, and even Dutch or Portuguese. In aggregate, however, the books present a relatively consistent understanding of the Ryukyuan people as foreign, yet familiar; Ryukyuan are understood to be different from Japanese, and subjects of an independent kingdom subordinate to the emperors of both Japan and China; but the Ryukyuan people are also seen to have strong historical connections and cultural similarities to the peoples of both Japan and China.

Chapter Three examines single-sheet *ukiyo-e* prints, a third type of Japanese popular depictions of Ryukyuan subjects, focusing specifically on the example of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* series of landscapes prints by the artist Katsushika Hokusai. The *Ryūkyū Hakkei* is quite possibly the only such series of single-sheet prints depicting landscape scenes of sites in Ryūkyū. As such, in contrast to the materials addressed in the previous chapters which focused more extensively on the Ryukyuan as people, and their appearances, the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* provides insights into how Japanese of the early 19th century might have conceived of Ryūkyū as a place. Examination of the prints series confirms the conclusions gleaned in the previous chapter of a complex understanding of Ryūkyū as both foreign and familiar, distant yet nearby, with its own distinct culture, but also exhibiting a strong degree of cultural “closeness” to Japan.

All East Asian names are presented in traditional East Asian order. Okinawan names, placenames and terms are, for the most part, given in the Japanese reading/spelling used most commonly in Japanese and English-language scholarship, for the sake of consistency and clarity. For example, Okinawa 沖縄 is used instead of Uchinaa, and Misato 美里 and Tomigusuku 豊見城 instead of Misatu and Tumigusuku. Similarly, the Japanese terms *seishi* (正使, chief envoy/ambassador) and *hachimaki* (鉢巻, a court cap), for example, are used instead of their equivalents in the native Okinawan language. Exceptions are made, however, for a few Okinawan ranks/titles, including *uekata* 親方, *sessei* 摂政 and *peechin* 親雲上, which either have no direct Japanese equivalent, or for which the Japanese term has a different meaning; these terms are given in the Okinawan reading as seen here. Where other Okinawan terms are employed, they are designated by an ‘O’ for “Okinawan language,” e.g. “Okinawa (O: Uchinaa).” The letters ‘C’ and ‘J’ are occasionally used, similarly, when Chinese or Japanese readings/translations of names and terms are provided.

Depictions of the “Foreign”

Before we can address the issues of depictions and conceptions of Ryūkyū, however, first we must briefly consider how early modern inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago conceived of the foreign more broadly, and of their own place among the peoples or cultures of the world. The ways in which early modern Japanese conceived of countries or nations, of the “foreign,” and of the boundaries between them, were driven by several overlapping conceptual frameworks and other fundamental attitudes or ideas. One of these frameworks conceptually divided the world into three realms. The lands comprising the Japanese archipelago was known as *honchō* (本朝, “this court”), *wagakuni* (我が国, “our land”), or by various other names. The term *kara* 唐 (also read as *tō*) referred to the realm of strong Chinese cultural influence outside of Japan, i.e. those lands within the sphere of the Sinocentric political order, including China, Korea, Viet Nam, and Ryūkyū. We shall return to the concept of *kara* later, when we discuss the conception of the *Tōjin* 唐人 (“person of *kara*”), a generic conception of the foreigner, incorporating elements from numerous disparate foreign cultures. Everything beyond *kara*, in this “three realms” model, was described as *Tenjiku* 天竺, a term which in most contexts refers specifically to India, or the land of the Buddha’s birth, about which some legends or stories were known, but which was conceived of as being exceptionally distant, and foreign (i.e. different); as one of the “three realms,” however, *Tenjiku* incorporated all that was beyond *kara*, including parts of Southeast Asia, Europe, and lands such as the Americas and Africa about which Japanese knew only through European sources, as well as fantastic lands assumed to exist somewhere out in the world, such as the land of all women, or the land of dwarfs. In another iteration of this conception of three realms, the first was rendered as *tenka* (天下, “the realm” or “all under heaven”), a borrowing from Chinese concepts of cosmology and political geography, while the other two were referred to as *ikoku* (異国, “foreign lands” or “lands which are different”) and *gai-i* (外夷, “outer barbarians”).⁹ These various pre-modern conceptions of the world were challenged when Europeans first arrived in Japan, introducing European maps, and European conceptions of nations and national borders. A conception of the world as consisting of *bankoku* 万国 (lit. “ten thousand lands”), which Ronald Toby translates as “myriad

⁹ Tessa Morris-Suzuki. “Invisible Countries: Japan and the Asian Dream.” *Asian Studies Review* 22:1 (1998), p. 6.

countries,”¹⁰ thus began to take root. Yet, throughout the Edo period, this concept existed alongside those of the three realms, which had yet to fade away.

Meanwhile, there prevailed as well a concept of concentric circles of difference which is of particular importance in understanding how conceptions of the foreign, as well as of Japanese identity, were constructed in the Edo period. Tessa Morris-Suzuki is one of a number of scholars who have articulated a vision of the world in which ethnic or national differences were not constructed based on strict geographical borders, but rather based upon a conception of a gradual decline in “civilized” identity, or identity as defined by the culture of the metropole, as one moves gradually further from the metropole. In this view, Japanese culture and civilization are centered in, and emanate from, the metropole, i.e. the imperial capital of Kyoto, or the shogunal capital of Edo, and as one moves farther from these centers of culture and civilization, one discovers people who, in the eyes of the Kyoto or Edo urbanite, would have been seen as progressively less civilized, less “Japanese,” and more barbaric or foreign.¹¹ This phenomenon is evident in the travel diaries and other writings of people from the metropolises when they describe people in the geographic extremes of the Japanese archipelago. The concept of gradual decline is evident as well as in the blurring of boundaries between what is and is not considered part of “Japanese land.” This is especially evident in the far north, at the boundaries between Japanese and Ainu identity, a subject I discuss further below.

Yet, while the boundaries between “Japan” and “not Japan” may have been quite blurry in this model of circles of gradual difference, this is not to say that such boundaries still did not exist. Inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago still held a conception of which places, peoples, and cultures they did and did not consider to be “Japanese.” The travel diary of Furukawa Koshōken, a native of Okayama who lived and studied in Edo, serves as an example of the way someone from an educated, metropolitan background conceived of difference in this period. Koshōken describes the people he met while traveling in Kyushu, the southernmost of the major islands of Japan, as less civilized, less cultured, or even as a strange sort of Japanese, but he still regards these provincial peoples as Japanese. By contrast, while he describes the people of

¹⁰ Ronald Toby. “Three Realms/Myriad Countries: An ‘Ethnography’ of Other and the Re-bounding of Japan, 1550-1750.” in *Constructing Nationhood in Modern East Asia*, eds. Kai-wing Chow, Kevin Doak, and Poshek Fu, pp. 15-45. University of Michigan Press, 2001.

¹¹ Morris-Suzuki. “Invisible Countries.” p. 6.

Ryūkyū as being in some respects culturally quite similar, or “close” to Japanese, he makes no indication that he considers them to be Japanese.¹²

One of the most prominent scholars writing in English addressing these issues is Ronald Toby, who has written several essays on Edo period constructions of the foreign and related subjects, including at least two discussing the “three realms” concept.¹³ Toby’s groundbreaking monograph *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan*¹⁴ focuses in particular on Korean and Ryukyuan tribute missions, describing their discursive role in contributing to the construction of popular conceptions of the power and legitimacy of the shogunate, as well as conceptions of the nature of the hierarchical relationship between Japan and its nearest neighbors. In brief, he argues that the sight of Korean and Ryukyuan tribute missions processing through the streets on their way to pay obeisance to the shogun served as a demonstration of the power and moral superiority of the shogunate, and of Korean and Ryukyuan recognition of Japan as the center of culture or civilization in the region.¹⁵ *State and Diplomacy* was among the first major works in English to more deeply examine Japanese foreign relations in the Edo period, at a time when scholarship had only recently begun to more fully reject the idea of *sakoku* 鎖国 (the “closed country”)¹⁶ in favor of a new framework for understanding Japan as highly engaged in interactions with the outside world while simply exercising policies of “maritime restrictions,” or *kaikin* 海禁.¹⁷ This volume is of great significance as one of the earliest and most extensive works focusing on early modern Japanese interactions with other East Asian peoples or polities,¹⁸ and for framing the Korean & Ryukyuan embassy missions within discourses of shogunal legitimacy. Like most of Toby’s work, however, *State and Diplomacy* draws more extensively upon Korean examples than Ryukyuan ones, leaving the reader with little information specifically pertaining to the Ryukyuan case, and with only the assumption that it

¹² Herbert Plutschow. *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*. Kent: Global Oriental, 2006. p. 94.

¹³ Toby. “Three Realms.”

Ronald Toby. “The ‘Indianness’ of Iberia and Changing Japanese Iconographies of Other.” in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart Schwartz, pp. 323-351. Cambridge University Press, 1994.

¹⁴ Ronald Toby. *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan*. Stanford University Press, 1984.

¹⁵ Toby. *State and Diplomacy*. pp. 211-230 *passim*.

¹⁶ That is, the idea that Tokugawa Japan cut itself off from interaction with the outside world.

¹⁷ See, for example: Arano Yasunori 荒野泰典. “The Entrenchment of the Concept of National Seclusion.” *Acta Asiatica* 67 (1994), pp. 83-103.

Arano Yasunori 荒野泰典. “*Sakoku*” *wo minaosu* 「鎖国」を見直す. Kawasaki: Kawasaki Shimin Academy shuppanbu, 2003.

¹⁸ That is, rather than focusing primarily or exclusively on interactions with Europeans and with China.

functioned for the most part in a similar fashion to relations with Korea. In the 1986 essay “Carnival of the Aliens,”¹⁹ Toby describes in detail a number of examples of Edo period popular publications depicting the Korean embassies, and implies the relevance of his findings and arguments for the case of the Ryukyuan embassies as well. He asserts the dramatic importance of the embassies, and depictions of them, in shaping Japanese conceptions of Self, and of the Other, but unfortunately provides no overarching conclusions as to the content of what Japanese urbanites, print consumers, or parade-goers thought of Koreans.

Meanwhile, early modern Japanese interactions with the Ainu, an indigenous people who lived chiefly on the island of Ezo (today called Hokkaido), have been discussed chiefly by Brett Walker and David Howell.²⁰ In their work, Japanese constructions of the Ainu as “foreign” or “barbarians” emerge as having been situated primarily in culture and behavior, rather than in physiognomic differences. Howell and Walker argue that there was a considerable degree of fluidity between Ainu and Japanese identities at certain times during the Edo period, and that a small number of Ainu actually came to be considered “Japanese.”²¹ They did so by shaving their beards and cutting their hair, taking on Japanese names, learning the Japanese language, wearing Japanese clothes, changing their dietary habits (the pre-modern/early modern Japanese diet included very little red meat or poultry), and otherwise adopting Japanese customs and appearance. Though representing an extremely small percentage of the total population of the archipelago, a number of Koreans, Chinese, and a very few Europeans were also able to assimilate into Japanese society and come to be considered “Japanese”; they included, among a variety of situations, Korean artisans and others captured in the 1590s Japanese invasions of Korea and brought back to Japan as prisoners of war, Chinese merchants and other Chinese who

¹⁹ Toby. “Carnival of the Aliens.” pp. 415-456.

²⁰ David Howell. “Ainu Ethnicity and the Boundaries of the Early Modern Japanese State.” *Past & Present* 142 (February 1994), pp. 69-93.

Tessa Morris-Suzuki. “Creating the Frontier: Border, Identity, and History in Japan’s Far North.” *East Asian History* 7 (June 1994), pp. 1-24.

Brett Walker. “The Early Modern Japanese State and Ainu Vaccinations: Redefining the Body Politic 1799-1868.” *Past & Present* 163 (May 1999), pp. 121-160.

²¹ The term *Wajin* (和人 or 倭人) is perhaps the term most commonly used to refer to “people of Japan” or “Japanese people” in contrast to the Ainu. When Japanese identity is discussed outside of the context of comparison to the Ainu, e.g. in the context of comparisons to other foreign peoples, terms other than *Wajin* are more frequently employed.

decided to settle in Japan, and the offspring of relationships between Dutchmen and Japanese women (especially Nagasaki-based courtesans).²²

Japanese interactions with the Ainu, and policies towards the Ainu, were for the most part handled by the samurai lords of the feudal domain, or *han* 藩, of Matsumae. Matsumae was the only domain located on the island of Ezo, and it was confirmed by the shogunate in its duties to oversee and manage trade and other interactions with the Ainu, including defense of the frontier. The borders of Matsumae *han*, and thus the northern borders of Tokugawa Japan as a whole, were not solidly defined geographically, but rather were defined more by the cultural identities of the inhabitants of the land. As Walker explains, “Matsumae policy [at times] sought to dramatize the cultural and ethnic distinctiveness which divided the two peoples [i.e. the Ainu and the Japanese], in turn using this distinctiveness to demarcate boundaries in the north.” At other times, in order to expand the territory which could be considered Japanese, in response to Russian encroachments upon Ezo, Matsumae reversed its policies forbidding Ainu from adopting Japanese customs, and instead encouraged the assimilation, or Japanization, of the Ainu people, at least to some extent. Thus, we can see that customs and behavior, more so than physiognomy or familial descent, were perhaps the most major factors in determining who was “Japanese,” and who was “foreign” or “barbarian,” in the eyes of the lords of Matsumae.

Examination of Japanese depictions of Europeans can also help to inform our understandings about Japanese constructions of Self and Other in this period. Some of the earliest Japanese depictions of Europeans were the so-called “Nanban Screens” or *Nanban byōbu* 南蛮屏風²³ produced in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. These folding screen paintings followed a standard compositional thematic, depicting European ships making port on the first in a pair of screens, and Europeans walking through the streets of a Japanese city on the second. Over the course of the Edo period, however, countless paintings, book illustrations, and designs on ceramics were produced depicting Dutchmen and other Europeans. Even in a rather cursory examination of a sampling of examples of such depictions, extensive similarities are evident. Standard elements commonly seen in such works include long smoking pipes, long curly

²² Arano Yasunori 荒野泰典. “The Formation of a Japanocentric World Order.” *International Journal of Asian Studies* 2:2 (2005), p. 204.

²³ *Nanban* 南蛮 (lit. “southern barbarians”) was a term used to refer to Europeans, whose ships approached Japan from the south, as they most often arrived via European colonies in Batavia, Macao, Manila, or elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

red hair,²⁴ triangular hats, vests or jackets buttoned down the front, and either tall boots or shoes with buckles, worn with hose (tights). The Dutchmen in these depictions are also frequently accompanied by an attendant, often dark-skinned,²⁵ sheltering the European man with an umbrella.²⁶ Lung Hsing Chu explains that these images were based not only upon direct observation and images in Western works (e.g. copperplate engravings), but also upon images of Westerners in Chinese materials.²⁷ As we shall see, Chinese publications played a significant role in informing and shaping Japanese understandings about Ryūkyū at this time as well.

Perhaps the most important scholarly essay in English directly addressing the subject of early modern Japanese visual depictions of foreigners (including Koreans and Ryukyuan) is one by Keiko Suzuki, entitled “The Making of Tōjin.”²⁸ In this article, Suzuki suggests that early modern Japanese conceptions of the foreign, as reflected in popular publications, were dominated by misconceptions and by a conflation of foreign peoples into a single generic foreigner, known as the *Tōjin*. The character read here as *tō*, which can also be read as *kara*, most literally refers to China’s Tang Dynasty (618-907), but the character’s meaning is somewhat fluid. *Tō* or *kara* is sometimes also used to refer to Chinese culture or Chinese civilization in general, extending beyond the chronological boundaries of the Ming (明, 1368-1644), Qing (清, 1644-1912), or other dynastic historical periods; as touched upon above, the term can also refer to the broader geographic realm of Chinese cultural influence (including Korea, Ryūkyū, and Viet Nam), or to the foreign more generally.²⁹ Suzuki cites examples in theatre and pictorial prints in which a foreign character such as Watōnai³⁰ or Tenjiku Tokubei is

²⁴ “Redhairs” (J: *kōmō*, 紅毛) was a term commonly used to refer to the Dutch in both China and Japan.

²⁵ As Batavia (today, Jakarta) in Indonesia was a major base of Dutch East India Company activity, dark-skinned Indonesians or Melanesians, as well as Africans, were common among the servants and slaves employed by Dutchmen in Japan. Junius Rodriguez. *The Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1997. p. 366.

²⁶ Chu Lung Hsing. “The Meeting of China, Japan and Holland: Dutchmen in Japanese Prints during the Edo Period.” Unpublished paper presented at the Design History Society Annual Conference, held at University College Falmouth, UK, September 2008. Figs. 21-36.

²⁷ Chu. pp. 2, 9-20.

²⁸ Keiko Suzuki. “The Making of *Tōjin*: Construction of the Other in Early Modern Japan.” *Asian Folklore Studies* 66 (2007), pp. 83-105.

²⁹ Suzuki. pp. 85-87.

Toby. “Three Realms.”

³⁰ Watōnai 和唐内 (lit. “within/between Japan and China”) is the name used in kabuki and bunraku theatre for the historical figure also known as Coxinga or Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624-1662). He was a pro-Ming loyalist of mixed Chinese/Japanese parentage who, from a base on Taiwan, led armed resistance against the Manchu (Qing Dynasty) conquest of China.

Donald Keene. *The Battles of Coxinga*. London: Taylor’s Foreign Press, 1951. p. 161.

depicted in a manner that does not accurately reflect a specific identity (e.g. as Chinese, or as Korean) but which instead incorporates elements of many cultures in a mishmash sort of fashion. Tokubei, for example, is said to be the son of a Korean official returning from Southeast Asia, but is referred to as Tenjiku Tokubei (“India Tokubei”), recites “Christian magic” supposedly learned from his Korean father, employing words drawn from Portuguese, and wears robes nominally patterned after Ainu garments.³¹ Pictorial depictions described by Suzuki similarly reflect a conflation of elements of many different cultures into the figure of a single “foreigner” – especially in terms of hairstyles, facial hair, facial features, hats, garments, boots, and accoutrements carried or used. Yet, as we shall see, early modern Japanese depictions of Ryukyuan people very frequently reflect a fairly accurate understanding of Ryukyuan dress and appearance. Though some of the depictions we will discuss incorrectly represent Ryukyuan dress, architecture, etc. as being nearly identical to that of China, none of the materials surveyed for this study showed signs of the conflation of Ryukyuan identity with that of Koreans, Ainu, Europeans, or any more generic conception of “the foreigner.” This reflects a fairly different phenomenon: a misunderstanding of the extent of Chinese influence in Ryūkyū, and not a conflation of Ryūkyū with all other foreign cultures.

The Ryūkyū Kingdom and Tokugawa Japan

A brief overview of the history of the Ryūkyū Kingdom and its relationships with the Chinese Imperial Court and with the Japanese *han* of Satsuma may be pertinent before delving into examination of images. Centered on the island of Okinawa, which lies roughly equidistant between the island of Kyushu to its north, and Taiwan to the south, the Ryūkyū Kingdom can be said to have come into existence in 1429, when the island was first united under a single king.³² The various principalities located on the island had already been paying tribute to the Chinese Emperor since 1372,³³ and the kingdom would continue to do so until 1874,³⁴ formally submitting to a subordinate relationship within the Sinocentric Confucian world order, in return for official recognition from China, and the opportunity to engage in trade. Through this interaction, the Ryūkyū Kingdom experienced considerable exposure to Chinese cultural

³¹ Suzuki. pp. 89-90.

³² George Kerr. *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*. Revised Edition. Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 2000. p. 86.

³³ Kerr. pp. 65-66.

³⁴ Kerr. pp. 366-368.

influence, and Ryukyuan culture came to incorporate elements of Chinese customs, dress, architectural styles, and political structures. As a result, as we shall see, many Japanese publications conceived of Ryūkyū as rather Sinified, or otherwise associated the kingdom very strongly with China.

Over the course of the 15th and 16th centuries, following the unification of Okinawa, the Ryūkyū Kingdom expanded to incorporate many of the neighboring islands, and became a major hub of maritime trade between China, Japan, Korea, and many Southeast Asian polities. In 1609, Ryūkyū was invaded by samurai forces from Satsuma *han*.³⁵ Though allowed to maintain some degree of independence, the kingdom was now subject to two masters: Satsuma, and China. From that point forward, for roughly 250 years, the Ryūkyū Kingdom sent regular tribute missions to both Beijing and Edo, received investiture missions from China, and was subject in its foreign relations to the strictures placed upon it by the leaders of Satsuma *han*, though Ryūkyū retained a considerable degree of autonomy in its domestic affairs.³⁶

Meanwhile, in order to strengthen its hold on power, the Tokugawa shogunate began in the 1630s to expel Europeans from Japan,³⁷ and to ban Japanese from traveling overseas.³⁸ Japan was not entirely sealed off, however, and still continued to be very active in trade and in cultural and intellectual exchange, through the closely guarded ports of Matsumae, Tsushima, Nagasaki, and Satsuma, where relations were maintained, respectively, with the Ainu, with Korea, with Chinese traders and the Dutch East India Company, and with Ryūkyū (and through Ryūkyū, with China).³⁹ Though Ryūkyū was a vassal state under Satsuma's lordship, and absorbed cultural influences from Japan,⁴⁰ the lords of

³⁵ A domain located in southern Kyushu, largely contiguous with modern-day Kagoshima prefecture.

³⁶ Kerr. pp. 166ff.

³⁷ With the exception of those affiliated with the Dutch East India Company, who were restricted to the man-made island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbor, beginning in 1641.

³⁸ Exceptions to the ban were made for a select few Japanese officials engaged in official business concerning Japan's relations with Korea and Ryūkyū.

³⁹ Brett Walker. "Foreign Affairs and Frontiers in Early Modern Japan: A Historiographical Essay." *Early Modern Japan* 10:2 (Fall 2002), pp. 44-62.

⁴⁰ The academic discourse on the extent of Japanese cultural influence in Ryūkyū, and the extent of prehistorical connections to Japonic peoples, is extensive and complex. For the purposes of this essay, it will have to suffice to say that Ryūkyū was influenced somewhat in the early modern period, but not as extensively as in the time since then (since the 1870s). Scholarship touching upon these issues includes: Kikuchi Yuko. "Hybridity and the Oriental Orientalism of Mingei Theory." *Journal of Design History* 10:4 (1997), pp. 343-354.

Gregory Smits. *Visions of Ryukyu*. University of Hawai'i Press, 1999.

Julia Yonetani. "Ambiguous Traces and the Politics of Sameness: Placing Okinawa in Meiji Japan." *Japanese Studies* 20:1 (2000), pp. 15-31.

Satsuma *han* took measures to limit the extent of Japanese influence in Ryūkyū, including banning Japanese from other domains from travelling to or residing in the kingdom. Measures such as these were aimed at maintaining the appearance of Ryūkyū's continued independence, in order to ensure that Ryūkyū's relations with China continued smoothly. Throughout the Edo period, the Chinese Court did not engage in formal relations with Tokugawa Japan. Thus, it has been argued that if the Chinese Court were to acknowledge Ryūkyū's association with Japan, it might cut off relations with Ryūkyū as well, severely diminishing Ryūkyū's value to Satsuma and to the shogunate. Satsuma and the shogunate benefited from this arrangement not only in terms of material gain from trade, but also by way of continued access to information about goings-on in China and beyond, obtained first-hand from Ryukyuan scholar-bureaucrats who traveled to Beijing, as well as in terms of prestige. Maintaining and emphasizing Ryūkyū's foreignness allowed both Satsuma and the shogunate to speak of holding dominion over an entire foreign kingdom.⁴¹

The Ryūkyū Kingdom sent tribute missions to the shogunal capital of Edo roughly once or twice in a generation, either to offer congratulations to a new shogun on his succession, or to respectfully ask for shogunal recognition of the succession of a new king of Ryūkyū.⁴² These were major events which created a festival or carnival atmosphere in Edo and other areas through which the procession passed, and spurred a considerable surge of interest in the customs, culture, and history of Ryūkyū. The embassy procession consisted of roughly one hundred men in brightly colored, exotic costume,⁴³ led by a royal prince, and escorted by a considerable number of samurai troops and officials from Satsuma.⁴⁴ In total, the Edo period saw eighteen such *Ryūkyū Edo nobori* missions.⁴⁵

In preparation for the arrival of the Ryukyuan procession into the shogunal capital, the shogunate ordered townspeople to clean the streets, take down unsightly signs, and

⁴¹ Smits. pp. 19-31.

⁴² Toby. "Carnival of the Aliens." pp. 422-423.

⁴³ Smits. pp. 27-29.

Missions in the 18th and 19th centuries generally numbered in the 90s, with the exception of those in 1710 and 1714, which were nearly double in size at roughly 170 people; earlier missions, in the 17th century, were smaller, numbering in the 70s.

Ryūkyū shisetsu, Edo e Iku! 琉球使節、江戸へ行く！ Naha: Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum, 2009. p. 45.

⁴⁴ Robert K. Sakai. "The Ryukyu Islands as a Fief of Satsuma." in *The Chinese World Order*, ed. John King Fairbank, pp. 112-134. Harvard University Press, 1968. pp. 125-126.

⁴⁵ *Edo nobori – Ryūkyū shisetsu no Edo sanpu* 江戸上り～琉球使節の江戸参府. Naha: Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education, 2001. pp. 4-5.

remove garbage from sight. The shogunate also put into place certain rules of etiquette for onlookers, requiring them to hang curtains or blinds if watching from upper floors, so as to not be seen from the street, and forbidding them from laughing loudly or fighting. These edicts also limited commerce on the streets while the procession passed, though publications about Ryūkyū and its people, or those depicting the procession, were still produced and sold in great numbers, and distributed quite widely.⁴⁶

Though Japanese cultural influence was strong in Ryūkyū at this time (to some extent, at least among Ryukyuan elites; one prominent Edoite of the time wrote that “the Ryukyuan dress like the Japanese and we understand each other’s language”⁴⁷), many scholars argue that efforts were in fact made by Satsuma and shogunate officials to play up the exoticism of these grand processions, and to suppress signs of Japaneseness. Ryukyuan members of the retinue were ordered to pretend they did not speak or understand Japanese, and the costumes and other accoutrements used in the processions were intentionally made to seem exotic and foreign to the eyes of the Japanese commoners and peasants who gathered in the streets for a glimpse of this rare event.⁴⁸ As Ronald Toby explains, the exotic appearance of the Ryukyuan ambassadors and their retinue brought great prestige both to Satsuma, as the only *han* to claim a foreign kingdom as a vassal, and to the shogunate, which could thereby assert the impression of its centrality in the region as a source from which culture and civilization emanated. These processions were among a number of methods through which the shogunate constructed a conception, disseminated throughout the archipelago, of a Japanocentric international order within which Ryukyuan, Koreans, Ainu, and Dutch acknowledged the cultural and Neo-Confucian moral superiority

⁴⁶ Yonahara Kei 与那原恵. “Ryūkyū shisetsu-dan ga motarashita Edo- Ryūkyū buumu” 琉球使節団がもたらした江戸琉球ブーム。 *Tokyojin* 東京人 271 (August 2009), pp. 132-138.

⁴⁷ Tachibana Nankei 橋南谿. *Saiyūki* 西遊記. Translated and quoted in Plutschow. p. 86.

⁴⁸ Tomiyama Kazuyuki has recently argued that the vast majority of these requirements regarding costume, and otherwise mandating exotic appearance, do not in fact appear in the original orders from Satsuma drafted in 1709, upon which the standards for all later processions were based. He asserts that the idea that such requirements existed derives from a misreading of the material by scholars of the early to mid-20th century, and that this error has been repeated and thus perpetuated by later and current scholarship. His transcription and translation (into modern Japanese) of the 1709 official documents reveals that, indeed, such requirements are not so explicitly spelled out. However, whether mandated by the Japanese authorities or otherwise, it is clear from the visual record that members of the Ryukyuan embassy did dress in Ryukyuan and Chinese costume, and thus would have seemed exotic to contemporary Japanese viewers.

See: Tomiyama Kazuyuki 豊見山和行. “Edo nobori kara Edo-dachi he: Ryūkyū shisetsu zō no tenkai” 「江戸上り」から「江戸立」へ—琉球使節像の転回. in *Ryūkyū shisetsu, Edo e Iku!* pp. 58-62.

of Japan and its rulers, and thus journeyed to Edo to present tribute and gifts in order to demonstrate their recognition of this centrality or superiority.⁴⁹ Indeed, in a booklet describing the 1811 Korean mission to Edo, Jippensha Ikku wrote explicitly that the embassy came “solely because of the merit of the Sacred Reign” of the shogun.⁵⁰ Similar sentiments surely appeared as well in books and pamphlets about the Ryukyuan embassies. These once-in-a-generation embassies, constructed by the shogunate for specific discursive purposes, and serving to disseminate that discursive concept to all observers, were the chief means, along with publications directly recording or describing these processions, by which the residents of Japan’s major cities (and beyond) learned about Ryūkyū. Beyond this, Ryūkyū was known to the people of Japan’s cities primarily only through the presence in the marketplaces of Ryukyuan goods – chiefly textiles and sugar⁵¹ – and through other publications, including many of Chinese origin.

The many works of visual culture produced at this time depicting Ryukyuan subjects – chiefly, woodblock printed books, single-sheet woodblock prints, and paintings – are not only significant, however, for what they can tell us about conceptions of Ryūkyū. Painted and published depictions of Ryūkyū, its people, and their customs also played an important role in stimulating and shaping widespread popular conceptions of Japanese identity which coalesced in the Edo period. Such works functioned alongside the discursive performance of the Ryukyuan embassy processions themselves, helping to constitute conceptions of an Other in contrast to which understandings of a Japanese Self could be formed.

It is important to note, however, that these ideas about Ryūkyū, and its relationship to Japan, were not disseminated in a uni-directional top-down manner, nor were they static. Discourses never are. The contents of popular publications in early modern Japan were not dictated by the shogunate (nor by Satsuma authorities), nor did popular discourses about Ryūkyū (like other popular discourses of the time) derive solely, or primarily, from messages passed down from the shogunate or other authorities. Rather, such discourses were primarily influenced, and perpetuated, by writers, illustrators, publishers, travelers, and consumers, who incorporated a wide range of messages, ideas, and influences (including some generated by

⁴⁹ Toby. *State and Diplomacy*. pp. 211-224ff.

⁵⁰ Toby. *State and Diplomacy*. p. 209, translating a quotation from Jippensha Ikku and Kitagawa Utamaro (ill.). *Chōsenjin raichō gyōretsuki* 朝鮮人來朝行列記. Edo: 1811.

⁵¹ Yokoyama.p. 148.

shogunate officials and other agents of authority) into their own beliefs and into their creative production, repeating these ideas, recombining them, and redistributing them.

Many scholars have suggested answers to the question of what form these conceptions of “Japan” took. Mark Ravina, among others, has elaborated on a concept of Tokugawa Japan centered on the samurai household, or *ie* 家, and on the feudal domain, or *han*. In this vision, Tokugawa Japan is not a unified, centralized state, but a loosely connected confederation of semi-independent *han* under the authority of the Tokugawa shogunate.⁵² Mary Elizabeth Berry, meanwhile, is one of a number of scholars who focus on a Japanese identity as conceived through the shared experiences of consumption of popular media, which resulted in the emergence of a singular body of cultural capital, or shared knowledge, in which people all across the archipelago shared. Through this common core of knowledge or experience of the contents of the same body of popular books and stories, which featured the same famous locations, consumers across the archipelago were able to recognize similarities and connections with one another, and to conceive of a shared identity as “Japanese.”⁵³

The issue of the emergence or development of “Japanese” or “national” identity is an extremely complicated one. To attempt to re-articulate, re-frame, or re-conceptualize the extensive and complex concepts of identity formation and (proto-)national identity in the Edo period cannot be the focus of this study. Though scholars may each choose to emphasize different models, they agree for the most part that the inhabitants of early modern Japan did conceive of a “Japan,” an “us,” in one fashion or another, envisioning a Self that could be understood as similar to, or different from, the peoples of Ryūkyū and other neighboring lands. In this essay, I examine a representative sample of visual culture materials which contributed to, and were the products of, early modern Japanese discourses on the Ryūkyū Kingdom and its people, in order to determine how Ryūkyū and its people were understood, or imagined, in the Japanese archipelago at this time.

⁵² Mark Ravina. *Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan*. Stanford University Press, 1999. pp. 38 *passim*.

⁵³ Mary Elizabeth Berry. “Conventional Knowledge in Early Modern Japan.” in *Public Spheres, Private Lives in Modern Japan, 1600-1950*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein, Andrew Gordon and Kate Wildman Nakai, pp. 19-52. Harvard University Asia Center, 2005.

The role of media in contributing to a sense of national identity is described as well, in broader terms (beyond the case of early modern Japan), in:

Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso Books, 1983. pp. 33-36 *passim*. Spitulnik. p. 164.

Chapter I: Handscroll Paintings as Visual Record

Roughly one hundred paintings depicting the Ryukyuan embassies' *Edo nobori* processions are extant today, while more than one hundred other works depict the corresponding Korean missions.⁵⁴ Most of these are believed to have been produced by shogunal court painters to serve as official records of the event, in visual form. In this chapter, I focus on one such pair of handscrolls, in the Sakamaki-Hawley Collection at the University of Hawai'i Library,⁵⁵ which depicts the 1710 Ryukyuan embassy's procession to Edo, and serves as a representative example of paintings of the *Edo nobori* processions.

Scrolls such as these were not only painted by those in service to the shogunate, however; amateur painters and commercial artists both in the metropolises and the provinces painted depictions of the embassies as well, either because of aesthetic interest, or commercial potential.⁵⁶ The pair of scrolls in the Sakamaki-Hawley Collection is unsigned, with no inscription or other explicit indications of an association with the shogunate. There are also no known records of the provenance of these scrolls prior to Mr. Hawley's acquisition of them, and therefore no definitive indications as to whether or not this set of scrolls was produced for official purposes.⁵⁷ However, there is reason to believe that this pair of scrolls was likely not painted for official purposes, but rather in a nonofficial context, perhaps for a wealthy patron. Constantine Vaporis, discussing handscroll paintings depicting the *sankin kōtai* processions of samurai lords traveling to and from Edo, observes that "documentation produced by artists under domainal patronage, reflecting the perspective of the samurai leadership, presented images of processions proceeding in a grand, stately manner. ... Nonofficial artists ... were more likely to capture the real-life slightly less grand images." He then goes on to describe a scroll prepared by a nonofficial artist depicting a *sankin kōtai* procession by samurai from Wakayama *han*. This scroll depicts figures resting their lances on their shoulders, turning around, perhaps to talk to one another, and otherwise behaving in a less than fully formal manner.⁵⁸ We see much the same behavior in the Hawley scrolls, in which many of the figures glance in different

⁵⁴ Toby. "Carnival of the Aliens." p. 417.

⁵⁵ The Sakamaki-Hawley Collection also includes one such handscroll painting depicting the 1671 procession.

⁵⁶ Toby. "Carnival of the Aliens." p. 420.

⁵⁷ From correspondence with Ms. Tokiko Yamamoto Bazzell, Japan Specialist Librarian, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library.

⁵⁸ Constantine Vaporis. *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. p. 90.

directions, rest lances or umbrellas on their shoulders, and group together not in a strict formation or marching order, but rather in a somewhat more disorganized fashion.⁵⁹ This is in stark contrast to the rather orderly depiction found, for example, in two *sankin kōtai* scrolls prepared for official purposes by painters in the service of the domain (*han*) of Sendai.⁶⁰ This issue will be discussed further below, following a closer examination of the content of the first of the two 1710 *Edo nobori* handscrolls in the Sakamaki-Hawley collection.

The first of the two scrolls depicts the portion of the procession featuring Ryukyuan officials, musicians, and other Ryukyuan members of the embassy, along with their escort of Japanese samurai and porters. The second scroll depicts the remainder of the procession, featuring samurai officials from Satsuma *han* (along with their escorts) and no Ryukyuan figures; this is followed by a lengthy section containing numerous depictions of Ryukyuan musical instruments, banners, and other accoutrements carried by those in the *Edo nobori* procession. Such objects were of keen popular interest, and depictions of them are a common sight in popular publications of the time. While the second scroll could be of value to a study on samurai processions, this essay will chiefly examine only the first of this pair of scrolls, focusing on the depiction of the Ryukyuan people themselves, their clothing, and the depiction of the procession as a whole.

This first scroll begins with an inscription naming and dating the event depicted. The inscription can be roughly translated as “7th year of Hōei, 11th month, 18th day; two envoys of the King of Ryūkyū Chūzan ascending; procession to the castle/capital.”⁶¹ *Hōei* 宝永 is an era name, the chief method of counting years and naming dates traditionally in Japan. The seventh year of this era corresponds roughly to 1710 on the Western calendar.⁶² The mention of “two

⁵⁹ See Figs. 1-1, 1-4, 1-9.

⁶⁰ See Vaporis. *Tour of Duty*. pp. 80-81.

⁶¹ 『宝永七年寅十一月十八日琉球中山王 両使者登 城の列』

⁶² Eras were not fixed in length or timing, but rather were determined by the Imperial court. The change from one era to another was often linked to a desire to celebrate or mark auspicious events, or to invite the beginning of a new era of prosperity. Era names were likewise determined by the court, which carefully considered the auspiciousness and meaning of the characters used, but did not adhere to a strict cycle in the usage of particular characters. The *Hōei* era itself is a good example of this, as it was declared following an earthquake in 1703. The court declared the end of the *Genroku* era (1688-1704), now associated with such misfortune and destruction, and declared the beginning of a new era, *Hōei*, employing characters meaning “eternal” (永, *ei*) and “treasure,” “wealth,” or “prosperity” (宝, *hō*). The *Hōei* era then lasted eight years, until 1711, when Emperor Nakamikado succeeded Emperor Higashiyama, and the era name was changed to *Shōtoku* 正徳. The change of era in this case was declared to mark the auspicious occasion of the new emperor’s enthronement, and the beginning of a new era of Imperial rule. Yoneda Yūsuke 米田雄介. *Rekidai tennō nengō jiten* 歴代天皇年号事典. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003.

envoys” refers not to multiple separate missions sent to Japan from Ryūkyū in this year; rather, it refers to the dual purpose of the 1710 mission, which was sent both to congratulate the new shogun Tokugawa Ienobu on his succession, and to ask for acknowledgment or recognition for a new Ryukyuan king, Shō Eki. Normally, such successions rarely occurred at the same time, and so separate missions would be sent many years apart, each led by a single chief envoy (正使, *seishi*) and a deputy or vice envoy (副使, *fukushi*).⁶³ Due to the dual or combined nature of the 1710 mission, however, it was led by two *seishi*, the “two envoys” of the inscription, each of whom were accompanied by a *fukushi*.

The term “Chūzan” in the inscription was a more formal or official name for the small Okinawan kingdom which conquered its neighbors in the 1420s, uniting the island of Okinawa under its control and establishing what we more commonly refer to as the Ryūkyū Kingdom. The term *nobori*, translated here as “ascending,” was a common term used to refer to travel “up” to the capital, and is still used today in Japan, for example, in the labeling of trains as “*Tokyo nobori*.” Finally, the character for “castle” (城) seen here can be interpreted as a metonym for the shogunal capital, evoking its identity as the center of a military government and as a military city rather than an Imperial capital (都 or 京).⁶⁴

Following the inscription, the depiction of the procession begins with two figures with shaved pates & topknots, black *haori* coats, *hakama* skirts, and a pair of swords each, marking them clearly as samurai. They are labeled explicitly as “*ashigaru*” 足輕 by inscriptions which float nearby. *Ashigaru*, literally meaning “light of foot,” was a term referring to the lowest ranking members of the samurai class, often translated as “footmen” or “foot soldiers.”⁶⁵ Many more *ashigaru* follow this first pair, along with numerous other Japanese figures with shaved pates and wearing short blue robes that expose their legs from roughly mid-thigh down. Most of these blue-robed men wear two swords at their waist, marking them too as samurai; many others, however, carry spears, boxes or baskets in a variety of sizes and shapes and wear but one sword at their waist, indicated by the artist simply by a single thin, straight line. The black-robed *ashigaru*, blue-robed “porters,” and other Japanese figures on foot are all organized

pp. 319-321.

⁶³ *Ryūkyū shisetsu, Edo he Iku!* p. 45.

⁶⁴ Edo did not become an Imperial capital until it became Tokyo in 1868; prior to that, being the seat of a government run by the samurai or “warrior” class, the city was in certain contexts strongly associated with the shogun’s castle (城), a military structure at the center of a castle town, i.e. a military city.

⁶⁵ “*Ashigaru*.” *Encyclopedia of Japan*. Kodansha, 2011. Available online at JapanKnowledge, <http://www.japanknowledge.com>.

either in groupings around figures on horseback, each also named in inscriptions above his head, or in more organized double-file lines between the mounted figures. As in most Japanese handscroll paintings of this kind, the procession faces to the right,⁶⁶ so that as the viewer unrolls the scroll, from right to left in the traditional East Asian manner, she enjoys a similar experience to actually watching the procession pass by.

The majority of the procession as depicted in the scroll consists of individuals of importance mounted on horseback, or riding in a palanquin, each surrounded by a group of *ashigaru*, porters, and Ryukyuan on foot; these figures of importance are interspersed with sections of solely *ashigaru* and porters, often marching single- or double-file. The procession is depicted in a single continuous stream of figures from the beginning of the scroll to the end. In describing and examining the painting, however, it is convenient to divide up the depiction by discussing each mounted (or palanquin-riding) figure, and the figures immediately accompanying them, as an individual group.

The first three mounted figures in the procession are clearly marked as samurai by the pair of swords at their waists, and the *kariginu* hunting jacket they each wear. Being pulled over the head, the *kariginu* hides the prominent V-neck shape otherwise visible on the front of both Japanese and Ryukyuan robes, the result of the way they are wrapped around the body, closed at the front, and tied.⁶⁷ Each of these first three figures is identified by an inscription above their head indicating their rank or title, and their name; all of the mounted or palanquin-riding figures throughout the scroll is identified in this manner. These three samurai, along with two horse minders who appear shortly afterwards, are the only mounted figures in Japanese garb in the first of the two scrolls; the remainder of the mounted and palanquin-riding figures, in either Ryukyuan or Chinese court costume, are Ryukyuan officials, as indicated both by their dress, and by their distinctively Ryukyuan titles.

The first Ryukyuan figure we see is identified as the *gieisei* 儀衛正, the head of the procession's musicians and entertainers.⁶⁸ He is mounted on horseback, and accompanied by a

⁶⁶ Handscroll paintings in which a procession faces to the left are more commonly found in Korean and Chinese works. In these, as the viewer unrolls the scroll, it is like he is walking up alongside the procession, walking up from the tail of the group, up towards the front (the beginning). In handscrolls produced in Japan depicting Korean processions, however, the right-facing orientation is most common. Toby. "Carnival of the Aliens." p. 438.

⁶⁷ See Fig. 1-1, comparing the dress of a samurai official from the beginning of the scroll (left) with that of a Ryukyuan official from the end of the scroll (right).

⁶⁸ Yokoyama. p. 417.

number of samurai in black and brown *haori*, porters in blue, and three other Ryukyuan. Two are men in long robes with long sleeves, and have their hair wrapped up in buns atop their heads; the third is a young man with golden hair ornaments⁶⁹ walking behind the horse. Two of these samurai, as well as many more in later groups in the procession (generally two per group), are labeled as *hokōshi* or *kachi-shi* 歩行士, specifically designating these men as accompanying on foot. The *gieisei* himself, identified as Sakumoto Peechin 佐久本親雲上,⁷⁰ wears the winged hat and long-sleeved robe of a Chinese court official.⁷¹ The Ryukyuan figures are distinguished from the Japanese ones primarily by their clothing, hairstyle, and facial hair. Skin tone is not used for differentiation; Japanese and Ryukyuan figures alike are depicted with the same “peach” pigment hue for their skin tones.

The *gieisei* is followed in the next grouping by six men in red caps and robes, two of whom carry banners which bear the characters 「金鼓」, or “gold drum,” banners which, with this specific inscription, appear quite frequently in Japanese illustrations of the accoutrements of the Ryukyuan envoys. These men are also accompanied by a number of porters and samurai, including four labeled as *hokōshi*. These bannermen appear to be leading the musicians, as would make sense given the presence of the *gieishi*; more men in the same type of red caps and robes follow, blowing long trumpets or banging drums, accompanied by a greater number of samurai and blue-clad porters. This first group of musicians, eighteen red-robed men in all, ends with two men carrying banners bearing images of tigers; these, too, are frequently reproduced in Edo period publications. Both the “gold drum” and tiger banners have fringed edges, a feature seen in Chinese banners of this time as well. However, while Chinese banners or flags were often triangular, or pennant-shaped, depictions of the Ryukyuan processions always show the Ryukyuan banners as being square or rectangular in form.

⁶⁹ Young men who did not yet hold court rank due to their age, and thus did not wear *hachimaki* court caps indicating court rank, generally did their hair in this fashion, with a large topknot, and a large hairpin indicating their family’s status by whether it was made of gold, silver, or copper. “Overview of the Ryūkyūs.” *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion, Volume 6: East Asia*. Oxford University Press, 2010. p. 424.

⁷⁰ Yokoyama Manabu provides a list of members of the mission against which these names/titles can be confirmed. Yokoyama. pp. 479-481; also, “*Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu shisha na haku sakuin*” 琉球国使節使者名簿索引. p13. in Yokoyama.

“*Peechin*” 親雲上 was a mid-ranking title in the Ryukyuan aristocracy; “Sakumoto” is likewise not a personal name, but a placename associated with the title. See: Matsuda Mitsugu. *The Government of the Kingdom of Ryukyu, 1609-1872*. Naha: Yui Publishing, 2001. pp. 203-207.

⁷¹ Valery Garrett. *Chinese Clothing: An Illustrated Guide*. Oxford University Press, 1994. pp. 9-17.

The musicians are followed by another small double-file line of *ashigaru* in black, and two groups of samurai and porters each surrounding a mounted samurai in *kamishimo* (that is, the skirt-like trousers called *hakama*, and triangular *kataginu* overcoat).⁷² They are in turn followed by yet another group of samurai and porters, this time walking along with a riderless horse, labeled by a calligraphic inscription as “horse to be presented [as a gift / as tribute]” 獻上馬, and two Ryukyuan minders, their hair wrapped up in buns. Horses were a very common tribute good given by Ryūkyū to China and to Japan,⁷³ deriving chiefly from Miyako, Yonaguni, and a few other islands which boast native breeds.⁷⁴

The next mounted figure is similarly robed, with the winged cap of a Chinese court official, and Chinese court robe with a *buzi* 補子 rank badge on the front; such embroidered or woven badges served as indications of one’s rank within the Chinese court or military, depending on which birds or animals were depicted.⁷⁵ As an Okinawan official, this figure, identified as Makiya Peechin 真喜屋親雲上, head groom 圉師,⁷⁶ i.e. horse steward, would not have actually served at the Chinese court, so his *buzi* serves a more symbolic purpose, indicating perhaps a sort of honorary rank. He is accompanied, as was Sakumoto Peechin, by five samurai in black *haori*, two *hokōshi* in their *kamishimo*, a number of porters in blue, and three men with obvious facial hair, wearing long-sleeved, long Okinawan-style robes,⁷⁷ their hair up in buns. Throughout the scroll, nearly all of the Ryukyuan figures, including both those on foot and those on horseback, have either mustaches or beards, while all of the Japanese samurai and porters, to a man, appear clean-shaven, a notable difference in fashions and customs.

Makiya Peechin’s group is followed by several more *ashigaru* and porters, two of whom hold up long spears or halberds, and by two men in the red caps and robes, who wield large red squares – possibly fans – on long shafts which they rest on their shoulders, pointing up and back.

⁷² Charles Dunn. *Everyday Life in Traditional Japan*. Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 1969. p. 21.

⁷³ Angela Schottenhammer. “Horses in Late Imperial China and Maritime East Asia.” in *Pferde in Asien: Geschichte, Handel und Kultur: Horses in Asia: History, Trade and Culture*, ed. Angela Schottenhammer et al., pp. 229-252. Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2009. pp. 230, 250-251.

⁷⁴ “Uma” 馬. *Okinawa Encyclopedia* 沖縄大百科事典. vol. 1. Naha: Okinawa Times, 1983. p. 312.

“Kōba” 貢馬. *Okinawa Encyclopedia*. vol. 2. p. 78.

“Miyako uma” ミヤコウマ. *Okinawa Encyclopedia*. vol. 3. pp. 584-585.

“Yonaguni uma.” ヨナグニウマ. *Okinawa Encyclopedia*. vol. 3. p. 810.

⁷⁵ “Overview: Han Chinese.” in *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. p. 112.

⁷⁶ Name and title (post) confirmed by consultation of Yokoyama. pp. 417, 480.

⁷⁷ *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. pp. 421-424, 430.

Yagi Peechin 屋宜親雲上, one of the mission's *shōkanshi* 掌翰史, or secretaries,⁷⁸ who handled all the mission's diplomatic correspondence,⁷⁹ is the next mounted figure in the procession, wearing the same type of Chinese-style garb, and accompanied by the same arrangement of three Ryukyuan men, clustered close behind his horse, and a total of seventeen samurai and porters grouped around him. The Ryukyuan robes are a very different shape from samurai garb, in that they fall nearly all the way to the ground, and feature very wide, long sleeves into which the man's hands are tucked and hidden. These robes are distinguished further by the boldly red strip of cloth along the deep V-neck collar and front of the garment, the result of the way Ryukyuan robes were typically worn, with the collar being turned down, revealing the inner lining.⁸⁰

After a group of fifteen *ashigaru* in black *haori* marching in two lines, we now finally come to the chief ambassador, or *seishi* 正使, Prince Misato 美里王子.⁸¹ He is preceded by two bearded (and hence, presumably Ryukyuan) men in red cap and robe, one of whom lifts a large, red ceremonial umbrella; the Prince is accompanied by nineteen samurai, two of whom are labeled as horse minders 馬廻, as were the two mounted samurai who followed the musicians. The ambassador rides in an open, bright red Chinese-style palanquin or sedan chair,⁸² presumably either painted or lacquered wood, with a four-sided curving roof, and carried by twelve porters in blue garb. The ambassador is clad in the Chinese court garb seen on other Ryukyuan figures earlier in the procession, and is accompanied by eleven men in Ryukyuan robes, eight of whom wear the squarish *hachimaki* court cap or turban, which though depicted in black here, would have been a sign of court rank, depending on its color.⁸³

⁷⁸ 「祐筆＝掌翰史」 Yokoyama. p. 417.

⁷⁹ *Edo nobori*. p. 29.

⁸⁰ *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. pp. 423-424.

⁸¹ The title or rank of *ōji* 王子, translated here as “prince,” does not necessarily indicate a prince of the royal lineage. Sons of the royal lineage were indeed called *ōji*, but they shared the same status in many respects (outside of line of succession) with those lords, or *anji* 按司, who were promoted to the rank of “prince” in recognition of their service. Matsuda. p. 203.

⁸² Prince Misato's conveyance is explicitly described as 「轎」 in a handscroll painting (Fig. 1-2) in the collection of the British Museum depicting the same 1710 event. This Chinese character is commonly translated as “palanquin,” but refers more specifically to this open type of palanquin used chiefly in China and Korea, often called a “sedan chair,” in contrast to the closed, hanging type more commonly used in Japan, in which the Ryukyuan *fukushi* (vice-envoys) are seen riding. This Japanese-style palanquin is more commonly referred to as a *kago* 「駕籠」.

“*Kyō*” きょう [ケウ] 【轎】. *Nihon kokugo daijiten* 日本国語大辞典. Shogakukan. Available online at JapanKnowledge, <http://www.japanknowledge.com>.

⁸³ *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. p. 424.

A mixture of samurai, Japanese porters in blue, and Ryukyuan porters follow, carrying a variety of boxes and baskets, including some in bright red, which might be presumed to be lacquered wooden containers. The Ryukyuan porters, including three who carry long spears or umbrellas, have buns on their heads, and mustaches & beards on their faces, though their clothing, cinched at the waist, and with narrower, shorter, more manageable sleeves, is different from that of the Ryukyuan men directly accompanying the officials, and clearly better suited to the manual labor in which they are engaged. A larger group of nine samurai and twenty-eight porters in blue follow next, walking double-file, guiding two riderless horses. Some of these porters carry baskets, and others carry spears.

The procession continues in a similar fashion as before, with repetition of similar patterns of groupings of samurai, porters, and Ryukyuan officials. The next mounted official is another secretary (*shōkanshi*), Miyagusuku Peechin 宮城親雲上, followed by a second chief ambassador, or *seishi*, Prince Tomigusuku 豊見城王子, whose immediate entourage mirrors that of Prince Misato. He rides in a similar roofed red palanquin, open on the sides, and carried by numerous Japanese porters in blue. He is preceded by two Ryukyuan in red cap and robe, one of whom lifts a large ceremonial red umbrella; a large number of samurai and Ryukyuan officials, most of whom wear court caps (*hachimaki*), surround the palanquin, and are immediately followed next by three Ryukyuan carrying a spear, a halberd, and an umbrella. While the exact meaning in the context of the Ryukyuan embassies is unclear, in the case of the *sankin kōtai* or “alternate attendance” processions of Japanese *daimyō* (feudal/regional lords) to Edo, the number of umbrellas, spears or halberds, traveling chests, and certain other objects included in the procession were elements in a complex iconographic system, signifying the status of the *daimyō* and his domain. For those well-versed in the significance of these symbols, *sankin kōtai* “processions were texts that could be read, more or less precisely,” allowing the observer to “then rank the lords.”⁸⁴ Members of houses⁸⁵ directly related to the shogun’s own Tokugawa clan were preceded and followed immediately by a total of four spears, while the most powerful lords not directly related to the Tokugawa – such as the lords of the Shimazu clan of Satsuma which claimed dominion over Ryūkyū – were permitted three (two before the

⁸⁴ Vaporis. *Tour of Duty*. p. 97.

⁸⁵ That is, a samurai clan or family. While there is potential for controversy over the choice to describe samurai houses as such, where other scholars might prefer the terms “families” or “clans,” I take no stance on the issue in this essay, and use these terms interchangeably.

daimyō, and one behind).⁸⁶ In the Sakamaki-Hawley *Edo nobori* scroll, we see each of the two *seishi* immediately preceded by an umbrella and no spears, and followed by one umbrella (folded up and carried like a spear or pole, over the shoulder), one spear, and one halberd, though many more spears appear in other portions of the procession. It is unclear how this relates to the system seen in the *sankin kōtai* processions (four spears for the Tokugawa, three spears for the Shimazu), or if the same iconographic system should be considered applicable at all.

The two *seishi* come roughly in the middle of the procession, and the middle of the scroll, preceded, as we saw, by musicians, the chief horse steward, the two secretaries, and a great many *ashigaru*, other samurai, and porters, carrying boxes, baskets, chests, and spears. They are followed by the first of two vice-envoys, or *fukushi* 副使, Tomimori *ueekata* 富盛親方,⁸⁷ who rides in a plainer, Japanese-style palanquin, constructed primarily of what we might presume to be unpainted, unlacquered wood. Unlike the Chinese-style palanquins of the *seishi*, which rise up above the carrying poles, recalling the idea of a throne, or perhaps that of a carriage with poles instead of wheels, the palanquin of the *fukushi* hangs below the carrying pole, like a basket.⁸⁸ His immediate entourage is smaller than that of either of the *seishi*, as we might expect; it takes only four men to carry the palanquin, and the five or so Ryukyuan accompanying the vice-envoy do not wear court caps; he is followed not by an umbrella, a halberd, and a spear, but only by a single umbrella.

The next figure of note is the other vice-envoy, Yoza *ueekata* 與座親方, who rides in the same type of palanquin, and is accompanied by the same pattern of entourage, followed, as Tomimori is, by a riderless horse, which we might assume to be his. The horse is followed in turn by the two *sangikan* 贊儀官, Shikenbaru Peechin 志堅原親雲上 and Aragusuku Peechin 新城親雲上, who would have been responsible for all ceremonial activities performed by their countrymen on this mission,⁸⁹ and by Eda Peechin 江田親雲上, the *gakusei* 楽正. In contrast to the *gieisei*, who oversaw the street musicians, the *gakusei* was in charge of the chamber

⁸⁶ Vaporis. *Tour of Duty*. p. 97.

⁸⁷ *Ueekata* (J: *oyakata*) was a Ryukyuan rank/title above *peechin*, but below *ōji* (Prince). Kerr. pp. 188-189; Matsuda p. 204.

⁸⁸ For descriptions of the Japanese palanquin, or *kago*, see: William Deal. *Handbook to Life in Medieval and Early Modern Japan*. Oxford University Press, 2007. p. 327. "Kago" 駕籠. *Encyclopedia of Japan*.

⁸⁹ Yokoyama. "Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu shisha na haku sakuin." pp. 9, 13.; *Edo nobori*. p. 28.

musicians,⁹⁰ who would perform indoors, seated, on various occasions during the journey, as well as in audience before the shogun. The *sangikan* and *gakusei* are each accompanied by a group much like those accompanying the previous officials, consisting of samurai, porters, and four men in long Ryukyuan robes and hairbuns.

The *gakusei* Eda Peechin is followed by eight *gakudōji* 楽童子 on horseback, each with their own group of samurai, porters, and Ryukyuan men accompanying them. The *gakudōji*, boys roughly 15-18 years of age, were among the chief entertainers in the embassy, performing music and dances.⁹¹ The title/rank of each of the *gakudōji* is inscribed above his head; all are identified as *satunushi* 里之子, a rank below *peechin*, but which marks them as belonging to the class of fief-holders most eligible for promotion to *peechin*.⁹² In contrast to most of the other mounted Ryukyuan in the procession, who wear Chinese court costume, the *gakudōji* wear Ryukyuan robes, each in a different color, their hair tied up in buns and decorated with golden hair ornaments.

Fourteen *shisan* 使贊, who served a function analogous to the Japanese *yoriki* 与力 (captains of the guard, or patrol commanders⁹³) bring up the rear, along with one *page*, or *koshō* 小姓, identified as Bin *satunushi* 保榮茂里之子.⁹⁴ They too wear Ryukyuan robes and *hachimaki* court caps / turbans, rather than the Ming Chinese-style robes and hats worn by officials earlier in the procession.

The scroll ends with the last of the porters who accompany the final *shisan*, and a seal reading *Hōrei bunko* 宝玲文庫, or “Hawley Collection.” This seal is that of Mr. Frank Hawley, who owned this scroll before, shortly after his death in 1961, the scroll was acquired by the University of Hawai‘i along with much of the rest of his collection of Okinawa-related materials.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 417.; *Edo nobori*. p. 29.

⁹¹ *Edo nobori*. p. 28.

⁹² “Satunushi” 里之子. *Okinawa konpakuto jiten* 沖縄コンパクト時点. Posted on Ryūkyū Shimpō website, <http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/page-174.html>. Viewed 12 November 2011.

Matsuda. pp. 204-205.

⁹³ Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 417.

“Yoriki and dōshin.” *Encyclopedia of Japan*.

⁹⁴ Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 481.

⁹⁵ University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library. “History of Sakamaki/Hawley Collection.” Posted on University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library website, http://www.Hawai'i.edu/asiaref/okinawa/collections/sakamaki_hawley/resources/history1.html. Viewed 17 September 2011.

One of the many stylistic elements evident in this painting is a simple and generic depiction of faces, which are not at all indicative of the actual features of any given individual; this is combined with, as mentioned earlier, an element of verisimilitude in the somewhat disorganized fashion in which the figures are depicted. The members of the procession face in a variety of directions, rather than adhering, unnaturally, to a strict marching formation. This can be seen, for example, in a segment of the scroll depicting three of the *gakudōji* (Fig. 1-6). Each of their three horses are depicted with their heads in different positions: one with its head lowered, perhaps looking downwards, one with its head up higher, looking forward, and one with its head twisted backwards. Two of the riders are shown in three-quarters view, while the third, in green, is seen in profile. Likewise, some of the figures on foot are seen in profile, and others in a three-quarters view, facing outwards from the scroll, towards the viewer, while a few look the other way, their backs visible to the viewer of the scroll. In another example, a few of the *shisan* guardsmen towards the very end of the scroll similarly turn backwards, looking behind them, or turn to face the viewer. In this way, the painting creates something of a sense of realistic three-dimensional space, with a depth of field into which (or out of which) the figures gaze. This variation in facing and pose, along with a degree of variation in the color of figures' garments, brings a degree of looseness and informality, and thus a greater sense of reality to what is otherwise a very formulaic painting. We might expect an official record painting such as this to depict all the figures marching strictly in formation, "in a grand, stately manner," as was the case in handscroll paintings of *sankin kōtai* processions prepared by artists in the employ of the *daimyō*.⁹⁶ Such a depiction would help convey to viewers the formality, importance, impressiveness, and elite status of this event, an event which serves as a display of the power of the *daimyō*, and the military discipline of his men. Yet, in this 1710 *Ryūyū Edo nobori* scroll, the artist has opted to depict figures marching in a far less strictly organized fashion, creating a more naturalistic scene of people behaving individually; they are distracted, looking in different directions, perhaps talking to one another, possibly falling in and out of formation, falling behind and catching up, and looking around, taking in the sights around them.

Yokoyama Manabu. "Frank Hawley and his Book Seals." trans. Tokiko Bazzell. Posted on University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library website, http://www.Hawai'i.edu/asiaref/okinawa/collections/sakamaki_hawley/resources/bookseals1.html. Viewed 17 September 2011.

⁹⁶ Vaporis. *Tour of Duty*. p. 90.

This informality and disorganization leads us to believe it likely that the Hawley scrolls were painted commercially, or otherwise by a nonofficial artist, and were not prepared for the shogunate as official records of the event. This being the case, one might question the reliability of the scrolls in representing the *Edo nobori* procession with any accuracy. Yet, through comparison to paintings produced by Ryukyuan painters depicting the court dress and other accoutrements of their own culture, as well as comparison to actual historical artifacts, such as *hachimaki* caps, golden hairpins, and *bingata* robes, we can confirm that these scrolls depict Ryukyuan court costume, and other accoutrements carried in the processions, with considerable accuracy.⁹⁷ The names or titles given for each of the Ryukyuan officials are also seen to be accurate, through comparison with the listings provided by Yokoyama Manabu.⁹⁸

Meanwhile, congruence or agreement between different paintings of the same event helps to confirm the reliability of each painting. A handscroll painting by Kanō Shunko, today in the collection of the British Museum, and depicting the same 1710 Ryukyuan procession, accords with the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll, for example, in the names of the officials, the style of their garments and modes of conveyance, the order in which each official or other groups of figures appears in the procession, and the number of figures in each section of the procession, even as Shunko's scroll differs in artistic style, and in medium, being painted on silk rather than on paper. Shunko's scroll is also a bit larger – 34 cm high as compared to the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll's 27 cm – and quite a bit more detailed in its depictions. Examining a section of the scroll depicting the vice-envoy Yoza ueekata (Figs. 1-9, 1-10), we quickly see that elements which are described in solid fields of color in the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll, such as the figures' garments, are in Shunko's scroll depicted with visible patterning, and family crests (J: *kamon* 家紋) which are nearly large enough and finely depicted enough to be identified. The faces are still quite generic, but do differ, and are fairly lifelike, bearing different facial expressions. Swords, which are rendered simply as single brushstrokes by the anonymous author of the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll,

⁹⁷ See Fig. 1-3. Note the facial hair, hairbun, *hachimaki* cap/turban, and the shape, length and overall form of the robes, conforming to what is depicted by the Japanese artist who painted the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll.

See also Figs. 1-4, 1-5, examples of *hachimaki* court caps, and Fig. 1-7 for examples of musical instruments. Examples of *bingata* robes can be found in:

Shō-ke keishō Ryūkyū ōchō bunka isan 尚家繼承琉球王朝文化遺産. Naha: Ryūkyū Shimpō-sha, 1993. pp. 34-66.

⁹⁸ Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 479-481.

are described more fully by Shunko, who paints in the wrapping of the hilt, the handguard (J: *tsuba*), and the patterning or decoration on the scabbard.

That said, historian Ronald Toby, comparing the 1710 Sakamaki-Hawley scroll to one depicting a Korean embassy to Edo the following year, suggests that the artist may have created or followed a sort of template for the lower-ranking Japanese escorts, filling in the higher-ranking Japanese figures, along with the details pertaining to a Ryukyuan embassy (i.e. rather than a Korean one), and accurate to this 1710 embassy in particular. He notes the “virtually identical costumes and poses, and [that the lower-ranking Japanese escorts] carry identical paraphernalia” in the 1710 painting of the Ryukyuan embassy and the 1711 depiction of a Korean one.⁹⁹ This pattern of using a standard template and adapting it to specific cases by filling in the relevant details was quite common in traditional East Asian painting. To take just one example, a pair of *byōbu* (folding screen) paintings depicting the enthronement ceremony of Empress Meishō (r. 1629-43) and the associated procession have been identified as having been, quite likely, the model for a number of later “record paintings” by court painters of the Kanō school depicting other Imperial Court events using an almost identical composition.¹⁰⁰

Indeed, there are some glaring differences between the Sakamaki-Hawley handscroll and the British Museum scroll, which ostensibly depict exactly the same event. These differences could be the results of adaptation from a template; were the two artists truly aiming for accuracy of depiction, and drawing from life, rather than from a template, it should be safe to assume that such differences would be far fewer. Such differences can be seen, for example, in the differing colors of the figures’ clothing, though the two scrolls agree for the most part, for example, on the number of figures of each type (Ryukyuan, *ashigaru*, and porters) in each grouping. The scrolls also accord in their depiction of the vice-envoy or *fukushi*, Yoza ueekata, riding in a Japanese-style palanquin, carried by roughly three men in front and three in back, and accompanied by five or six men in Ryukyuan robes with their hair up in buns, none of them wearing *hachimaki*. The *fukushi* is also depicted wearing a court robe in the Ming style in both scrolls. However, in the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll, the court robe is grey, while in the British Museum scroll it is red; Kanō Shunko depicted the porters’ jackets in black, and the garments of the *ashigaru* in a variety of colors, while the anonymous painter of the Sakamaki-Hawley scroll, as described above, clothed the porters in blue, and the *ashigaru*, for the most part, in black.

⁹⁹ Toby. “Carnival of the Aliens.” p. 436.

¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth Lillehoj. *Art and Palace Politics in Early Modern Japan 1580s-1680s*. Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2011. pp. 200-203.

This discrepancy seems odd, given that color had great significance in court costume, banners, and other status symbols in both Japan and Ryūkyū. Court rank, for example, was represented in Ryūkyū chiefly by the color of one's *hachimaki*; color bore a similar significance in court caps in ancient Japan,¹⁰¹ and in the *buzi* and certain other elements of Chinese court costume.¹⁰² Thus, it comes as a surprise to see that one artist or the other (or both) was not careful to accurately convey the colors worn by the figures in the procession. Perhaps this is the result of preparing, and then later relying on, monochrome sketches, rather than painting more directly from life; or, perhaps, the painters, and their patrons, were interested chiefly in the type of garments worn, and the size and arrangement of each grouping within the procession, and not in colors or certain other details. If either or both of these works are indeed nonofficial portrayals, there is the possibility that the painter simply took liberties with the choice of colors, in order to serve his own aesthetic preference, or that of his patron. Whatever the explanation, the difference in color remains a curiosity, given all the other concordances between the two works.

If we are to consider the Hawley scrolls to be privately commissioned or commercially purchased works, then their purpose, and their audience, becomes quite different from the "record paintings" produced by shogunal court painters. Beyond a patron's potential interest in Ryūkyū on an intellectual level, these colorful depictions of foreigners in strange costume likely also served as sources of entertainment. Certainly, they remain appealing and entertaining depictions for us today, capturing something of the positive energy and carnival atmosphere of the event itself.

Yet, regardless of whether these scrolls were appreciated primarily as a source of entertainment, they conveyed a powerful discursive message: that of Ryukyuan subordination. The idea of Ryukyuan subordination to the power and Confucian moral authority of Satsuma, and by extension the shogunate, does not appear in the details of the painting; it is not seen in the style of the Ryukyuan's dress, nor in the poses of their bodies, nor in any other figural or compositional symbolism. However, anyone viewing this scroll, and understanding anything about the surrounding context, would have understood that the Ryukyuan envoys depicted here journeying "up to Edo," as it states in the opening inscription, are doing so in order to pay

¹⁰¹ Louis Frédéric. "Kan'i jūnikai no sei." *Japan Encyclopedia*, trans. Käthe Roth. Harvard University Press, 2005. p. 471.

¹⁰² Alexandra Bonds. *Beijing Opera Costumes: The Visual Communication of Character and Culture*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. p. 147.

homage and tribute to the shogun, and that they do so as representatives of a king who is a vassal to the lord of Satsuma.

The *Edo nobori* processions were themselves the strongest and most direct vehicle for conveying the idea of Ryukyuan subordination, but the processions were ephemeral; each only occurred once, and did not remain in existence to be seen. Their discursive impacts derived from the occasion of the actual procession, but those impacts could only be maintained in the long term by remembering and referring to that occasion, acts of memory in which scrolls such as these served an important function, even if they were not produced at the direction of any official authority. Ronald Toby discusses these discursively-reinforced conceptions of shogunate power and legitimacy, and of Ryukyuan submission, at length in his monograph *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan*, along with the ways in which the shogunate made use of Ryukyuan and other foreign embassies to promote widespread belief in such conceptions.¹⁰³

This concept is a crucial one in early modern Japanese understandings of Ryūkyū, its people, and their relationship to “Japan”; that is, the relationship of Ryūkyū and its people to the shogunate, and to all the people under the shogunate’s authority. Yet, strictly in terms of style, composition, and iconographic content, perhaps the chief significance of the 1710 *Edo nobori* scroll paintings in the Sakamaki-Hawley Collection lies in what these works convey about the degree of accuracy in early modern Japanese understandings of the foreign, and of the Ryūkyū Kingdom and its people more specifically. Through comparison with extant artifacts, and with depictions by Ryukyuan artists, we have discovered that the Hawley scrolls, as well as those by Kanō Shunko in the British Museum, display a high degree of accuracy in their depictions of Ryukyuan costume, accoutrements, and the appearance otherwise of the members of the Ryukyuan embassy. The painters of these handscrolls were quite possibly commoners with little access to official information about Ryūkyū, nor opportunity to interact with Ryukyuan people any more directly than by observing the processions from a distance. Yet, nevertheless, it is clear that they display an intimate knowledge of the various styles of Japanese, Ryukyuan, Chinese and Korean costume, accoutrements, etc., neither conflating nor confusing Ryukyuan style with that of other cultures. The high degree of accuracy in these scrolls is, thus, evidence not only of accurate knowledge on the part of commoner painters, but also of the viewers of their paintings, and thus of a certain portion of the populace at large.

¹⁰³ Toby. *State and Diplomacy*.

Chapter II: Illustrated Books & Popular Discourse

In a page from an 1836 “Illustrated Guide to the Peoples of the 42 Countries”¹⁰⁴ (Fig. 2-1), a figure wearing a turban and a long gown is labeled as representing Ryūkyū. But his outfit does not quite resemble actual historical Ryukyuan or even Chinese garb. Ryukyuan *hachimaki* court caps were indeed wrapped around the head, and thus might be conceived of as “turbans”; however, unlike the round, bulging, ball-like turban depicted in this illustration, Ryukyuan *hachimaki* were made of pieces of cloth wrapped around one another to form the sides of the cap, perpendicular to a flat top.¹⁰⁵ In another popular publication, a fold-out map of the world illustrating “peoples of the ten-thousand countries” (*Bankoku jinbutsu zue*, date unknown; Fig. 2-2),¹⁰⁶ Ryūkyū is represented not by people in the typical costume worn by aristocrats, townspeople, or peasants in any everyday context; rather, Ryūkyū is represented by figures wearing robes and feathered hats like those Japanese illustrators might have seen Ryukyuan musicians wearing in the *Edo nobori* processions.¹⁰⁷

This chapter will examine popular depictions of Ryukyuan subjects in woodblock-printed books, revealing conceptions and misconceptions held by members of the urban and provincial Japanese masses regarding the Kingdom of Ryūkyū and its people in the 18th and early 19th centuries. As we shall see, there were many publications which provided their popular audience with rather accurate information about Ryūkyū. Yet, there were also many which did not reflect so accurate an understanding of Ryukyuan cultural identity; unlike the scroll painting discussed in the previous chapter, many publications conveyed incorrect information about the style of Ryukyuan dress and accoutrements, or about Ryukyuan history and culture otherwise.

As touched upon above, Keiko Suzuki has argued that, in early modern Japan, popular conceptions of foreigners tended to conflate Others into a single, “*inter-national*” category known as *Tōjin* 唐人. The term, which might be translated as “Chinese people” or, more literally, to “people of Tang [Dynasty China],” was frequently used to refer not only to Chinese, but to

¹⁰⁴ *Shijūnikoku jinbutsu zuzetsu* 四十二国人物図説. 1836. Okinawa Prefectural Archives #T00015112B.

Image reproduced in *Edo nobori*. p. 38.

¹⁰⁵ See Figs. 1-4, 1-5.

¹⁰⁶ From *Bankoku jinbutsu zue* 万国人物図絵. Okinawa Prefectural Archives #T00016116B.

Image reproduced in *Edo nobori*. p. 39.

¹⁰⁷ This particular type of feathered hat does not appear in the 1710 Sakamaki-Hawley scroll, but it does appear in a 1764 scroll today in the collection of the Okinawa Prefectural Museum. See Fig. 2-3.

“foreigners” more generally, equating a general conception of foreignness with Chinese-ness.¹⁰⁸ Suzuki writes that “different groups of Others were made interchangeable, or homogenized, in imagery,”¹⁰⁹ and describes, among other examples

a print by Utagawa Toyoharu (1735-1814) from the 1770s, [which] depicts [Watōnai] and his Chinese retinue in procession; the latter wear so-called *tōjin* beards, plumed hats, long jackets, and shoes, and carry trumpets, drums, and banners – all standardized *tōjin* paraphernalia. The print also captures a Japanese-style masted-vessel, a sedan chair (used by Korean and Ryukyuan envoys), and a tiger as a mount for the hero (for the Japanese, an animal that was typical of East Asia, especially Korea). A supposed Chinese palace in the background shows a conflation of Chinese and Western architecture elements with a Dutch national flag flying overhead. Furthermore, in [the encyclopedia] *Wakan sansai zue*, frilled collars or sleeves [like those worn by Europeans] are used to depict the Ezo (Ainu), as well as peoples of Pagan (now Burma), Srivijaya (now Sumatra), and a few other places.¹¹⁰

It cannot be denied that there are many examples of *ukiyo-e* prints and other popular publications which purport to depict a specific type of foreigner, and yet in their depiction reflect this conflation of the Other into a single, homogenized form which we might call the *Tōjin*. However, examination of a selection of Edo period woodblock-printed books reveals that in many popular publications depicting Ryūkyū or its people, this was not the case. Rather, these materials indicate that popular audiences in fact had a relatively solid, if somewhat misinformed, conception of Ryūkyū and its people. Some of the materials surveyed mistakenly portray the architectural styles, court costume, hairstyles, and other aspects of Ryukyuan culture in a manner far more similar to those of China than to genuine Ryukyuan forms; however, nowhere in the materials surveyed do illustrations reflect a conflation of Ryukyuan identity entirely with that of a generic foreigner, incorporating elements of Korean, Portuguese, Dutch, and Ainu costume or accoutrements, as Suzuki describes.

Popular Publishing

Before discussing these materials, however, we must consider the context within which they were produced and consumed, as well as the validity of the extrapolation of discursively disseminated and widely held attitudes and conceptions from individual publications.

¹⁰⁸ Suzuki. pp. 85-87.

Toby. “Three Realms.”

¹⁰⁹ Suzuki. p. 83.

¹¹⁰ Suzuki. p. 94.

Popular publishing took off in the Edo period, with 7,800 distinct titles listed in an Edo publishers' list in 1696,¹¹¹ and a great many more titles published over the remaining 150 or so years of the Tokugawa era, many of which were likely released in print runs of upwards of a thousand copies each.¹¹² More than ninety different titles directly pertaining to Ryūkyū were published over the course of the period,¹¹³ along with many more of related interest, such as guides to the peoples of the world which included sections on the people of Ryūkyū. Publishing was most active in Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto, but took place in other cities across the archipelago as well. Books circulated widely, along with other materials, as traveling booklenders and booksellers, along with merchants, pilgrims, and travelers of other sorts, transported them to provincial cities and remote villages throughout nearly the entire Japanese archipelago. Such materials were consumed by people in nearly all walks of life; the literacy rate in Tokugawa Japan was quite high compared to that of most other societies at that time.¹¹⁴ The illiterate too can be said to have shared in the same body of knowledge, by looking at the numerous illustrations typically present, and by having books read to them.

The widespread availability and consumption of printed media was among several developments which contributed in the early modern period to the emergence of a shared body of knowledge among people across the Japanese archipelago, to a stronger degree, and in a

¹¹¹ Mary Elizabeth Berry. "Was Early Modern Japan Culturally Integrated?" *Modern Asian Studies* 31:3 (1997). p. 548.

¹¹² Henry Smith. "The History of the Book in Edo and Paris." in *Edo & Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era*, eds. James McClain, John Merriman and Ugawa Kaoru, pp. 332-352. Cornell University Press, 1994. p. 343.

¹¹³ Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 185.

¹¹⁴ The most often cited figures for the literacy rate in Tokugawa Japan are 40% male literacy and 15% for women. Kornicki. *The Book in Japan*. pp. 275-276.

Herbert Passin estimates 40-50% male literacy, and argues for a high rate of literacy throughout all levels of society, on the basis of how essential literacy was for social success.

Herbert Passin. *Society and Education in Japan*. Kodansha, 1982. pp. 47-49.

Peter Kornicki and others have pointed out, however, that there are considerable issues with these figures, and much has been written on the extreme difficulties of obtaining more accurate estimates. See for example, Peter Kornicki. "Literacy Revisited." *Monumenta Nipponica* 56:3 (Autumn 2001), pp. 381-395.

Richard Rubinger, meanwhile, suggests based on circumstantial evidence that "perhaps 50 percent of the farming population or even more" (p. 41) throughout the country, may have been literate. He argues that village headmen in particular would have had to be literate to at some extent, in order to perform the tasks required of them. They were required to calculate taxes paid by the village, to keep records of tax payments and other matters, to communicate with other villages and with superior authorities, and to otherwise manage village administration. Emphasizing the existence of *terakoya* ("temple schools"), domain schools, and other educational institutions, as well as even more informal modes of education, he argues for the possibility of a rather considerable portion of the rural population having had access to the opportunity to learn at least the very fundamental basics of reading and writing.

Richard Rubinger. *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2007. pp. 22-43ff.

more widespread manner, than in earlier periods. “However disparate their subjects and readers, writers came to assume a core learning – ... a cultural literacy – that ranged across the history, institutions, and mundane civility of *Nihon*. They began, too, to conflate cultural literacy with membership in a collectivity conscious of itself – a ... ‘national knowledge.’”¹¹⁵ Readers across the archipelago, in major cities, provincial towns, and remote villages came to share with one another a common body of knowledge, something we might call “cultural capital” or “national knowledge,” drawn from the works of those writers (and illustrators). This phenomenon was strengthened by the wealth of Edo period publications which drew quite heavily from one another, resulting in considerable commonality between materials, conveying the same discursive content, repackaged.¹¹⁶

Many of these publications served, whether explicitly as guidebooks, or in the guise of fiction, as descriptions of the great cities, certain provinces, the archipelago as a whole, or of foreign lands. One example of such a work is Ihara Saikaku’s 1688 *Nihon eitaigura* 日本永代蔵. Through the conceit of a series of humorous fictional narratives, Saikaku gives readers a tour of a number of places throughout the archipelago, and reflects a conception of *Nihon* as a whole, as a socio-cultural and economic entity, if not a political, geographical one. As Saikaku’s characters travel the country, the reader is introduced to a great variety of places, from Dewa province in the north to Nagasaki in the south, along with the major economic and cultural centers of Ise, Ōtsu, Sakai, Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo. Saikaku describes these places, and many others, at times in rather extensive detail, down to the names of the shops on either side of the street in a given neighborhood, alongside mentions or descriptions of famous sites throughout his characters’ journeys. *Nihon eitaigura* is one of many Edo period works of which large sections were copied or adapted by later authors and publishers, who then re-disseminated the discursive content of the 1688 original in new publications. The ideas and impressions of what a given place was like, or which aspects of it were worth noting, as described by Saikaku, were in this manner reiterated numerous times over, influencing not only readers of his own time, but those of later centuries as well, over a large geographical span. Readers (and others) across the archipelago, informed by the same self-referencing body of materials as one another, were thus

¹¹⁵ Berry. *Japan in Print*. p. 211.

¹¹⁶ This phenomenon is quite evident in Yokoyama’s survey of books on Ryūkyū, and in Jurgis Elisonas’ essay on Edo guidebooks. See: Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. pp. 185-247; Jurgis Elisonas. “Notorious Places: A Brief Excursion into the Narrative Topography of Early Edo.” in *Edo & Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era*, ed. James McClain, John Merriman and Ugawa Kaoru, pp. 253-291. Cornell University Press, 1994.

able to join one another in a shared set of conceptions of a singular entity called *Nihon*, as well as in their conceptions of foreign peoples and places.

Of course, the archipelago remained rather culturally diverse from one region to another in the Edo period, as it remains today, with festivals, regional dialects, local specialty foods, and other local specialty products differing from one region to another. A great many works from the period, including Saikaku's *Nihon eitaigura*, make extensive references to defining features or local specialty goods of various locales, such as Ise crabs, Nara saké, and the firearms for which the port of Sakai was famous.¹¹⁷ As one scholar writes, "even highly educated people had very malleable notions of what it meant to call oneself 'Japanese.'"¹¹⁸ Yet, that this diversity existed within Tokugawa Japan does not negate the conceptualization at that time of a self-contained "Japan" any more so than it does today. The archipelago can still be said to have become more culturally integrated, or unified, in the 18th-19th centuries than ever before, in many respects.¹¹⁹ And it can still be said to have been united in a conception, whatever form that may have taken, of a singular, unified entity known as *Nihon*.

This regional diversity must be understood within the context of an appreciation, very much prevalent at the time, of the distinction between "Japan" (though it contained much regional diversity) and the foreign. While people were certainly aware of difference within the archipelago, they also conceived of a greater difference between "Japan," and that which was decidedly "non-Japanese," or outside of "Japan." This is evident in the terminology used to refer to places within these two conceptual categories. For a native of Edo period Japan, other provinces or *han* (daimyō domains), such as Satsuma in the south, or Matsumae in the north, were *takoku* 他国 ("another land"),¹²⁰ while places such as Ryūkyū, Korea, or Holland were referred to (among other terms) as *ikoku* 異国 ("foreign land"). This distinction was well-

¹¹⁷ Berry. *Japan in Print*. p. 216.

¹¹⁸ Marcia Yonemoto. *Mapping Early Modern Japan*. University of California Press, 2003. p. 1.

¹¹⁹ Chris Uhlenbeck and Marije Jansen. *Hiroshige: Shaping the Image of Japan*. Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2008. p. 10.; Yonemoto. p. 4.

¹²⁰ The meaning of the character 国 is complex, especially in this period. I use the translation "land" here in order to clarify and emphasize the contrast/comparison between "another land" and "[a] foreign land." However, the character can also be translated as "country," "province," or "kingdom," and can sometimes refer to one's village, town, or small local region otherwise. Mark Ravina elaborates on the multivalent meanings of the character in: Mark Ravina. *Land and Lordship*. pp. 13, 29-34.; Mark Ravina. "State-Building and Political Economy in Early-Modern Japan." *Journal of Asian Studies* 54:4 (1995), pp. 997-1022.

established as early as the very beginning of the Tokugawa era, if not earlier, and is seen consistently throughout both official and popular writings from the period.¹²¹

Furthermore, works such as *Nihon eitaigura*, almost without exception, even as they highlight diversity from one locale to another, also describe each locale in relation to the whole of *Nihon*. In *Nihon eitaigura*, Saikaku explicitly describes each of the disparate locations his characters visit as, for example, the foremost shipping port in *Nihon*, the province of the gods, or the place where “all the provinces [of *Nihon*] rub shoulders.”¹²² In doing so, and through frequent references to “the customs of *Nihon*,” “the leading merchants in *Nihon*,” “the sharpest men in *Nihon*,” and “the commerce of *Nihon*,”¹²³ along with the very title of the book itself, *Nihon eitaigura*, Saikaku acknowledges and conveys to his readers a conception of *Nihon* as a given socio-cultural and economic entity.

As we can see from the use of terms such as *takoku* and *ikoku*, it was thus not only through recognizing in distant and culturally diverse provinces something definable as “Japaneseness,” but also through defining something seen in, for example, Ryūkyū, as “foreignness,” or as “beyond Japan,” that conceptions of “Japan” (*Nihon*)¹²⁴ were shaped. Ronald Toby argues that Japanese identity began to emerge in the 16th-17th centuries through “processes of imagining an increasing variety of excluded Others, peoples and creatures defined as ‘not Japan’ and ‘non-Japanese’ even before there was full internal agreement upon where Japan was and who was Japanese.”¹²⁵ He contrasts this view with that of Benedict Anderson, who he describes as “articulating a notion of the nation as a community imagined [exclusively, or primarily,] from within. ... At the extreme,” he writes, “one might read Anderson as positing the nation from within as a self without others,”¹²⁶ which Toby argues is simply not the case for early modern Japan. Throughout *Imagined Communities*, Anderson focuses chiefly on the recognition or discovery of “similarities, consistencies, and continuities”¹²⁷ across the borders of provinces or regions within a given geographical territory. However, in early modern Japan, the

¹²¹ Toby, Ronald. “Rescuing the Nation from History.” pp. 224-225.

¹²² Berry. *Japan in Print*. p. 219.

¹²³ Berry. *Japan in Print*. p. 219.

¹²⁴ Known as well by a variety of other terms, including ‘Great Japan’ (*Dai Nihon* 大日本), ‘all under heaven’ or ‘the realm’ (*tenka* 天下), ‘the land of the gods’ (*shinkoku* 神国) ‘this court’ (*honchō* 本朝), and ‘all the provinces’ (*zenkoku* 全国).

¹²⁵ Toby. “Three Realms/Myriad Countries.” p. 17.

¹²⁶ Toby. “Three Realms/Myriad Countries.” p. 15.

¹²⁷ This idea is not explicitly articulated in any one section of *Imagined Communities*, but emerges as Anderson’s chief thematic approach throughout the volume. (Anderson. *Imagined Communities*.) Toby articulates this as Anderson’s approach in Toby. “Three Realms/Myriad Countries.” p. 15.

rejection of the Other, namely chiefly Ainu, Koreans, Chinese, Ryukyans, and Europeans, as “non-Japanese” may have played just as important a role in constituting a popular conception of Japanese identity as the recognition of similarities and consistencies between regions or *han*.

Toby goes on to discuss a number of Edo period publications describing the peoples of the world, such as the 1647 *Bankoku jinbutsu-zu* (万国人物図, “Illustration of People of the Myriad Countries”) and the Imperially commissioned *Sekai chizu byōbu* (世界地図屏風, “Map of the World Folding Screen”; year not given). These and other depictions of the peoples of the world – including paintings, woodblock printed books, and works in other formats – for the most part consisted of or contained captioned images of figures representing different peoples of the world. In most of these works, the Japanese are represented by a single figure, that is, as a single “Japanese people,” just as the Koreans, Chinese, and Dutch are each represented by one figure, or one set of figures. The Japanese are not represented by multiple figures, one for each province, region, island, or *han*, but only by one figure representing the people of Nihon. Some of these works, however, omit the Japanese, describing only foreign peoples, while others mix ethnic or racial classifications with classifications of people by profession or otherwise, listing actors, Ainu, prostitutes, beggars, Dutchmen, old men & women, samurai, Ryukyans, farmers, merchants, Vietnamese, artisans, Buddhist monks, Shinto priests, and Spaniards as though in a single categorization scheme.

Some of these works, such as Hayashi Shihei’s 1785 *Sangoku tsūran zusetsu* 三国通覧図説 (Fig. 2-4),¹²⁸ represent the Japanese islands in one solid color as a single entity, while others, such as an 1829 *Dai-Nippon-koku zenzu* 大日本国全図 (Fig. 2-5),¹²⁹ depict the territory which comprises “Japan” in many different colors, representing the different geographical provinces or political domains. Others include the Ryukyuan people while excluding the Ainu, or vice versa. Yet, though many of these works are organized around different categorization schemes, a pattern does emerge by which Ryukyans (along with certain other peoples), in those works in which they *are* shown, are regularly described as “foreign” (異国, *ikoku*) or as associated with *kara* (唐). Ryukyans are neither categorized as Japanese nor as “barbarians” (外夷, *gai'i* or a number of other terms), though the latter label is frequently applied in these works to peoples

¹²⁸ Hayashi Shihei 林子平. *Sangoku tsūran zusetsu* 三国通覧図説. 1785. Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library. Registration numbers HW 552-553.

¹²⁹ *Dai-Nippon-koku zenzu* 大日本国全図. Part of set *Bankoku yochi no zu* 万国輿地之図. 1829. Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library. Registration number HW 704.

from Southeast Asia and Europe. Discussing the representation of Ryūkyū in these types of publications, Tessa Morris-Suzuki writes that “the overall impression is very much [one of a] ‘different country,’ though not of a place whose exoticism would put it in the outer circles of barbarism.”¹³⁰

Popular publications of the Edo period describing or depicting Ryūkyū ran the gamut in terms of content and format, from those depicting Ryukyuan subjects with a high degree of detail and accuracy, to those reflecting more fanciful or simply mistaken conceptions of Ryukyuan clothing, architecture, and/or landscape. Such works, which Yokoyama Manabu refers to as *Ryūkyū-mono* 琉球物,¹³¹ include depictions of the Ryukyuan embassies; retellings of the legend of Minamoto no Tametomo, a 12th century samurai who was said to be the progenitor of the Ryukyuan royal family; descriptions and depictions of Ryukyuan customs, material culture, history and society; and overviews of a wide range of peoples of the world, including Ryukyans, along with a variety of other types of materials. Some of these works were based relatively closely on direct experience, such as in the case of printed reproductions of Arai Hakuseki’s *Nantōshi* 南島志, a text based upon Hakuseki’s direct interactions with Ryukyuan ambassadors, in which he describes Ryukyuan history and customs. Many writers drew upon these firsthand accounts in turn, lending a degree of accuracy or reality to their publications. Quite often, however, they combined such information with more fanciful or wholly inaccurate material. This is not surprising, as it was quite common in Edo period publishing for authors to draw extensively from earlier works, and to describe in an authoritative manner places the author had not actually visited. Edo was hardly off-limits to Japanese travelers the way that Ryūkyū was, yet numerous guidebooks to Edo copied extensively from one another rather than being produced based on firsthand knowledge of the city. These works often repeat the same errors as one another or otherwise indicate a lack of understanding of the layout of the city, all while speaking in a most authoritative tone.¹³²

Whether these writers and illustrators mistook as accurate the descriptions they drew upon, or whether they leaned towards the fictional knowingly and intentionally, motivated primarily by the desire to cater to consumer preferences (i.e. to produce what would sell), their impact in shaping people’s understandings about Edo (or Ryūkyū, as the case may be), was just

¹³⁰ Tessa Morris-Suzuki. *Re-Inventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998. p. 20.

¹³¹ Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 185.

¹³² Elisonas.

as real, and significant; it functioned unlike the impact in today's world of countless paintings, novels, films, comicbooks, and the like in shaping, for example, conceptions about Japan among Westerners and others.¹³³ This is little different from some of the core concepts in Edward Said's articulation of Orientalist discourses and how they function.¹³⁴

What is of importance for this essay is not the illustrators' intentions, however, since this remains not fully knowable; rather, this study focuses on the ideas such works convey about Ryūkyū, and the likely impact upon popular conceptions about the island kingdom. Such conceptions were reified through reproduction and repetition, as writers and illustrators drew upon earlier works, repeating or recreating the same stories, images, and misconceptions to such an extent that they became standard convention. Keiko Suzuki has argued that “[foreigners were] part of the popular *imaginary*, a discursive invention.” It is easy to see how this applies to the discursive invention of an idea or impression of Ryukyuan, in the mind of the Edo period townspeople. Suzuki goes on to note “how thorough the townspeople's cultural production of the Other could become even without opportunities to establish contact with actual foreigners.”¹³⁵ Publications such as these were a crucial element in that process.

Of those Edo period popular publications focusing on Ryukyuan subjects, many depicted the Ryukyuan embassy processions, whether in total, or in part. Some of these may have been publications of drawings by an illustrator (or textual accounts by a writer) who witnessed the processions firsthand. However, most were likely based on a handscroll painting such as those described in the previous chapter. *Ryūkyū kaigo* 琉球解語, illustrated by Hiroshige, is one such work.¹³⁶ It depicts the *Edo nobori* procession of 1850 (incidentally, the last Ryukyuan mission of the Edo period), and does so in a manner very similar to that of the *Edo nobori* handscroll paintings. The manner in which, and the extent to which, commercial or popular versions of these handscroll paintings would have circulated or been otherwise accessible remains unclear. However, as an *Edo nobori* handscroll attributed to a ten-year-old Hiroshige is believed to have been painted by copying another scroll, it would seem that such objects were not entirely unobtainable.¹³⁷

¹³³ Tamara Swenson. “‘What Kind of Culture Could Produce These?’ Appeal of the Exotic as Entry into Japanese Culture.” *Osaka Jogakuin College Kiyō* 大阪女学院大学紀要 4 (2007), pp. 104.

¹³⁴ Edward Said. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978. pp. 2, 6, 12ff.

¹³⁵ Suzuki, Keiko. p. 85.

¹³⁶ Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library, Registration Number HW 449 C2.

¹³⁷ Narazaki Muneshige 櫛崎宗重. “*Ryūkyū-jin raikō no zukan*” 琉球人来貢の図巻. in *Bessatsu Kobijutsu 3: Hiroshige* 別冊古美術 3 : 広重, pp. 29-30. Sansaisha, 1983. pp. 29-30.

Ryūkyū kaigo opens with a bold title page (Fig. 2-6), the four *kanji* of the book's title arranged in a square and taking up more than half the page. The names of author and illustrator, Tomioka Shukō 富岡手高 and Ichiryūsai Hiroshige 一立斎廣重 respectively, are given on the right, with the shopname of Edo-based publisher Jakurindō 若林堂,¹³⁸ his address (in front of Shiba Shrine), and the publication date Ka'ei 3 (1850) on the left. Opposite the text page, the volume begins with the phrase *gyōretsu hajime* 行列始, or “the beginning of the procession,” and a depiction of a figure on horseback. He wears a black winged court cap in the Ming style, and a patterned robe with dark strips at the collar and cuffs, and is identified clearly as the *gieisei* 儀衛正 Takamine *peechin* 高嶺親雲上. He is accompanied by two figures in Okinawan robes and hair-buns, one of whom carries a closed umbrella, and is followed, as we would expect, by a series of musicians with round, feathered hats, two of whom carry banners reading “golden drums” (金鼓), while several others carry and play drums, flutes, and trumpets. Though Keiko Suzuki identifies the oboe-like *charumera* and certain other types of musical instruments as signs of the generic *Tōjin*, instruments such as these were genuinely played in Ryūkyū.¹³⁹ Hiroshige's description of the form of the instruments within his depiction of the procession is not exceptionally accurate; but it strikes the viewer as an earnest attempt to depict Ryukyuan instruments, and not an instance of drawing upon a conception of generic “foreign” or foreign-looking instruments.

The book makes use of the horizontal *yokohon* 横本 format to better emulate a handscroll, and depicts the procession of that year¹⁴⁰ in much the same way that a handscroll would. A stream of figures dominates each page and continues smoothly onto the next two-page spread, each figure of importance identified by an inscription. The images are all relatively simple depictions in monochrome ink, with bold outlines and a minimum of fine detail; the faces

It remains unclear from Narazaki's explanation whether Hiroshige was able to obtain such a scroll because of his family's samurai status, or because of his father's personal connections; the work he copied from may also have been a more amateur work simply sketched by a family friend or the like who saw the procession in person, and not a high-quality commercial work for which questions of circulation and availability are more applicable.

¹³⁸ Identified in the colophon at the end of the volume as Wakasa-ya Yoichi 若狭屋與市. A firm active for over one hundred years, from c. 1794-1897, succeeding generations of Yoichis published numerous prints by Utamaro, Eisen, Kiyonaga, Kuniyoshi, Kunisada, Hiroshige, and Kyōsai, among others.

Andreas Marks. *Japanese Woodblock Prints: Artists, Publishers and Masterworks, 1680-1900*. Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 2010. p. 222.

¹³⁹ See Fig. 1-7.

¹⁴⁰ Confirmed through corroboration of names of officials depicted with those listed in Yokoyama. *Ryūkyū-koku shisetsu torai no kenkyū*. p. 516.

are described far too simply to depict recognizably specific individuals, but neither are these wholly generic, as each face depicts somewhat different features. The depiction is considerably abbreviated, with the entire procession depicted across only nine pages. Whereas the handscroll paintings include numerous *ashigaru*, porters, and other accompanying figures surrounding each mounted official, as well as marching between each official, in the *Ryūkyū kaigo* we see multiple officials portrayed one after another, with only two figures on foot accompanying each; Hiroshige seems to have illustrated only the Ryukyuan involved in the procession, and not the Japanese porters and samurai who accompanied them in the scroll paintings. Following the nine pages of illustration of the procession itself, the remainder of the volume is taken up primarily by textual description, accompanied by images depicting hair ornaments, musical instruments, and other elements of the Ryukyuan ambassadors' accoutrements.

Just as in the scrolls, Hiroshige's figures are seen in something of a three-quarter view, from the front and to the side, as if the viewer were watching from the side of the road, ahead of this section of the procession, and looking back at the approaching figures. The composition lacks any background; figures' names or titles are written above their heads as in the scrolls, along with inscriptions identifying objects carried or ridden in (e.g. spears, palanquins). The use of labels (inscriptions) in this way was a common convention in prints and illustrated books at this time, but recalls as well the *Edo nobori* handscrolls. For a consumer lacking access to *Edo nobori* handscroll paintings, a publication such as this could serve a very similar purpose, providing the consumer with a vicarious experience of seeing the procession, and informing him about the appearance of the members of the procession, and of their banners, spears, musical instruments, and other accoutrements; given the extensive amount of textual description, a book such as *Ryūkyū kaigo* would likely be even more informative than the nearly exclusively pictorial mode of the handscroll paintings.

Ryūkyūjin daigyōretsuki 琉球人行列記,¹⁴¹ a volume published in 1752, is very similar to the *Ryūkyū kaigo* of roughly a century later. It opens with a two-page preface by the author, identified only as Benshōdō 辨装堂, followed by four pages of illustrations of ships (Fig. 2-7), with each page divided horizontally into two panels, each of which depicts (in most cases) one

¹⁴¹ *Ryūkyūjin daigyōretsuki* 琉球人大行列記. Benshōdō 辨装堂. Anan Shirōemon 阿南四郎右衛門 (publisher). 1752. Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library. Registration number HW459.

ship. The first six ships are each numbered, from *ichiban* (one) through *rokuban* (six), and identified both pictorially by samurai house crests (*kamon*), banners and flags, and by a written inscription. Given that the author and publisher of this volume were based in Kyoto, and based on the inscriptions accompanying the illustrations, we can identify these six ships as river boats provided by various *daimyō* (at the shogunate's orders) to transport the members of the Ryukyuan embassy from Osaka to Kyoto.¹⁴² The final, unnumbered, set of such illustrations depicts river boats of Satsuma *han*, and a Ryukyuan seagoing junk, the differences in style and appearance quite apparent.

The embassy procession itself is depicted across the bottom of twenty-three pages (Fig. 2-8), following the illustrations of the ships. The depiction and overall format is much the same as Hiroshige's *Ryūkyū kaigo*, with the key difference that a horizontal dividing line is introduced, separating the illustration from the written inscriptions above, which identify key figures and objects. The depiction here seems less abbreviated than Hiroshige's, which depicts many of the mounted Ryukyuan officials grouped together, with only a very few men on foot accompanying them. Here, the illustrator has included Japanese porters and the various sizes and shapes of boxes and other objects that they carry, as well as musicians and groups of other Japanese and Ryukyuan figures on foot. Rather than simply a document of the most prominent officials, these 23 pages (in contrast to Hiroshige's nine) give a stronger impression of a procession; as the viewer turns each page, there are lulls, as groups of lower-ranking figures pass by, carrying banners and halberds, and high points, as the vice- and chief envoy appear in their palanquins, and as other figures of importance "pass by," so to speak, high atop their horses. The text is more extensive than in the painted scrolls or in the *Ryūkyū kaigo*, providing not only the names/titles of the important figures, and the names of a select few objects, but brief descriptions as well of posts/titles and objects, along with citations of the number of people in certain groups or categories within the procession.

The arrangement of the figures seems less strictly organized than in either the handscroll paintings or the *Ryūkyū kaigo*, and perhaps more realistic or accurate in that respect. Figures do not march in tight ranks or in strict single- or double-file, but just sort of group around one another haphazardly, with space between each figure. The figures face in different directions, many of them twisting or gesturing, introducing a sense of liveliness and a lighter

¹⁴² Miyagi Eishō 宮城栄昌. *Ryūkyū shisha no Edo nobori* 琉球使者の江戸上り. Daiichi Shobō, 1982. pp. 84-85.

mood, as well as a stronger sense of depth of the field. The overall effect, however, is of a publication extremely similar to *Ryūkyū kaigo*, which can be understood to serve the same commercial purposes and to have a very similar discursive impact. Such works likely served as souvenirs for those who witnessed the processions, and as substitutes for those who did not. Indeed, even at the time, popular author Jippensha Ikku, in the preface to the 1811 pamphlet mentioned in the Introduction to this essay, explicitly described the pamphlet as having been produced for “people who are unable to see [in person] ... the splendid parade of the Korean guests.”¹⁴³ Depictions of the processions such as these provided a relatively accurate and well-informed glimpse into the appearance of Ryukyuan (or Korean) people, and the style and aesthetic of their garments and other accoutrements, as well as an opportunity to experience, albeit second-hand, the exciting atmosphere of watching foreign processions parade through the streets.

A frequently cited and reproduced painting by Hanegawa Tōei depicting a circa 1748 Korean embassy making its way through the streets of Edo (Fig. 2-9)¹⁴⁴ serves as an example of one rather different way in which popular artists depicted such events. Later reproduced by Okumura Masanobu and Nishimura Shigenaga as woodblock prints,¹⁴⁵ Tōei’s painting stands in stark contrast to the handscroll paintings, and to the images in *Ryūkyū kaigo* and other works which appear to emulate the handscrolls. Tōei’s painting depicts the procession within a setting: namely, within the context of city streets lined with crowded buildings and with barriers holding in the masses of people gathered on the sides of the streets, eager to see the procession. In the bottom of the composition, as the procession turns a corner, we see the Korean figures from the side, many of them in a three-quarter view from the back, as if they have just passed us by. However, the rest of the composition is portrayed from an elevated viewpoint, making the entire street visible stretching back to a view of Mt. Fuji on the horizon, the crowds and procession within the street easily visible above the heads of the crowd lining the bottom of the composition in the extreme foreground.

It was not only books explicitly describing or depicting the *Edo nobori* processions which presented information about Ryūkyū and its people in a relatively accurate manner, however.

¹⁴³ Ronald Toby. “Contesting the Centre: International Sources of Japanese National Identity.” *The International History Review* 7:3 (1985), pp. 362.

¹⁴⁴ Ronald Toby. “The originality of the ‘copy’: mimesis and subversion in Hanegawa Tōei’s *Chōsenjin Ukie*.” in *The Culture of Copying in Japan: Critical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Rupert Cox, pp. 71-110. New York: Routledge, 2007.

¹⁴⁵ *Chōsen tsūshinshi* 朝鮮通信使. Tokyo National Museum, 1985. p. 5.

Maps and illustrated books depicting the peoples of the world and bearing titles such as *Bankoku jinbutsu zue* (lit. “images of the peoples of the ten-thousand countries”) were another widely available and popular form of publication which contained information about Ryūkyū. A 1799 volume entitled *Ehon ikoku ichiran* 絵本異国一覽, or “Picture Book Listing Foreign Countries,”¹⁴⁶ includes Ryūkyū among two-page spreads which each depict one of eleven countries or peoples. The volume seems to be organized geographically, beginning with the places geographically and culturally closest to Japan, before describing more exotic peoples from more distant lands. “Great Qing” (i.e. China) is depicted first, followed by Korea, Ryūkyū, and Orankai (兀良哈, Tartary). Ryūkyū is followed by Taiwan, and then, moving into Southeast Asia proper, the book offers images of scenes in Champa 占城, Quang Nam 広南 (central Viet Nam), Java 瓜哇, Brunei 渤泥, Siam 暹羅, and finally Pattani 巴旦 (a Malay sultanate that included parts of modern Thailand and Malaysia), roughly in the order of their geographic distance from Japan.

Many of the images seem constructed explicitly for the purposes of displaying for the reader/viewer the distinctive style of garments, architecture, interior décor (e.g. furniture), and/or products and goods of that country or culture. Ryūkyū is represented in an outdoor scene in which a group of Okinawan men and women gather around a pair of displays set out in a manner akin to those of street-side vendors. All have either bare feet or are wearing sandals, and all wear floor-length robes in the Okinawan style, with patterning or elaborate designs and a dark strip along the edges of the garment (especially noticeable on the collar); all wear their hair up in buns, with long hairpins. A young person kneels on a square, possibly a cushion, adjacent to a platform where a variety of fish are laid out, presumably on display for sale. Next to the platform of fish, a multi-tiered display in the left half of the composition features goods including a folding fan, a lacquered set of stacking boxes/trays, ceramic bowls or cups, and a hanging lantern. Two men with obvious facial hair lean over the display and point at the goods, while a woman sitting next to it holds up her hand in their direction and smiles, as if speaking to them about her wares. Another woman carries a baby in her arms, while yet another woman, on the far right of the composition, approaches the gathered group with a tied bundle of some type balanced atop her head. In the far distance, in the top right corner, we see a group of houses with peaked roofs, and tall, branching forms which might be intended to represent tropical

¹⁴⁶ Shunkōen Hanamaru 春光園花丸. *Ehon ikoku ichiran* 絵本異国一覽. 1799. Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library. Registration number HW554.

plants such as banana or palm trees. An area of sky or mist at the top of the composition is filled with text, as it is on every page of the volume. The text is difficult to make out, as it is written in the very loose and calligraphic form typical of Edo period popular publishing, but it makes mention of the generations of kings;¹⁴⁷ of Satsuma, Japan 日本薩摩; and of dyed clothing made from banana fiber,¹⁴⁸ among other subjects, presumably describing, very briefly, some of the key elements of Ryūkyū's history and culture. It is possible that this depiction of Ryūkyū derives from the author's or illustrator's familiarity with Ryūkyū through the Ryukyuan goods available in Japanese markets; discussion of typical Ryukyuan goods would have been common in published materials as well, however, just as we saw *Nihon eitaigura* describing certain places within Japan chiefly by the commercial products for which each is famous. The depiction of the figures, their garments, and other elements of this composition in the *Ehon ikoku ichiran* contains no glaring inaccuracies, and presents to the viewer/reader impressions of Ryūkyū, and of ten other countries, that do not appear to have been conflated or confused by the illustrator with the cultural features of other foreign peoples.

An illustrated volume entitled *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* 鎮西琉球記,¹⁴⁹ meanwhile, is an example of a rather different type of book relating to Ryūkyū. The volume relates the legend of the 12th century samurai warrior Minamoto no Tametomo who, after being exiled to a remote island to the south of Japan, makes his way to Okinawa, where he has a son with the chief's daughter; that son then grows up to become the first king of Okinawa, and the ancestor of the Ryukyuan royal line. This idea of the Ryukyuan royalty being descended from a samurai, and by extension descended from Japan's own Imperial line,¹⁵⁰ was a particularly persistent and commonly published one in the Edo period. It is unclear precisely when this myth originated, or in which text, but it can be seen in numerous publications, including Arai Hakuseki's 1719 *Nantōshi* 南島志, an otherwise very well-informed volume based on direct conversation with Ryukyuan ambassadors, and Morishima Chūryō's 1790 *Ryūkyū-banashi* 琉球談. This story appears as well in the 1650 *Chūzan Seikan* 中山世鑑, an official history of the kingdom

¹⁴⁷ After the three characters 「琉球国」 (Country of Ryūkyū), the text begins with 「国王代々中山王と...」 (the kings of this country, generation after generation, "King of Chūzan"...).

¹⁴⁸ 「芭蕉布の衣装に琉球つむぎ」

¹⁴⁹ Miyata Nanboku 宮田南北. *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki: Tametomo gaiden* 鎮西琉球記・為朝外傳. Yoshida Jihee 吉田治兵衛 and Tenman'ya Yasubee 天満屋安兵衛 (publishers). 1835. University of Hawai'i Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library. Registration number HW606.

¹⁵⁰ Minamoto no Tametomo (1139-1170), son of Minamoto no Tameyoshi, was a descendant of Minamoto no Yorinobu, great-great-grandson of Emperor Seiwa (r. 858-876).

compiled by Ryukyuan royal advisor Shō Shōken, who was strongly pro-Satsuma (pro-Japan) in his political leanings.¹⁵¹ The inclusion of this legend in an official Ryukyuan history serves to reify a version of history which supported the idea that Ryūkyū had been subordinate to Satsuma / Japan since at least the beginning of the 13th century.¹⁵² Tametomo's connection to Ryūkyū is generally regarded by historians today as mere myth.¹⁵³ However, as late as the 1950s, George Kerr, author of the most definitive and comprehensive volume on Okinawan history available in English today, devoted a number of pages to the Tametomo story, claiming that it "cannot be verified at this time; neither can it be dismissed as pure fiction."¹⁵⁴

The text of the 1835 *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* is accompanied by a series of images, illustrating scenes from Tametomo's legend, and from the narrative of Satsuma's 1609 invasion of Ryūkyū, in two-page spreads. The table of contents is framed by an intricate design perhaps intended to emulate the appearance of brocade, and featuring the *kamon* of the Shimazu and Tokugawa clans. The illustrations themselves fit into roughly three types. Some of the two-page spreads feature images of scenes in Ryūkyū, such as at the gates of Shuri castle (the Ryukyuan royal palace), or a market scene; these are depicted as from a bird's-eye perspective, and a rather distant viewpoint, with the figures quite small on the page. Other pages feature images of individual figures from the story, such as Tametomo, or Shimazu Tadahisa. The figures are depicted quite large, in full samurai armor (Tametomo wears a Japanese court cap, while Tadahisa wears a *kabuto* helmet), seated below curtains bearing their *kamon*, and accompanied by brief inscriptions. The third type of scene in the *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* falls in between these two, depicting scenes from the narrative in the scale most commonly seen in *ukiyo-e*. Figures are roughly ½ to 2/3 the height of the page, and are seen from the side, immersed in the setting.

¹⁵¹ Smits. *Visions of Ryukyu*. pp. 51-62.

¹⁵² Shimazu Tadahisa, progenitor of the Shimazu clan, established the clan's control of Satsuma province in the 1180s, and in 1206 was named "Lord of the Twelve Southern Islands," a reference to Ryūkyū, though he never set foot in the islands or was able to exercise any actual control over the islands. Nevertheless, it was from this point on that the Shimazu clan of Satsuma alleged their suzerainty over Ryūkyū, and it was on this basis that they petitioned Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu to invade Ryūkyū in 1609 as a punitive expedition, punishing the kingdom for its insubordination, in refusing to send troops to contribute to Toyotomi Hideyoshi's 1590s invasions of Korea, and refusing to send a formal envoy to submit to Tokugawa authority following the naming of Ieyasu as Shogun in 1603. See: Stephen Turnbull. *The Samurai Capture a King: Okinawa 1609*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2009. pp. 7ff.

¹⁵³ For example, see Sakamaki Shunzō. "The Heike: From Defeat at Dannoura to a Golden Age in Ryukyu?" *Journal of Asian Studies* 27:1 (1967), pp. 117.

¹⁵⁴ Kerr. p. 46.

In contrast to some of the works discussed above, in which the Ryukyuan people, their costumes, and accoutrements were depicted with a considerable degree of accuracy, the illustrations in *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* are markedly more fanciful. One scene depicts crowds outside the gates to Shuri castle, Ryūkyū's royal palace (Fig. 2-10), which is identified by an inscription in the top right corner, as well as within the image by a plaque on the gate itself.¹⁵⁵ From the style of the architecture in the illustration, it is clear that the illustrator understood that the style and layout of the actual Shuri castle were heavily influenced by, and based upon, Chinese Imperial palace architecture, or that he had at least a general conception of Ryukyuan architecture being very much Chinese in style. Yet, while he was perhaps correct in drawing upon Chinese architectural modes in his rendering of the castle, the final result is merely a fictional imagining of a Chinese palace, and looks nothing like the actual, historical Shuri Castle. The palace walls seen in the illustration are quite rectilinear in form; they rise straight up without tapering and turn sharply at right angles. Horizontal lines in the illustration give the impression of very regular rows of small bricks, and four portals are cut into the wall, which continues smoothly above the gateways. By contrast, the walls of the historical Shuri castle¹⁵⁶ are made from blocks of white limestone which taper inwards as they rise up. The walls curve and wind, and are punctuated by wooden gates with watchtowers stretched horizontally across the top of gaps in the stone wall.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, rather than the lengthy series of interconnected multi-story buildings seen sitting atop the massive gate structure in the book illustration, Shuri castle's guardhouses are much smaller and simpler. The main gates in the outer walls of Shuri castle each feature only a single portal, and are accessed by dirt paths, or by tall sets of stone stairs. Of all the gates at the actual royal palace, only the Hōshinmon, the final gate leading into the innermost enclosure (O: *unaa* 御庭) features multiple portals like those seen in the woodblock image. Yet, while the Hōshinmon does more closely resemble the image on this page of the *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki*, with its more rectilinear, blocky form, there are still significant differences. The Hōshinmon has

¹⁵⁵ The inscription reads 「中山省首里王城の図」, or, loosely, "Picture of Royal Castle of Shuri in Chūzan Province." The character 省 is today used to designate the provinces of China, but it is unclear whether its use at this time would have implied Chūzan's (that is, Ryūkyū's) identity as a province of China, as the use of that character would indicate today. The plaque over the gate within the image reads 「中山楼」, or "Chūzan Tower," a not unreasonable assumption for the name of a gate or building within the Shuri Castle compound, though in reality none of the structures bear this name.

¹⁵⁶ Destroyed in 1945, and rebuilt in the 1990s according to historical records, pre-war photographs, and archaeological scholarship.

¹⁵⁷ Fukushima Shunsuke 福島駿介. *Okinawa no sekizō bunka* 沖縄の石造文化. Urasoe: Okinawa Shuppan, 1987. pp. 158-159.

rectangular portals and not rounded arches, and lacks any separate palisade or other structures atop it. If anything, the gate structure seen in the illustration, with its rounded-arch portals and rectilinear forms, most closely resembles the “Great Red Gates” (C: *Da Hongmen*) at Qing Imperial tombs in China, such as that of Nurhachi in Shenyang.¹⁵⁸

Meanwhile, nearly every figure depicted in this scene outside the gates of the castle wears their hair in a queue, in the Manchu (Qing Chinese) style, along with Qing-style *bufu* court robes and round, pointed hats (See Fig. 2-11).¹⁵⁹ These images are not directly accompanied by narrative text, and it is unclear if these figures are intended to be Chinese officials on a formal mission to Ryūkyū. However, if they are meant to be Ryukyuan officials, then these crucial details – their Qing-style hats, robes, and hairstyle – are plainly incorrect. As we have seen in both handscroll paintings and illustrations from certain, more accurate, popular publications described above, Ryukyuan generally wore their hair in buns, not in long braids. Unlike the multi-piece Manchu costume which often includes a vest, Ryukyuan one-piece robes more closely resemble the Japanese kimono, and Ryukyuan court caps, or *hachimaki*, are pillbox-shaped caps worn close around the head, not the circular, spiked hats seen in this image. Indeed, in nearly every respect, from the architecture to the costume of the figures gathered in the plaza, to the triangular, fringed banners they carry,¹⁶⁰ this image represents not Ryukyuan styles or modes, but Qing Chinese ones.

This substitution of Chinese modes for Ryukyuan ones continues throughout this illustrated *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki*. Distinctly Ryukyuan styles of architecture and costume are nowhere to be seen, reflecting either a conception of Ryūkyū as highly Sinified, or a flat-out confusion or conflation of the two places and their respective cultures. Another two-page spread depicting an episode from the narrative of the 1609 invasion of Ryūkyū depicts four samurai, their backs to the viewer, fleeing as they are driven off by a single mounted figure with a spear (Figs. 2-12, 2-13). The spear-wielding figure is identified by the inscription in the top-right as a Ryukyuan general (琉将), but while the fleeing figures are easily identified as samurai by their distinctive, and accurately depicted, style of armor, their attacker’s garments show no

¹⁵⁸ Sun Dazhang, Nancy Steinhardt et al. *Chinese Architecture*. Yale University and New World Presses, 2002. p. 273.

¹⁵⁹ Melissa Leventon. *What People Wore When*. New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2008. pp. 190-191. Edward Rhoads. *Manchus & Han: ethnic relations and political power in late Qing and early republican China, 1861-1928*. University of Washington Press, 2001. pp. 59-60, cover image.

¹⁶⁰ As touched upon very briefly in the previous chapter, square banners were far more typical in Ryūkyū, while triangular pennants are more typically Chinese.

signs of being identifiably Ryukyuan. Rather, they most closely resemble Chinese theatrical costume. The theatrical form known today as Beijing opera (*jingju* 京劇) was only first emerging in the early 19th century when this book was published, so we cannot say that this images explicitly refers to, or draws upon, Beijing opera costume *per se*. Yet, since “a majority of the costumes were already conventionalized into distinct theatrical versions... by the Ming era,”¹⁶¹ costume worn on the Beijing opera stage today can help serve as a guideline for the styles associated with Chinese theatrical costume even of the late 18th or early 19th centuries.

Indeed, the resemblance of the general’s costume to the trousers, embroidered vest-jacket, and water shirt of the *wusheng* (武生, martial man) character archetype is striking.¹⁶² His helmet or headdress, likewise, with wing-like forms on the sides, ornamentation directly above the brow, and a pom-pom or the like on top, is of a form commonly seen in the theatre,¹⁶³ recalling but not fully resembling the style of Ming dynasty helmets designed for actual use in battle.¹⁶⁴

The remaining images depicting the Satsuma invasion of Ryūkyū follow much the same pattern. One shows a small group of samurai rushing into frame from the right, before a massive gate, as several figures in Chinese costume flee in the lower-left corner. The samurai carry a banner clearly marked with the *kamon* of the Shimazu clan of Satsuma, and the depiction of their armor, and of the banner itself, quite accurately represent the form of samurai armor and samurai *sashimono* banners. The fleeing figures, meanwhile, trail behind them a fringed banner in the Qing (Manchu) style; one of them wears a winged helmet in the theatrical or Ming style like that seen previously. All in all, it is only the inscriptions, and our familiarity with the nominal subject matter, that allows us to understand these illustrations as depicting Ryukyuan subjects; the architecture, costumes, and other elements depicted are wholly Chinese.

In relating the tale of Minamoto no Tametomo and his adventures in Okinawa (where he supposedly sired the first king of the island), the *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* very clearly serves to reinforce discourses of justification for Ryukyuan subordination under Japanese authority, and for Ryukyuan membership within a Japonic cultural/ethnic sphere. The idea that Ryūkyū’s kings draw their royal legitimacy from their descent from the Minamoto, and by extension from

¹⁶¹ Bonds. p. 27.

¹⁶² Bonds. pp. 194 (vests), pp. 200-201 (water shirt), p. 272 (*wusheng* costume).

¹⁶³ Leventon. p. 190.

¹⁶⁴ Michael Haskew et al. *Fighting Techniques of the Oriental World*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2008. pp. 16, 65, 85, 109ff.
Hua Mei. *Chinese Clothing*. Cambridge University Press, 2011. p. 69.

Japan's own Imperial lineage, plays into ideas of a common origin, or at least a link many centuries old, between Ryūkyū and Japan. Even if the Shimazu did not see themselves as particularly directly connected to the Minamoto clan, the notion of Ryūkyū's kings being ultimately descended from the same samurai class to which the Shimazu belonged, and from the same Imperial lineage to which the Shimazu claimed loyalty, could only have helped support Shimazu claims that Ryūkyū was in some way rightfully associated with or connected with "Japan." This, combined with the Shimazu narrative of Ryūkyū having been rightfully, or naturally, subordinate to the rulers of Satsuma province since at least the early 13th century,¹⁶⁵ served to help justify, at least in the popular consciousness, the Shimazu dominance of Ryūkyū following the 1609 invasion, and by extension, justifying Japanese annexation and "colonization"¹⁶⁶ of the Ryukyus in the Meiji period.¹⁶⁷ All of this is further supported in the illustrated *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* by the dramatic, heroic retelling of the 1609 invasion, which while it includes at least one scene of samurai being defeated or driven off by a Ryukyuan general, also includes many more scenes of Ryukyuan warriors (in completely Chinese dress) fleeing, and of their castle burning. As impressive as Shuri castle and its gates are in these depictions, Japanese superiority is hammered home pictorially by a two-page spread in which Kagoshima castle, the home castle of the Shimazu clan of Satsuma, towers over all that surrounds it. The main keep

¹⁶⁵ That is, the time of Shimazu Tadahisa, who was named "Lord of the Twelve Southern Islands" by the Minamoto shogun.

¹⁶⁶ Scholars question and debate the applicability of discourses of "colonialism" or "colonization" in discussing Okinawa. Important essays on this subject in English, contrasting the Okinawan case with those of Japanese involvement in Korea, Taiwan, and Hokkaidō include:

Alan Christy. "The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa." *Positions* 1:3 (Winter 1993), pp. 607-639.

Hyman Kublin. "The Evolution of Japanese Colonialism." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2:1 (1959), pp. 67-84. pp. 73ff.

Richard Siddle. "Colonialism and Identity in Okinawa before 1945." *Japanese Studies* 18:2 (1998), pp. 117-133.

Yonetani. pp. 15-31.

¹⁶⁷ Japan overthrew the Ryūkyū Kingdom and annexed its territory in a number of steps over the course of the 1870s. In 1872, the king was designated *han'ō* 藩王, or "domainal lord," as the Ryūkyū Kingdom was declared to be a feudal domain, "Ryūkyū *han*" 琉球藩. As Satsuma *han* had already been abolished, Ryūkyū now came under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and then, as of 1874, under the Ministry of the Interior. The first Japanese military installation in Okinawa was established in 1876; the same year, Japanese authorities implemented Japanese criminal codes and took over law enforcement (police jurisdiction). In 1879, the kingdom/*han* was formally dissolved and its lands fully formally annexed, and the royal family absorbed into the Japanese *kazoku* 華族 peerage. Okinawa Prefecture was established, and placed under the authority of a Japanese governor and Japanese politicians & bureaucrats, chiefly from Satsuma (Kagoshima prefecture) and appointed by Tokyo.

Uemura Hideaki. "The Colonial Annexation of Okinawa and the Logic of International Law: The Formation of an 'Indigenous People' in East Asia." *Japanese Studies* 23:2 (2003), pp. 107-124.

dwarfs trees and other structures in the castle complex, which though multi-storied themselves, come up only as high as the first story of the keep.

Though its authors may have intended this volume as merely a source of entertainment, it is clear that in retelling these stories as they understood them, and through the particular manner of the illustrator's depictions, this volume serves to reinforce prevalent conceptions of Japanese dominance and power vis-à-vis Ryūkyū. The volume similarly draws upon widespread discourses concerning the aesthetic or cultural character of Ryūkyū – namely, the idea that Ryukyuan architecture, garments, and culture otherwise are in the Chinese-style – reinforcing these (mis)conceptions through viewers' consumption of the visual text. Diaries and other surviving texts written by observers of the Ryukyuan processions very commonly describe Ryukyuan costume, musical instruments, or other aspects of their appearance and performance, as *tō no yō* (or "*kara no sama*" 唐の様).¹⁶⁸ This term could be interpreted to mean "in the Chinese manner," but due to the complex variety of meanings of the term *tō/kara*, it is difficult to know what these diarists intended in their description of the Ryukyuan sights in front of them as being *tō no yō*. However, what is clear is that some popular illustrators, having read such diaries, or works based on them, or having simply learned about Ryūkyū through rumor and word of mouth, took the phrasing quite literally and employed their understandings of Chinese style in envisioning Ryūkyū. The final result is thus both a product, and a producer, of the discourse on Ryukyuan appearances and cultural identity prevalent among townspeople in early 19th century Japan, and an example of the many books, prints, and other materials published in the Edo period which perpetuated a misinformed understanding about Ryūkyū as being more thoroughly culturally Chinese than it in fact was.

There was considerable variety to be found in Edo period popular publications describing or depicting Ryūkyū. There was no one singular narrative, or singular conception of Ryūkyū to which these publications all adhered. Some purported to serve as sources of factual information, while others more clearly had entertainment as their chief purpose. Some displayed a high degree of factual accuracy in their depictions of Ryukyuan costume, architecture, geography, and other cultural features (e.g. illustrations of musical instruments and other accoutrements carried by members of the *Edo nobori* processions), resulting from close observation, research, or simply drawing from properly reliable sources. Other publications depicted Ryūkyū and its people as Chinese, or in more purely fanciful manners,

¹⁶⁸ Miyagi. pp. 65-67.

relying upon stereotypes or vague conceptions of Ryukyuan subjects, combining a conflation of foreign cultures with elements of pure fantasy.

Yet, despite the diversity of materials, and the varying ways in which Ryūkyū is depicted, when taken in aggregate, a discourse about Ryūkyū emerges that is complex but fairly consistent. It is not difficult to imagine a consumer of these materials picking and choosing elements from each of a number of publications to form his personal understanding of Ryūkyū. Doing so, a hypothetical Japanese reader would come to an understanding of Ryūkyū as a place which is distinct from Japan, culturally, politically, and geographically, but which has strong cultural, political, and economic connections to Japan, through maritime trade, the legacy of Minamoto no Tametomo, the political subordination of Ryūkyū to Satsuma *han* and to the shogunate, and through the resulting cultural influences that accompany all of these other factors. This envisioned Ryūkyū simultaneously has strong political and economic connections to China, and is heavily influenced by Chinese culture. It is a place that is recognized by the reader of Edo period popular publications as being not fully Japanese nor Chinese, a place with its own distinct foreign culture, quite foreign compared to distant provinces within Japan, but still less foreign, and more familiar, than places such as Holland or Spain, the people of which were considered exceptionally unusual,¹⁶⁹ due to their great cultural distance from both China and Japan.

¹⁶⁹ As discussed above, unlike Ryukyuan, who were fairly consistently categorized as *kara*, Europeans were regularly identified as “barbarians” or “outer barbarians.” Depictions of Dutchmen in Japanese art often focus on their long, curly red hair, tall boots, strange architectural and shipbuilding styles, and bizarre games (cards and billiards were common activities in the Dutch settlement on Dejima), as well as their dark-skinned servants/slaves and facial hair, among other features.

Chapter III *Hokusai Ryūkyū Hakkei*: A Case Study

This chapter examines a series of *ukiyo-e* prints depicting landscape scenes in Ryūkyū, designed by Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) and published in 1832 by Moriya Jihei,¹⁷⁰ entitled *Ryūkyū Hakkei* 琉球八景, or “Eight Views of Ryūkyū.” As we have seen, much of commoners’ knowledge of Ryūkyū at this time was mediated through the *Edo nobori* embassies, and through illustrated books and single-sheet prints depicting or describing those embassies. The *Ryūkyū Hakkei* offers a somewhat different perspective on the island kingdom, in that it does not depict Ryukyuan people as observed in *Edo nobori* processions within Japan, but rather depicts Ryūkyū itself, in the form of landscape scenes, providing us with a glimpse into what sort of place Ryūkyū might have been in the imaginations of the townspeople of Edo period Japan.

Scholarship on this series of prints has been almost exclusively limited to the realm of connoisseurship, and to approaches which focus largely on form, color, style, and the biography of the artist, to the detriment of discussions of wider cultural and historical context. The late *ukiyo-e* expert Richard Lane discussed the series only in passing in his survey of Hokusai’s life and career, portraying it as a more or less unremarkable example of Hokusai’s many series of landscape prints.¹⁷¹ Many other treatments of the subject are equally superficial.¹⁷²

Yet, far from being simply another set of landscape prints, this is the only series mentioned in Lane’s comprehensive catalog of Hokusai’s oeuvre¹⁷³ to depict landscape scenes in Ryūkyū in the form of single-sheet prints; indeed, it is the only such series of which I am aware by any Edo period Japanese artist.¹⁷⁴ As described above, the vast majority of images produced as part of the fervor surrounding these ambassadorial processions

¹⁷⁰ Ewa Machotka. *Visual Genesis of Japanese National Identity: Hokusai’s Hyakunin Isshu*. New York: Peter Lang, 2009. p. 64.

Moriya Jihei 森屋治兵衛 was the name of a series of publishers who operated the Kinshōdō 錦森堂 publishing house based in Nihonbashi, in Edo, from roughly 1797 until 1886. Other print designers published by Moriya Jihei include Utamaro, Kunisada, and Hiroshige. (Marks. pp. 226-227.)

¹⁷¹ Richard Lane. *Hokusai: Life and Work*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1989. p. 207.

¹⁷² See for example, Matthi Forrer. *Hokusai*. Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1991. pp. 25-26; Plate 53.

¹⁷³ Lane. *Hokusai*. pp. 279-298.

Richard Lane. *Images from the Floating World*. New York: Konecky & Konecky, 1978. pp. 255-269.

¹⁷⁴ Landscape scenes within Ryūkyū, depictions of Ryukyuan architecture and other subjects, and maps of the island kingdom, could be found within illustrated books. Hokusai’s series was thus not the sole set of images of landscape scenes of sites in Ryūkyū; it may have been, however, the only such series in the form of individual single-sheet prints, i.e. not bound into a book.

depicted those things the artists, and the consumers, could theoretically have seen for themselves: the processions within Japan, and the fashions, musical instruments, banners, and other accoutrements of the Ryukyuan members of the procession. Works depicting customs, architecture, or landscapes within Ryūkyū were fairly widely available in Japan at this time in illustrated books such as those discussed in the last chapter; many of these drew upon, to one extent or another, materials produced by Chinese officials who, as part of their official responsibilities, experienced Ryūkyū firsthand, an opportunity off-limits to nearly all Japanese. The *Ryūkyū Hakkei* must therefore be seen not merely as examples of Hokusai's landscapes and pictorial design aesthetic, but as a tool, alongside illustrated books and other materials, for informing our understanding of early modern Japanese conceptions about Ryūkyū.

Zhou Huang and the history of the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*

The *Ryūkyū Hakkei* was adapted by Hokusai from eight landscape views of scenes in Ryūkyū, found in a Chinese volume originally published in 1757 and entitled *Liuqiuguo zhilue* (琉球国志略, J: *Ryūkyū-koku shiryaku*). A comparison of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints and the images in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* reveals that Hokusai indeed based his compositions very closely on the Chinese source. Each of the eight prints corresponds directly to a two-page spread in the Chinese volume. Hokusai's distinct personal style, recognizable from his other works, can be seen in his version of the eight views, but the selection of sites, overall compositions, and titles assigned to each image are taken directly from the Chinese source, with little change. Hokusai added some elements such as ships, and the triangular form of Mt. Fuji in the far distance; he also made other alterations to the compositions, such as in the architectural style of structures in several of the prints, but overall the most striking difference is simply in the addition of color.¹⁷⁵

It is unclear who composed the landscapes and other images in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*, but the volume as a whole is attributed to Zhou Huang 周煌, a Chinese scholar-bureaucrat who served as deputy ambassador on a mission to Ryūkyū in 1756-7, to take part in investiture rituals formally granting the Qing Court's recognition of Shō Boku (r. 1752-1794) as the rightful King of

¹⁷⁵ Kishi Akimasa 岸秋正. "Hokusai no Ryūkyū Hakkei ni tsuite" 北斎の琉球八景について. *Ukiyo-e geijutsu* 浮世絵芸術 13 (1966), pp. 36-39.

Ryūkyū.¹⁷⁶ Zhou Huang and the other members of the Chinese mission stayed in Ryūkyū for roughly seven months, as was typical for investiture envoys, and it was during this time that he composed the text that would become the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*. The volume contains sections on Ryukyuan history, the structure of the kingdom's political bureaucracy and administration, commercial and agricultural products, culture and customs, and other such topics. In addition to the eight two-page spreads depicting landscape scenes, which served as the models for Hokusai's series, the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* contains ten more illustrations in two-page spreads, including maps of the archipelago, of Okinawa Island, and of the journey from Fuzhou to Okinawa, as well as a star map of the constellations visible from Okinawa, and depictions of the lodgings provided for Chinese envoys, the investiture ceremony, the king himself and his attendants, and a Ryukyuan ship.¹⁷⁷

The lengthy text was assembled from the reports of previous Chinese ambassadors, official Ryukyuan royal documents, and Zhou Huang's own observations.¹⁷⁸ Compiled for the Chinese Imperial bureaucracy to serve as an official history of the kingdom, the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* was, in 1831, copied and distributed in Japan by the shogunate for similar official purposes, including as educational materials to be used in the training of shogunate and domain (*han*) officials, as well as in the upbringing of children destined for such posts.¹⁷⁹ It can be assumed that Hokusai somehow obtained one of these 1831 woodblock-printed copies, which then became the basis for his "Eight Views" compositions.

In his alterations of the eight landscape images, Hokusai drew upon his understanding of what Ryūkyū was like, based upon the countless things he had seen, heard, and read about the island kingdom. In other words, Hokusai's mental image of the Ryukyuan landscape, and thus his *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, were products of popular discourse, the very same popular discourse which the prints series then influenced in turn. Many of the alterations made by Hokusai (and/or his publisher) to the compositions he found in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* seem minor at first glance, the overall composition being so similar, but it is precisely because of the limited nature of these

¹⁷⁶ "Shū Kō" 周煌. *Okinawa konpakuto jiten* 沖縄コンパクト時点. Posted on Ryūkyū Shimpō website, <http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/page-174.html>. Viewed 5 September 2011.

¹⁷⁷ Hirata Tsugumasa 平田嗣全, trans. *Ryūkyū-koku shiryaku* 琉球国志略, by Zhou Huang 周煌. San-ichi Shobō, 1977. pp. 9-11, 34-69.

¹⁷⁸ *Ryūkyū-koku shiryaku* 琉球国志略. *Okinawa konpakuto jiten*.;Hirata. pp. 1-2.

¹⁷⁹ Kishi. pp. 36-39. Kishi uses the term 「官板」 (*kanban*), which refers to something published by the shogunate, or specifically published by the shogunate for use in shogunate schools, where shogunate and domain officials were trained.

changes that we are able to focus more closely upon them. These changes, along with those elements which Hokusai chose to conserve, reveal much about his (and his publisher's) attitudes, intentions, and conceptions of Ryūkyū, and the conceptions communicated by his *Ryūkyū Hakkei*. By extension, the compositions thus also permit insights into attitudes more widely held among the general populace, regarding Ryūkyū's geographical, political, economic, and cultural position in the world in relation to Japan, as well as into nascent conceptions of Japanese identity.

Before we move on, we have to note that Hokusai did not wield exclusive control over the design of these prints. *Ukiyo-e* print designers such as Hokusai generally discussed the design of a print with the publisher, and designated which colors to use where; however, it was up to the artisan doing the actual work of printing the images onto paper to mix the colors, and publishers, not artists, ultimately had creative control of the final product. The extent to which the publisher may have had a hand in the selection of colors, or in other creative choices, in the design of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* is unclear. However, it is ultimately immaterial who it was that made the color choices for these prints, since Hokusai, his publisher, the woodblock carver, and the printer were all, in theory, subject to extremely similar discursive influences,¹⁸⁰ and can be presumed to have possessed extremely similar views or conceptions about Ryūkyū – conceptions reflected in their creative choices in the production of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*. For the sake of brevity of phrasing, I refer to Hokusai as having made the creative decisions in the design of these prints; however, the publisher, block-cutter, and printer all played crucial roles as well in determining the final form of these compositions.¹⁸¹

Descriptions of the eight prints in the *Hokusai Ryūkyū Hakkei*

The series was released in 1832 to coincide with an *Edo nobori* mission sent from Ryūkyū, and with the concordant popular demand for materials relating to Ryūkyū at that time. It consists of eight landscape views, depicting various sites in and around the kingdom's chief port of Naha. Many of the prints share similar features, including tiled roofs in a deep blue, large expanses of sea and sky surrounding tiny islands or spits of land, small boats, and shorelines

¹⁸⁰ Hokusai and the other men involved in the production of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* were embedded in the same web of popular discourse. There is no reason to presume that they would have had dramatically different experiences from one another in terms of books they had read, prints and paintings they had seen, conversations they had participated in, and other influences upon their conceptions of Ryūkyū.

¹⁸¹ Marks. pp. 10-13.; Helen Merritt and Nanako Yamada. *Guide to Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints, 1900-1975*. University of Hawai'i Press, 1995. p. 2.

where, rather than the land sloping naturally into the water, walls of neatly packed grey stone extend straight down from the land to meet the water a short distance below.

The scene titled “Sunset Glow at Jungai” (筍崖夕照, *Jungai sekishō*)(Fig. 3-1)¹⁸² depicts a shrine with high stone walls atop a cliff which seems to hang suspended in mid-air. Shrubs and trees poke out from its rocky crags. Simple rectilinear outlines in the Chinese image (Fig. 3-2), indicating the tall stone walls typical of Ryukyuan architecture, are elaborated upon in Hokusai’s print; the individual stones are drawn in, along with some speckled surface texture. Hokusai, or his publisher, chose a brown color for these stone walls, which would in reality have been made from white Ryukyuan limestone, as seen today at numerous historical sites and traditional-architecture villages in the Ryukyus;¹⁸³ yet, the basic form is certainly distinctive enough to be recognizable as relatively accurate. Similar stone walls are seen in most of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints. As I discuss in more detail below, another notable change made by Hokusai in “Sunset Glow at Jungai,” and in many other prints in the series, is the deployment of Japanese-style rooftops in place of the Chinese-style roofs seen in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.

Continuing our examination of this print, we see two boats added by Hokusai gliding by in the water below the cliff. Light blue patterns against the plain white paper serve to represent both water and sky, with no clear horizon line dividing the two. The water blends into the sky, as in the original, though Hokusai has eliminated the waves, indicated by lines in the Chinese image, replacing them with a smooth pattern of light blue which seems to suggest a calmer sea. In Hokusai’s multi-colored print, the green cliff fades to yellow as it moves upwards within the image, the titular “sunset glow” represented by spots of pink on the dirt path. Due to the distinctive form of the cliff, the presence of buildings atop it, and of the ocean stretching out beyond it, the scene is easily identifiable as Naminoue Shrine, which sits atop a cliff overlooking the beach and the South China Sea. Though integrated into the national system of Shinto shrines

¹⁸² English translation of the titles of the prints are those employed by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in their online (public) and internal collections databases. (<http://www.mfa.org/search/collections>) No indication is given on the prints as to the order they are meant to go in, if any, or the order of their publication. The *Liuqiuguo zhilue* depicts the scenes in the following order (Japanese/English reading given): *Senki*, *Rinkai*, *Beison*, *Dragon Cavern*, *Jungai*, *Chōkō*, *Castle Peak*, *Chūtō*. If there is any logic to this ordering, it is unclear.

Zhou Huang 周煌. *Liuqiuguo zhilue* 琉球国志略. 1757. Repr. Shanghai: Commercial Press 商務印書館, 1936. pp. 24-39.

¹⁸³ *Okinawa bijutsu zenshū* 沖縄美術全集, vol. 5. Naha: Okinawa Times, 1989. pp. 96, Plates 6, 9, 18.

in the Meiji period, Naminoue was previously a shrine of the native Ryukyuan religion, associated with the protection of the kingdom.¹⁸⁴

Another print in the series, entitled “Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō” (長虹秋霽, *Chōkō shūsei*)(Fig. 3-2), depicts a long, thin stone bridge, with a few islets in the distance, and a mountain on the horizon. Two boats, not present in the Chinese original (Fig. 3-3), ply the waters in the lower left corner of the composition; Hokusai has also added two tiny figures walking across the bridge. The sea is depicted here, as throughout the series, with a blue *bokashi* (fading) effect which replaces the countless ocean waves drawn in black line in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*. A mountain on the horizon, indicated by a simple triangle in both the Chinese and Japanese versions of the image (colored a pale yellow in Hokusai’s print), has been identified by several scholars as bearing a striking resemblance to conventional depictions of Mt. Fuji. It stands alone on the horizon, clearly visible, its distinctively triangular shape said to recall the famous mountain. A form in the far distance in another print in the series, “Banana Garden at Chūtō,” is even more easily identifiable as Mt. Fuji, as it is colored in a dark blue, with an area of white at the top, recalling Fuji’s distinctive snowcap (Figs. 3-5, 6). The possible significance or discursive implications of Hokusai’s inclusion of Mt. Fuji in these landscapes is discussed below.

The Chōkōtei (長虹堤, lit. “long rainbow embankment”) to which the title of the print refers was a one-kilometer-long, narrow earthen causeway, built around 1452, to link the port city of Naha, much of which was then located on its own islet in the bay, with the port of Tomari and the royal capital of Shuri, on Okinawa Island proper.¹⁸⁵ The embankment is no longer extant, as the waters it once spanned have since been filled in with landfill, and the city of Naha has grown to encompass Tomari, as well as Shuri and a number of other former villages and towns in the area. However, while the Chōkōtei is generally described as an earthen embankment, and not a stone bridge, it seems fairly clear that this is the site to which the print refers.

In Hokusai’s print “The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai” (臨海湖声, *Rinkai kosei*)(Fig. 3-6), as well as in the Chinese image upon which it was based (Fig. 3-7), a stone embankment, much like the one in “Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō,” extends diagonally across the composition, from lower right to upper left, as it does in the “Chōkō” print. Five rooftops and a number of trees sit

¹⁸⁴ Maehira Fusaaki 真栄平房昭. “*Bakuhanei kokka no gaikō girei to Ryūkyū*” 幕藩制国家の外交儀礼と琉球. *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歴史学研究 620 (June 1991), pp. 43.

¹⁸⁵ “Chōkōtei” 長虹堤. *Okinawa konpakuto jiten*.

Uezato Takashi 上里隆史. “The Formation of the Port City of Naha in Ryukyu and the World of Maritime Asia: From the Perspective of a Japanese Network.” *Acta Asiatica* 95 (2008), pp. 61.

atop the embankment, encircled by high stone walls, just to the right of the center of the composition. The embankment ends near the top left of the composition, connecting to a hilly or mountainous islet, atop which sits another stone-walled enclosure. Hokusai added a small boat in the bottom right corner, as in “Jungai” and “Chōkō,” along with a few blue roofs on an islet present in the Chinese work, in the distance, in the top right of the composition. The word “Rinkai” in the title of the print literally means “beside the sea,” but also refers to a temple, Rinkai-ji, which once stood on a long, narrow spit of land in Naha Bay.¹⁸⁶ As in both Hokusai’s print and the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* image, the temple was located roughly halfway between the “mainland,” so to speak, of Okinawa Island, and the fortress of Mie *gusuku*, at the end of the spit, which was built to guard the entrance to the harbor.¹⁸⁷

In Hokusai’s “Bamboo Grove at Beison” (桑村竹籬, *Beison chikuri*)(Fig. 3-9), a group of blue-tiled roofs sticks up above a cluster of trees, surrounded by stone walls and reed or bamboo fences. As in most of the other prints in the series, the land drops off rather sharply, only a narrow strip of yellow land separating the water’s edge and the gates to this walled compound. A few figures – not present in the Chinese version of this scene (Fig. 3-10) – can be found on this strip of land, outside the gates, looking out at the water, walking, and possibly talking (one appears to be sweeping the ground with a broom, rake, or similar implement), while another figure mans a small boat just offshore. Other rooftops, trees and hills are seen in the distance, partially hidden behind white and yellow mists or clouds. While most of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints are fairly faithful to the landforms described in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*, in “Beison,” a section of tree-lined land on the right side of the composition, in the background, is replaced with an area of yellow and white, representing mist or water. The result is a composition which gives the impression of smaller, more isolated islands, in contrast to the Chinese composition, in which the landforms seem more extensive, or grouped more tightly.

From the title, it is clear that “Beison” is meant to be a depiction of Kumemura (O: Kuninda), the chief center of Chinese learning in the kingdom, and the community from which the majority of the kingdom’s scholar-bureaucrats were drawn.¹⁸⁸ The titles of these prints are generally given using the *on’yomi* or “Chinese-style” reading for the Chinese characters, but in most cases, the characters of the title are recognizable as placenames that employ the *kun’yomi*,

¹⁸⁶ Uezato. p. 58.

¹⁸⁷ “Rinkaiji” 臨海寺。 *Okinawa Encyclopedia* 沖縄大百科事典. vol. 3. p962.; Uezato. pp. 61, 68-69.; Turnbull. p. 29.

¹⁸⁸ Uezato. pp. 57, 59ff.

or Japanese-style reading, of those same characters. Here, the characters read as “Beison” (桑村) can also be read as “Kumemura.”

“Banana Garden at Chūtō” (中島蕉園, *Chūtō shōen*)(Fig. 3-6) depicts a similar scene of blue roofs, stone walls, an expanse of water, a single boat, and mountains rising up in the background. The view here is from an even more distant vantage point, the figures smaller. These figures, along with the boat, like those in “Beison,” are additions, not present in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* composition (Fig. 3-7). Forms resembling banana leaves – long and tapering, extending upwards in groups of three or so – emerge from between the blue-roofed structures and the stone walls. Large yellow boulders covered in texture dots, not unlike those typical of Chinese landscape paintings, lie on the shore, or in the water; one, fully on land, is surrounded by walls and houses which have been built around it. Where the Chinese composition employs lines to create texture on the rocks and mountains, Hokusai’s print uses dotted patterns, and incorporates color. In both versions of the image, a stairway extends down into the water, as it does in “The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai,” highlighting, perhaps, the close connection of this community to the sea. White clouds with rounded fingers extend across the middle-ground, obscuring the distance between the blue-roofed homes and the distant mountains. This last element is an alteration from the Chinese composition. Similarly to the changes in “Beison” discussed above, here too Hokusai adds additional areas of mist, further distancing the conglomeration of homes in the foreground from the mountains in the background. As in “Beison,” this makes the composition feel less densely packed, arguably creating the impression of smaller and more isolated communities.

In “Chūtō,” the site depicted can once again be determined from the title of the print. Chūtō is the *on’yomi* for Nakashima 仲島, an area in what is now the Izumisaki neighborhood of Naha City, which was known as a pleasure district in the early modern period. Nakashima became established as a red-light district around 1672, along with two other nearby areas, and remained active in this capacity until such operations were shut down in 1908. The area is also famous for the so-called *Nakashima nu ufu-ishi* 仲島大石, or “large stones of Nakashima,”¹⁸⁹ included in the Chinese illustration, and colored yellow in Hokusai’s print.

The form of a long, thin, stone bridge, slightly curved upwards, as seen in “Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō,” appears once again in “Night Moon at Senki” (泉崎夜月, *Senki yagetsu*)(Fig.

¹⁸⁹ “Nakashima” 仲島. *Okinawa Encyclopedia*. vol. 3. p. 15.

3-8). In this print, Hokusai employed a deeper set of blues, and the same yellow hue for the clouds as for the ground, suggesting the darkness of the night. The depiction of the sky in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* illustration (Fig. 3-9) is fairly minimal. A few lines suggest the presence of clouds in an otherwise blank expanse at the top of the composition; the moon is not depicted. By contrast, Hokusai places a disc of white at top center, amidst a field of pale blue, the moon floating in the sky just to the right of a rolling mountain. A swath of yellow cloud or mist with rounded fingers extends horizontally across the middle of the composition, where in the Chinese illustration there is only blank space implying the presence of the cloud or mist. Tiny figures – this time present in both Chinese and Japanese compositions – cross the bridge, which extends from a spit of land in the bottom right hand corner of the composition to a compound of buildings on the right, rising up behind stone walls. The compound is much more impressive in the *ukiyo-e* print, consisting of three or four large blue-roofed buildings, with one even taller tower behind them, where the Chinese image has only a few smaller buildings. The significance of this, if any, is unclear. The print is quite similar to the Chinese composition in other respects, however, such as in the inclusion of two boats in the lower right (this time visible in the Chinese illustration as well), and in the depiction of a pair of trees in the lower left corner, rendered in largely the same shape or form in both works. The deep blue of the rooftops, the stone walls, the stone facing of the land where it drops down into the water, and the yellow ground in Hokusai's version are all quite consistent with the remainder of the series. The *on'yomi* "Senki" 泉崎 of the print's title uses the same characters as those for Izumisaki, at that time a separate village, and today a neighborhood in central Naha which contains the offices of the prefectural government, central police station, and City Hall.¹⁹⁰

Also within the Izumisaki area is a site known as Jōgaku, or Gusukudake, which might be literally translated as "castle peak." It is this site which is depicted in Hokusai's "Sacred Fountain at Castle Peak" (城嶽靈泉, *Jōgaku reisen*)(Fig. 3-10). This composition contrasts with the others in the series, in that it features no human figures, no boats, no grey stone bridges or walls, and no expanse of light blue water. The only manmade structure evident is a single Chinese-style gate, hiding behind tall, thin trees at the right side of the composition, expanded somewhat in size and form from that in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* illustration (Fig. 3-11). The viewer's eye is drawn to a waterfall at the center, which flows into a body of water colored a deep blue in Hokusai's rendering, which seems to extend up towards the top of the composition. Much of the rest of

¹⁹⁰ "Izumisaki" 泉崎. *Okinawa Encyclopedia*. vol. 1. p. 184.

the composition is taken up by hilly, grassy, land in greens and yellows, partially obscured by white clouds. As in other illustrations from the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*, the clouds in the Chinese composition are described chiefly in wavy lines and seem to flow vertically; by contrast, the form of the clouds in the Japanese version of “Castle Peak,” like those throughout the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, flow horizontally across the composition. Some seen here have long tendrils with rounded ends, while others are rounder and fluffier, much more like the clouds stereotypically seen in Western children’s drawings. On the bottom left, thin paths of land separate areas of light blue water which might be assumed to be rice fields, some other kind of flooded fields, or perhaps fish ponds or the like; these are larger and less numerous than in the Chinese rendering.

Today, Jōgaku is a public park. Prior to World War II, the hill was covered in pines and bushes, and from the top one could see all of the Izumisaki area, as well as the port of Naha. Despite the name “Castle Peak,” the site is not associated with a castle or fortress, but once was the site of an *utaki* 御嶽, a sacred grove of the native Ryukyuan religion. One earlier Chinese envoy recorded the presence of a structure at the top of the hill, but another reported in 1719 that it had collapsed; by the time of Zhou Huang’s journey to Ryūkyū in 1757, there may have been very little of it left.¹⁹¹

The final print in the series, “Pines and Waves at the Dragon Cavern” (龍洞松濤, *Ryūdō shōtō*)(Fig. 3-12), stands apart from the others somewhat in that it depicts a snow scene, something extremely unlikely to occur in reality in Ryūkyū, or at least extremely uncharacteristic of the islands. This print perhaps deviates the most from its corresponding Chinese model in that the Chinese composition provides little indication of the presence of snow. Areas of blank, white paper describe rocks, rooftops, water, sky, and distant mountains as they do on other pages of the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*; the scratchy, somewhat minimal approach to the depiction of the trees seen throughout the Chinese volume likewise does not allow for the subtlety of depicting snow-covered treetops, or at least does not appear to attempt to do so. By contrast, in Hokusai’s print, areas of green are clearly visible under areas of white outlined in thin black lines to indicate the shape of snow-covered treetops. Similarly, a thin outline and the faintest hint of a deep blue enveloping a triangular area of white suggest a tile rooftop under a layer of snow.

The view is one seen from great distance; if there were any figures outside in the snow, they would surely be little larger than specks or dots. The stonework seen in other prints at the point where the land drops off into the sea is not seen here; unlike in the other prints in the

¹⁹¹ “Gusukudake” 城嶽. *Okinawa Encyclopedia*. vol . 1. p. 951.

series, here the land seems to gradually descend to meet the water, in a more natural manner. Hokusai's version of the composition is dominated by a large expanse of water which blends into the sky, making the location of the division between the two (the horizon line) unclear, and suggesting, perhaps, a feeling of the site floating in an extensive expanse of sea. By contrast, the land in the Chinese version of the scene (Fig. 3-13) extends a little farther to the edge of the composition, separating the sea below it from the sky above. A heavy layer of snow tops two boats added by Hokusai which are otherwise like those seen in other prints in the series. In Hokusai's composition, the white of the snow blends in with cloudforms absent from the Chinese illustration, confusing the eye, and obscuring more than usual the shape and extent of the tendril-like, snaking landforms. At the top right of the composition, we find a deep blue, snowcapped mountain where the Chinese illustration has five peaks stretching across the full width of the two-page spread. As each of the other seven prints in the series refers to a specific site in or around Naha, it should be presumed that "Dragon Cavern" does as well. However, if it does, the identity of the site is unclear, as Ryūdō, or "dragon cavern" does not appear to be the name of any location of note in the city.

Comparison to the classic *Hakkei mode*

The decision to include a snowy scene in a collection of views of tropical Ryūkyū may seem perplexing. However, this is but one of a number of elements of the compositions and titles of the "Eight Views of Ryūkyū" prints designed specifically to recall, or make reference to, the classic theme of the "Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang 瀟湘八景," which is said to have originated with Song dynasty scholar-official Song Di (c. 1015- c. 1080). Song Di was not the first to produce views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers in painting, nor in poetry, but he is cited as having established the specific set of "Eight Views" that Chinese, Korean, and Japanese artists would reference, recreate, adhere to, and adapt for centuries. Song Di's original "Eight Views" paintings do not survive, but scholar-official Shen Gua (1031-1095) discusses the works, and provides their titles, in his *Dream Pool Essays* (夢溪筆談, *Mengxi bitan*), a compilation of his writings on a wide variety of subjects.¹⁹² The eight standard Chinese themes he cites are as follows:

¹⁹² Valerie Malenfer Ortiz. *Dreaming the Southern Song Landscape: The Power of Illusion in Chinese Painting*. Leiden: Brill Publishing, 1999. pp. 64-65ff.
Deng Yinke. *Ancient Chinese Inventions*. Cambridge University Press, 2011. p. 147.

- *Wild Geese Descending to Sandbar 平沙雁落
- *Returning Sails off Distant Shores 遠浦帆歸
- *Mountain Market in Clearing Mist 山市晴嵐
- *River and Sky in Evening Snow 江天暮雪
- *Autumn Moon over Lake Dongting 洞庭秋月
- *Night Rain on Xiao and Xiang 瀟湘夜雨
- *Evening Bell from Mist-Shrouded Temple 煙寺晚鍾
- *Fishing Village in Twilight Glow 漁村夕照¹⁹³

For centuries, these eight titles served as themes for ink landscapes by painters in China, Japan, and Korea. In early modern Japan, *ukiyo-e* print designers adapted the theme to locations in Japan, producing, most famously, series depicting “Eight Views of Ōmi,” the region around Lake Biwa in central-western Japan, as well as, later, series such as “Eight Views of Edo.”¹⁹⁴ Throughout East Asian art, when a set of landscapes is organized into “eight views” (J: *hakkei* 八景), it is almost assuredly a reference to the “Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang” thematic. Indeed, paintings and print series depicting “Eight Views of Ōmi” (*Ōmi Hakkei*) include scenes such as “Evening Bell at Miidera” and “Returning Sails at Yabase,” adhering quite closely to the eight themes cited by Shen Gua, and applying each to a site in or around Ōmi.¹⁹⁵ Meanwhile, series such as the “Eight Views of Edo” (*Edo hakkei*) parody or otherwise twist or adapt the original eight themes, but without ever drifting too far from them; each of the eight prints in the series clearly refers to one of the eight traditional themes. To cite just one example, though Suzuki Harunobu cheekily moved from grand landscapes to parlor scenes in his series *Furyū mitate zashiki hakkei*, the prints still refer clearly and directly to the classic eight themes. Each of the eight prints, which bear titles such as “Returning Sails of the Towel Rack” and “Autumn Moon of the Mirror Stand,” parodies one of the eight classic “Eight Views” themes, mapping clearly onto the eight classic themes in a one-to-one manner.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Alfreda Murck. *Poetry and Painting in Song China: The Subtle Art of Dissent*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2002. p. 71.; Ortiz. p. 76.

¹⁹⁴ Allen Hockley. *The Prints of Isoda Koryūsai: Floating World Culture and its Consumers in Eighteenth-Century Japan*. University of Washington Press, 2003. pp. 55-56, 68ff.

¹⁹⁵ Hockley. pp. 55-56.

¹⁹⁶ Hockley. p. 56.

The titles, and pictorial content, of each of Hokusai's *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints, however, while pointing to the traditional eight themes, diverge quite starkly from them. No one of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints refers specifically, and solely, to one of the standard eight themes. The classic "Eight Views" theme of "Autumn Moon over Lake Dongting," for example, is referenced in the titles and compositions in Hokusai's prints "Night Moon at Senki," "The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai," and "Pines and Waves at the Dragon Cavern," the Chinese character for "cavern" 洞 being the same as the "Dong" in the name of Lake Dongting. However, "The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai," while mentioning a lake, does not depict an "autumn moon," nor do any of the other *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints. None make direct mention of Dongting. Similarly, "Sunset Glow at Jungai" recalls the classic theme of "Fishing Village in Twilight Glow,"¹⁹⁷ but does not depict a fishing village. Several of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* include depictions of sailing ships, but none include the classic phrase "Returning Sails" in their title; "Pines and Waves at the Dragon Cavern" depicts a snow scene – all but unheard of in Okinawa – in allusion to the classic theme of "River and Sky in Evening Snow," but again does not employ any of the characters for river, sky, evening, or snow in its title. In short, though the references to the classic "Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang" are obvious in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, a considerable divergence from the standard titles and motifs is also evident.

Granted, Hokusai did not choose these sites, titles, or compositions himself, and so the blame for the divergence could be laid at the feet of the illustrator of the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*. However, Hokusai made the conscious decision to abide by the choices made by that illustrator, to adopt the compositions and their titles without altering them to better fit the standard eight themes, and made the decision (along with his publisher, Moriya Jihei) to label and market these as a *hakkei* series. Thus, it can be argued that in their failure to hew to either the standard themes of the "Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang" or those of the "Eight Views of Ōmi," the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* were intentionally designed, both by the Chinese investiture envoys in their selection of sites and titling of the images, and in Hokusai's conscious choice to reproduce those divergent subjects and titles wholesale, to represent a foreign place, not fully within the realm of China nor of Japan. Conceived of as being located outside of these realms geographically, and/or culturally, *Ryūkyū* thus falls outside of the realm of the applicability, or appropriateness, of standard Chinese or Japanese thematics of poetry and painting, such as that of the "Eight

¹⁹⁷ The terms "Sunset Glow" and "Evening Glow" here are translations of the same two-character phrase, 夕照。

Views.” By having the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* not fit the standard motifs that would be expected for landscape scenes of sites in China or Japan, Hokusai (and the illustrator of the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* before him) emphasizes the distance, or difference, between Ryūkyū and Japan.

The Foreign and the Familiar in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*

The *Ryūkyū Hakkei* are not the only landscape prints by Hokusai depicting sites he never visited, and merely imagined. In fact, Hokusai likely never traveled to many of the places he depicted. Yet, though many of those scenes may be merely imagined scenes, and not described from direct experience, they nevertheless function to allow viewers to travel vicariously, experiencing the geographic breadth of “Japan” and gaining an appreciation for the “Japaneseness” of these sites. As Mary Beth Berry writes, “actual discovery may not have been essential to the social role of *meisho* [名所, “famous places”] ... It was the presentation of famous places in guides and maps, as well as the dissemination of the *meisho* image, that probably bound society more emphatically than travel itself.”¹⁹⁸

Meisho prints, and other prints depicting landscapes within Japan, employed a variety of signs and stylistic elements, along with elements of standardization of depiction throughout a series, or even between series, which helped reinforce the conceptual connections between disparate sites – or between sites and viewers – into a singular entity known as “Japan” (or “Nihon”) comprised of the people and places depicted, as well as everything between them. Many of these features, consistent throughout Hokusai’s depictions of landscape scenes within “Japan,” do not occur in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, markedly setting Ryūkyū apart. Comparisons of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints to other landscapes by Hokusai thus serve as a good starting point for determining the extent to which the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* can be said to represent Ryūkyū as foreign, or as Japanese.

To begin with, Hokusai literally distances his viewer from Ryūkyū by employing in his Ryūkyū prints a birds-eye perspective, and a relatively distant point of view. While there are surely exceptions, generally speaking, most of Hokusai’s landscape prints of sites within Japan depict scenes from a relatively close vantage point, and the human figures often relatively large within the frame of the print. The point of view in those prints is low and near the ground-line, resembling somewhat a view from human eye-level, making the scene seem more nearby, and more familiar or accessible. This can be clearly seen in, for example, the “Sazai Hall of the

¹⁹⁸ Berry. “Was Early Modern Japan Culturally Integrated?” pp. 576-577.

Temple of the 500 Arhats” print from Hokusai’s “36 Views of Mt. Fuji” series (Fig. 3-19), in which the viewer is placed on a veranda, behind a number of figures looking out at Mt. Fuji. The figures are large enough that details of their clothing, hairstyles, and gestures or poses are visible, and the architectural foreground is presented as though the viewer were there on the veranda herself. By contrast, the figures and buildings in the Ryūkyū prints are a fraction of the size, depicted as though seen from a great distance. Gian Carlo Calza writes:

Here the vision is distant and detached, with a multiple vanishing point, also known as a ‘bird’s-eye’ view. The observer is not directly involved, but is simply fascinated by a beautiful panorama, rendered exotic by the use of almost fairy-tale natural features emphasizing the sense of distant and unknown lands.¹⁹⁹

Richard Lane further describes the effect as “dangerously close... to *bonseki* – miniature landscapes fashioned from sand and pebbles.”²⁰⁰ This effect is enhanced by the expansiveness of areas of sea and sky in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, which all but completely surround the landforms, and frame the compositions, serving as a stand-in for the tray or frame within which such *bonseki* landscapes would be displayed.

In the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints, sea and sky surround islands so minute that they house only a handful of small structures, emphasizing the identification of Ryūkyū with tiny islands, and with a heavily island- or ocean-based lifestyle. Other lands are seen only in the distance, and are often obscured by mists, making each tiny island – whether it be the large structure seen in “Night Moon at Senki,” or the ten or so homes on a minuscule island of their own in “Banana Garden at Chūtō” – seem all but entirely removed from one another, alone in a vast ocean, dramatically exaggerating the impression of distance and isolation.

This depiction of very small landforms with wide expanses of surrounding sea may in fact not be entirely unrealistic when it comes to sites such as the Chōkōtei embankment, or the long spit of land seen in “The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai,” both of which, in reality, jutted out into, or across, expanses of water. Yet, on the whole, Okinawa Island, or, for that matter, even the far smaller island of Ukishima which once constituted the core of the city of Naha, were not nearly as small, nor as divided up by the sea, as would seem to be indicated by images such as “Banana Garden at Chūtō” and “Bamboo Grove at Beison,” where bridges and boats abound, and ten or so houses are crammed onto a tiny island or peninsula, the sea never more than a few yards away. The bird’s eye view, and isolation of landforms in a frame of sea and sky,

¹⁹⁹ Gian Carlo Calza. *Hokusai*. London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 2003. p. 230.

²⁰⁰ Lane. *Hokusai*. p. 207.

contributes to a sense of detachment and distance which, indeed, lends the scenes the appearance of being miniaturized fantasy landscapes, distancing them not only from the viewer, but also from reality.

The Ryūkyū prints are further marked as foreign by Hokusai in the style of cartouche with which he encloses the title of the series, his signature, and the title of the individual scene on each print. In the vast majority of his other landscape prints depicting scenes within Japan, such as in prints from his series “36 Views of Mt. Fuji,” “Rare Views of Famous Japanese Waterfalls,” or “Remarkable Views of Bridges in Various Provinces” (Figs. 3-20,21,22), he employs a simple rectangular cartouche. Yet, in the Ryūkyū prints, the cartouche takes a more elaborate form, resembling, it has been suggested, a particular style of Chinese fan known as a “duck’s foot” shape or “Swatow fan.”²⁰¹ Fans similar in shape to these cartouches are also seen in traditional Ryūkyū dance,²⁰² and in the Ryukyuan *kumi-odori* (O: *kumi-udui*) theatrical form. Such a fan is wielded, for example, by the villain Amawari in the play *Nidū tichi uchi* (Fig. 3-23), suggesting that this is indeed a style of fan which could be associated with Ryūkyū, and, thus, with the foreign, or the non-Japanese. This use of a different, and possibly Chinese- or Ryukyuan-inspired, cartouche rather than the simpler rectangular one seen on Hokusai’s landscape scenes in Japan can be read as one of a number of discursive elements implying the non-Japaneseness, i.e. foreignness, of Ryūkyū for Hokusai and the Japanese people of his time.

Yet, the architectural styles of structures seen in the compositions tell a more complicated story. The architecture depicted in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* includes Japanese-style rooftops, Chinese-style gates, and traditional Ryukyuan stonework, crafting for the contemporary Edo period consumer of Hokusai’s prints an impression that Ryūkyū is exotic, but not wholly foreign, a place with its own distinctive architectural aesthetics alongside familiar elements from Japanese styles, and decidedly foreign (to Japanese eyes) elements from its own traditions and those of distant China.

Ryukyuan stonework can be seen throughout the series, nearly everywhere that land meets sea. It is seen especially, however, in bridges, such as in “Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō” and “Night Moon at Senki,” and in walls, such as in “The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai” and “Sunset Glow at Jungai.” The “Rinkai” print depicts Mie *gusuku*, which was built in the late

²⁰¹ Neville John Irons. *Fans of Imperial China*. Hong Kong: Kaiserreich Kunst, Ltd., 1982. p. 228.

My thanks to Dr. Alfred Haft for alerting me to this connection.

²⁰² Nishihira Shumo and Tōma Ichirō. *Koten Ryūkyū buyō no kata to kumi odori go gumi* 古典琉球舞踊の型と組踊五組. Naha: Gekkan Okinawa-sha, 1972. pp. 30, 280-287.

16th century to defend the harbor.²⁰³ Traditional Okinawan fortresses, known as *gusuku*, are known for their stonework, which made extensive use of local Okinawan limestone. The arrangement of the structures in “Sunset Glow at Jungai” in particular recalls the typical layout of *gusuku* fortresses. The actual site depicted in “Jungai,” Naminoue Shrine, was never used as a military fortress or noble’s fortified residence. However, the way that the structures are arranged in Hokusai’s print closely resembles Nakijin *gusuku*, the center of power for the kingdom of Hokuzan, which ruled the northern section of Okinawa Island. The residence of the Lord of Nakijin was near the top of a mountain outcropping; other buildings, as well as a small garden, and a spring, were located nearby, within high walls of rough stone. The homes of lesser vassals, along with other structures within the castle compound, were located at a lower level down the incline, while a series of shrines occupied the highest point atop the outcropping.²⁰⁴ It is especially in this last manner that the connections between a representative fortress such as Nakijin *gusuku*, and the Naminoue bluff depicted in “Sunset Glow at Jungai” are obvious.

Other than one Chinese-style gate in “Sacred Fountain at Castle Peak,” Chinese architecture is not seen in the series. While the rooftops in many of the original *Liuqiuguo zhilue* images are distinctively Chinese in appearance, curving upwards at the corners, those in Hokusai’s prints are not. This is a significant change. It would seem that Hokusai intentionally altered the rooftops presented in the Chinese images to become Japanese *irimoya* 入母屋 hipped-gable roofs.²⁰⁵ In the *irimoya* style, the front and back planes of the roof descend straight downwards from the peak of the roof, not curving but flat. The triangular form they create is visible on the sides of the building, where roof elements extend out to the sides at a much shallower angle. Though this style of roof was originally introduced to Japan from China,²⁰⁶ it is evident in the earliest extant example of Japanese Buddhist architecture, the 7th century Tamamushi Shrine, and later became the most common form of roof for Buddhist temples in Japan.²⁰⁷ Hokusai’s contemporary audience would have seen these as quite familiar forms, not as exotic or foreign.²⁰⁸ Many of the other rooftops in the series are in a much simpler style, in

²⁰³ Uezato. pp. 61, 68-69.; Turnbull. p. 29.

²⁰⁴ Kerr. pp. 61-62.

²⁰⁵ A.L. Sadler. *A Short History of Japanese Architecture*. Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1962. Plate 114.

²⁰⁶ Mary Parent. “Irimoya-zukuri.” *Japan Architecture and Art Net Users System (JAANUS)*. 2001. Available online at <http://www.aist.or.jp/~jaanus/deta/i/irimoyazukuri.htm>. Viewed 30 September 2011.

²⁰⁷ Penelope Mason. *History of Japanese Art*. New York: Harry N. Adams, 1993. p. 46.

²⁰⁸ Though we are speaking of a time when Japan was more politically decentralized and perhaps more culturally heterogeneous than today, “there is a bedrock of basic similarities [in architecture across the

which the roof descends in roughly rectangular forms on the two long sides of the building, with no third and fourth segments descending down the short sides of the building. These too would look quite typical to the Japanese viewer; in stark contrast to the forms seen in the Chinese images on which Hokusai based his compositions, the eaves of the Japanese-style roofs in his *Ryūkyū Hakkei* prints do not curve upwards. “Th[at] concave curve of roof eave ends,” which Hokusai eliminates from the compositions, is “a trademark of Chinese wooden architecture. That curve is present in most Chinese roofs.”²⁰⁹

As the majority of the *hakkei* prints depict neighborhoods and not specific famous buildings, we cannot know precisely what those specific structures might have looked like; however, comparison to extant structures from that time, pre-war photographs, and evidence from archaeological research indicates that neither the up-turned eaves seen in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* nor the hipped-gabled roofs seen in Hokusai’s images reflect traditional Ryukyuan architectural styles. The Nakamura family house in Kita-Nakagusuku, originally built around 1750, is believed to be the oldest extant example of an Okinawan *minka* 民家, or private home,²¹⁰ and is but one of a number of aristocratic homes from the 18th century which survive today. Though located at a distance from the capital, the Nakamura house and others like it are believed to very closely emulate the style of aristocratic homes in Shuri. These are therefore fine examples of the type of roofs that would have dominated the 18th-early 19th century skyline of the places depicted in Hokusai’s *Ryūkyū Hakkei*. The form of Okinawan *minka* is said to have been strongly influenced by Japanese *shoin* 書院 architecture in the early 17th century, following the Satsuma invasion, but it is also believed to have changed very little afterwards, over the course of the 18th and early 19th centuries.²¹¹ This means that Hokusai’s alteration of the style of the rooftops throughout the series cannot be taken as an effort to “correct” the Chinese images based on information he might have somehow obtained as to actual architectural changes in Ryūkyū between 1757 (the year of the publication of the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*) and his own time, in 1832.²¹² That Okinawan *minka* architecture has its basis in Japanese forms is evident in the way in which

archipelago] that, if not universal, still apply in a great majority of cases. It is this core of shared traits that allows us to speak of ‘Japanese architecture.’”

Nishi Kazuo and Hozumi Kazuo. *What is Japanese Architecture?* Kodansha International, 1983. p. 6.

²⁰⁹ Fu Xinian. “The Sui, Tang, and Five Dynasties.” in Sun Dazhang et. al. p. 130.

²¹⁰ *Okinawa bijutsu zenshū*. vol. 5. p. 99.

²¹¹ *Okinawa bijutsu zenshū*. vol. 5. p. 100.

²¹² That Hokusai could have, or would have, obtained such information is rather unlikely, in any case, as he had no direct access at all to visiting Ryukyuan officials, to Japanese who might have met with the Ryukyuan visitors, or to official documents.

pillars and rafters are used to hold up the roof, in the arrangement of rooms, and in various other elements, even as the Okinawan structures deviate from Japanese forms as well. The roof of the Okinawan *minka* is particularly distinctive, and as the form of the roof is what is most clearly visible in both Hokusai's prints and his Chinese models, it is here that we shall focus our attention. The Nakamura house, along with other extant structures, bear squat, tiled, hipped roofs in which the four roof segments descend from a short ridgebeam.²¹³ The ridge-beams on these roofs is far shorter than those in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* images, which seem to extend the full length of the rooftop, and which are completely absent from Hokusai's images.

The eaves of the Okinawan *minka*, meanwhile, as at the Uezu family house seen in Fig. 3-25, curve up slightly at the corners, less dramatically than is implied by the Chinese images, but more so than the eaves in Hokusai's prints, which do not curve up at all. An overhanging second lower section of roof called an *ama-haji*, and exterior walkways seen, for example, at the Uezu house, are features developed in Okinawa to help provide protection from typhoons.²¹⁴ The roof tiles are a shade of red-orange that is extremely common in the Ryūkyū Islands, and contrasts sharply with the dark blue employed in Hokusai's prints. Red ceramic tiles such as these became quite standard on the roofs of palace buildings and aristocratic homes in Shuri, as well as other structures, as early as the 16th century.²¹⁵

Given the dramatic differences between the rooftops seen on traditional Ryukyuan structures, and those seen in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, it seems extremely unlikely that Hokusai might have been seeking to correct the Chinese images, in order to represent the scenes in a manner truer to actual Ryukyuan architectural styles. Hokusai very likely had no solid source of information as to the true appearance of Ryukyuan architecture; however, he may have made these alterations in order to make the images better match his own impressions or conceptions as to what Ryūkyū looked like, as shaped by the popular discourse to which Hokusai had been exposed in his life. This is, perhaps, only a difference of nuance, but it is an important one.

Guided by these ideas about the nature of Ryūkyū's cultural identity, Hokusai's alteration of the rooftops in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* may have been a deliberate move to make Ryūkyū seem more familiar, more Japanese in appearance, and less "foreign" in general, by

²¹³ This style of roof, in which the sides are triangular on the short sides of the building, and trapezoidal on the long sides, most closely resembles what is called a *yosemune* 寄棟 roof in Japanese. A hipped roof style, it is markedly different from the hipped-gable *irimoya* style employed by Hokusai. See Fig. 3-25. Parent. "Yosemune yane." *Japan Architecture and Art Net Users System (JAANUS)*. Viewed 30 March 2012.

²¹⁴ *Okinawa bijutsu zenshū*. vol. 5. p. 100.

²¹⁵ *Okinawa bijutsu zenshū*. vol. 5. pp. 97-98.

making it less Chinese. As discussed above, the term *tōjin*, a word which might be translated as “Chinese people” or, more literally, to “people of Tang [Dynasty China],” was very frequently used to refer to foreigners more generally, equating a general conception of foreignness with Chinese-ness. Though we have already seen a number of examples to the contrary, many other Edo period works did in fact reflect conceptions of the foreign which conflated all foreigners, both Westerners and non-Westerners, into a single category of “foreigner,” or *tōjin*.²¹⁶ A similar logic was employed in describing all foreign ships from East or Southeast Asia as *tōsen* 唐船, or “ships of Tang [China].”²¹⁷ Chinese elements in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* landscapes, therefore, would not have been seen by Hokusai as simply signs of a foreign culture, Chinese culture in the specific sense, but as truly equivalent to signs of foreignness itself, i.e. foreignness in a more general sense. Thus, we can perhaps see Hokusai thinking of his stylistic decisions not in terms of Japaneseness and Chineseness, but more broadly and directly in terms of the familiar and the foreign.

His decision to convert a rather non-descript structure in “Sacred Grove at Castle Peak” – just the barest description of a roof and three legs (the pillar at the fourth corner being implied, of course) – into a distinctively Chinese-style gate is curious, therefore, in light of his conversion of so many other architectural elements from Chinese forms in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* compositions into Japanese forms in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, a move which would seem aimed at presenting Ryūkyū as a familiar, and not quite so foreign, place. The gate in Hokusai’s “Sacred Grove” resembles a *chuihuamen* 垂花門, a type of Chinese gate topped by a tiled roof with short eaves, which rises high above the neighboring sections of white plaster or stone walls, each of which has a similar tiled roof. The *chuihuamen* form is particularly distinguished by the elaborate wood carvings to be found under the eaves of the gate,²¹⁸ making the gate’s roof seem disproportionately elevated off the ground, as compared to a simpler style of gate. These features can be seen easily in an example of the *chuihuamen* form at Enchōen, a Chinese garden in Tottori prefecture, Japan (Fig. 3-26). The gate in “Castle Peak” is further distinguished as Chinese by the way its wings (C: 擺手 *baishou*)²¹⁹ curve. On Japanese gates, the wings, or

²¹⁶ Suzuki.

²¹⁷ Ishii Yoneo. *The Junk Trade from Southeast Asia: Translations from the Tōsen Fusetsu-gaki, 1674-1723*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998. pp. 2-3ff.

²¹⁸ Guo Qinghua. *A Visual Dictionary of Chinese Architecture* 中国建築英漢双解辞典. Victoria, Australia: Images Publishing, 2002. p. 26.

Ronald Knapp. *China’s Old Dwellings*. University of Hawai’i Press, 2000. p. 66.

²¹⁹ Guo. pp. 16-17.

adjoining walls tend to be quite straight and rectilinear in form, and to form a straight line with the gate itself.²²⁰

A *torii* gate in “Sunset Glow at Jungai” is another example of Japanese architectural elements in the series. Curiously, a form closely resembling a *torii* appears in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* version of “Jungai” as well, though this is a distinctively Japanese structure, a particular type of gate marking the entrance to a Shinto shrine. The site depicted in “Jungai” would be officially incorporated into the Japanese nationwide system of Shinto shrines in 1890,²²¹ fifty-eight years after the publication of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*. However, when Zhou Huang saw it in 1757, and when Hokusai reproduced an image of it in 1832, the shrine was still one belonging to the indigenous Ryukyuan religion.

Kishi Akimasa has pointed out another feature of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, which contributes to the impression that Ryūkyū is perhaps not so distant – geographically, culturally, and/or politically – from Japan after all. Namely, he has identified triangular forms seen in the background in two of the prints – in the far distance, along the horizon in “Banana Garden at Chūtō” and “Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō” – as Mount Fuji.²²² The identification of these forms as Fuji is supported by writers such as Yonahara Kei.²²³ Though Kishi notes that there were forms on the horizon in some of the original Chinese images which could be construed as resembling Fuji, it seems clear that in Hokusai’s version of the landscapes the artist made a point of intentionally identifying these forms specifically as Fuji, even adding the distinctive snowcap onto one of the mountains in “Banana Garden at Chūtō.”

The inclusion of this triangular form in the distance might be interpreted as simply an element of design, that is, an aesthetic choice, to balance, mirror, or contrast with other shapes and forms in the composition. The same could be said of nearly any element in this print, or indeed, in any artwork. However, whether this was an aesthetic choice does not exempt it from having potential discursive meanings. Hokusai’s own “Thirty-Six Views of Mt. Fuji,” which he began to produce in 1830, just two years prior to the publication of the *Ryūkyū* prints, enhanced Fuji’s prominence in the collective consciousness, and its prominence as a national symbol, allowing it to take on various connotations and resonances in the *Ryūkyū Hakkei*. Though it is in

²²⁰ Examples of many forms of Japanese gates can be found in: Kondō Yutaka 近藤豊. *Ko kenchiku no saibu ishō* 古建築の細部意匠. Taiga Shuppan, 1972. Plates 7 (following p. 20).

²²¹ Shinzato Keiji 新里恵二 et al. *Okinawa-ken no rekishi* 沖縄県の歴史. Yamakawa Shuppansha Ltd., 1996. *Nenpyō* 年表 p. 25.

²²² Kishi.

²²³ Yonahara. p. 137.

reality impossible to see Mt. Fuji from Okinawa, the mountain can be interpreted to be serving a metaphorical or imaginative role here, symbolizing the geographic nearness of the two countries, as well as, perhaps, cultural, political and economic connections.

Conclusion

In adapting the images from the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* into his *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, Hokusai made alterations to the compositions which serve to convey a stronger Ryukyuan cultural connection to Japan than do the images of Ryūkyū in the Chinese source. This suggestion of close connections between Japan and Ryūkyū is accomplished chiefly through the inclusion of Mt. Fuji on the horizon in several of the prints, and the inclusion of Japanese architectural elements where structures in Chinese style were seen in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue*. These images remain scenes of a foreign land, however, seen from a distant bird's eye perspective, which removes the viewer from the scene both in terms of implied physical distance, as well as emotional distance. The landforms seen in the prints are surrounded almost completely by expanses of sea and sky, as though physically cut off from the world of the viewer. Chinese and Ryukyuan architectural elements further contribute to a sense of cultural distance or difference. An element of a vibrant popular discourse, the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* both draws upon, and contributes to, understandings quite prevalent in Hokusai's time of the Ryūkyū Kingdom as a place that straddled the discursive or conceptual line between the foreign and the familiar, the exotic and the domestic, the Other and the Self.

The Japanese pre-modern worldview was not one of strict boundaries between countries, or between the foreign and the familiar. Rather, many people conceived of numerous circles of gradual change away from "Japaneseness," or from "civilization," with the major cities of Edo, Kyoto and Osaka at the center.²²⁴ Thus, we should not expect that Japanese of the time might have seen Ryūkyū as purely foreign, nor as wholly Japanese. Whether in their eyes at that time, or in our own understandings today, Ryūkyū's status or identity vis-à-vis Japan has always been more complex. It is positioned somewhere in-between being wholly foreign, and being geographically, politically, economically, or culturally "Japanese."

Early modern conceptions of Ryūkyū as closely related to, or connected to, Japan, or indeed subordinate in some fashion to Satsuma or to the shogunate, surely had political implications. They served as the basis out of which later attitudes towards Okinawa and its

²²⁴ Morris-Suzuki. pp. 15, 29.; Yonemoto. pp. 106-107.

people developed. However, it is important to note that on an official level, relations between the Ryūkyū Kingdom and the Tokugawa shogunate did not change dramatically between the early 18th century, when the Hawley scrolls were painted, and Hokusai's time over a century later. It would not be until the 1870s, four decades after the publication of the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* and more than twenty years after Hokusai's death, that the Japanese government would begin taking steps to dismantle the government of the Ryūkyū Kingdom, to annex its lands, and to assimilate its people into the Japanese "nation." Though a very few intellectuals of the Edo period suggested on rare occasions annexation of Ryūkyū or the implementation of assimilation policies, the Western world's discourses of Orientalism & racism, imperialism and colonialism, and of the modern nation-state, which fueled the events of the 1870s, had not yet been introduced to Japan in Hokusai's time. To the extent that the *Ryūkyū Hakkei* is implying an argument for conceiving of Ryūkyū as more closely related to Japan, and less associated with China, it does so within a cultural dimension, speaking to viewers' conceptions of the cultural identity of Ryūkyū and its history (and by contrast, their conceptions of their own cultural identity), and not to overt political themes.

Conclusion

Journeys to Ryūkyū were off-limits for Japanese people of the Tokugawa era,²²⁵ and direct interaction with Ryukyuan people was likewise extremely limited; even seeing a Ryukyuan person in the flesh was an extremely rare experience. Knowledge about Ryūkyū was mediated almost entirely through popular publications, including books, prints, and maps. Examination of both elite and popular depictions of Ryukyuan subjects reveals that early modern Japanese conceptions about Ryūkyū and its people ranged widely from the more accurate to the more mistaken. Understandings about Ryūkyū were not singular, but myriad. Yet, common themes emerge.

One of the most prominent of these was the perception that Ryūkyū was subordinate to Japan (or to the shogunate), a less cultured or less civilized kingdom sending missions to a center of civilization – the shogun’s capital of Edo – in ritual acknowledgement of Japan’s (or the shogun’s) superiority. The *Ryūkyū Edo nobori* processions were performative and ritual acts of subordination, tools carefully crafted by the Tokugawa shogunate to shape the discourse of Ryūkyū’s relationship with Tokugawa Japan, for the shogunate’s own benefit. Popular publications depicting the processions, or otherwise drawing upon them provided readers with rather accurate, well-informed descriptions of the Ryukyuan people who took part in these processions, along with their clothes, hairstyles, banners, musical instruments, and appearance otherwise; such materials also functioned to disseminate and reinforce conceptions of the shogunate’s strength, legitimacy, and moral rectitude as an upright Confucian leader, and of Japan as a shining beacon of Neo-Confucian civilization to which lesser countries pay homage and tribute.

Ryūkyū’s cultural connections to China feature quite prominently in such publications as well, as seen both in Ryūkyū’s inclusion in a category alongside China and Korea in maps and guides to “the peoples of the world,” as well as in depictions, some more fantastic than others, incorporating elements of Chinese dress or architecture, or other signs of Chinese culture. Works such as *Ryūkyūjin daigyōretsuki* (1752), *Ehon ikoku ichiran* (1799), *Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki* (1835), and *Ryūkyū kaigo* (1850) conveyed to readers ideas of contemporary Ryukyuan subordination and of centuries-old connections between Ryūkyū and Japan stretching back to

²²⁵ See Note 38: Exceptions to the ban were of course made for a select few Japanese officials engaged in official business concerning Japan’s relations with Korea and Ryūkyū.

the time of Minamoto no Tametomo, as well as conceptions of Ryūkyū as foreign, exotic, and heavily influenced by China, but still somewhat familiar, and culturally and/or geographically near. The discursive conceptions of Ryūkyū perpetuated by these publications had profound political implications, in that the lords of Satsuma *han*, as well as the shogunate, benefited from a popular belief in their power over the foreign island kingdom. Yet, this is not to say that agents of Satsuma or the shogunate had any direct involvement in dictating the content of popular publications. Rather, through the metaphorical machinery of popular discourse, these ideas were conveyed, consumed, repeated, and reinforced by a myriad of actors – including publishers, illustrators, writers, and consumers – each acting independently, based on their own impressions about Ryūkyū. Each drew upon what they themselves had heard, read, and seen, serving as producers of the popular discourse on Ryūkyū just as they were, at the same time, products of it.

In works such as Hokusai's *Ryūkyū Hakkei*, the artist employed artistic license to alter Chinese images in order, perhaps, to depict Ryūkyū the way he understood it, or the way he wished his audience to understand it. He made these changes intentionally, despite the possibility that the images in the *Liuqiuguo zhilue* might have been perfectly accurate, as far as he knew, since they were drawn by Chinese painters who had actually visited these sites in person. We must also consider the possibility that his design decisions were influenced chiefly by profit motives, though it is difficult to ascertain precisely which pictorial aspects were more attractive to, or popular among, consumers. Yet, no matter what his intentions or motivations may have been, the end result was the same: a series of depictions of sites in Ryūkyū that had an impact upon consumers' conceptions, or impressions, of Ryūkyū's cultural (and possibly political) identity, as being quite closely connected or related to Japan, but still distinct, foreign, and exotic.

Access to paintings, prints, and books was by no means universal in early modern Japan, but for those who did have access to such materials, relatively accurate information about Ryūkyū was within reach. Though some publications were far less accurate than others, conflating Ryukyuan costume, architecture, and cultural identity otherwise with that of China, it is clear that writers, publishers, and illustrators, and therefore their readers, had an understanding of Ryūkyū as a distinctive place, however inaccurate that understanding may have been in certain respects. Numerous materials were available portraying Ryūkyū in a distinctive manner, not conflating it with generic or generalized conceptions of "the foreign,"

but rather conveying to readers impressions of Ryukyuan styles of dress and culture and customs otherwise, as well as addressing the history of the kingdom and of its relationships with China and Japan. It is evident from the popular publications surveyed that Ryūkyū was understood to be heavily influenced by, and strongly connected to China, and to have strong connections to Japan as well. Inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago in the early modern period thus conceived of Ryūkyū²²⁶ as being quite culturally close, but as nevertheless lying beyond the imagined cultural and geographical boundaries of what might be considered “Japan.” In doing so, they began, on a more popular level and in a more widespread way than ever before, to imagine those boundaries, to conceive of where they lay and what they meant, and then, by extension, to imagine their membership in what lay within the boundaries: Japan.

²²⁶ Along with other foreign peoples such as the Koreans and the Ainu.

Appendix: Figures



Fig. 1-1

Ryūkyū-jin tōjō no gyōretsu

琉球人登城之行列

(Procession of Ryukyuan Enroute to Edo Castle)(Details)

Anonymous, c. 1710

Handscroll, ink and colors on paper

Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library



Fig. 1-2:

Ryūkyū-koku ryōshi tōjō no gyōretsu emaki
(detail)

琉球国両使登城之行列絵巻

(Illustrated Handscroll of the Procession of
Ryukyuan Ambassadors to the Capital)

Kanō Shunko

c. 1710

Handscroll, ink and colors on silk

British Museum, 1886,0309,0.1-2



Fig. 1-3:

Painting of an *anji* and an *ōji* in robes for great occasions [on the right] and everyday robes [on the left]

王子按司大礼服並通常服着装図

19th c., Anonymous Ryukyuan painter

Tokyo National Museum

Image & brief description included in:

Naha City History Museum 那覇市歴史博物館. *Kokuhō Ryūkyū kokuō Shō-ke kankei shiryō no subete* 国宝「琉球国王尚家関係資料」のすべて. *Okinawa Times*, 2006. p259.



Figs. 1-4, 1-5:

Hachimaki in the collection of the Staatl. Museen zu Berlin, Museum für Völkerkunde.

Sekai ni hokoru Ryūkyū ōchō bunka isan hōten 世界に誇る・琉球王朝文化遺産宝展. Urasoe City Art Museum, 1992. pp80-81.



Fig. 1-6:
Ryūkyū-jin tōjō no gyōretsu 琉球人登城之行列
 Procession of Ryukyuan Enroute to Edo Castle)(Detail)
 Anonymous, c. 1710
 Handscroll, ink and colors on paper
 Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library



Fig. 1-7

Okinawan musical instruments

18th century

Tokugawa Art Museum

Okinawa bijutsu zenshū 沖縄美術全集. vol. 5. Plates 143, 144, 145.

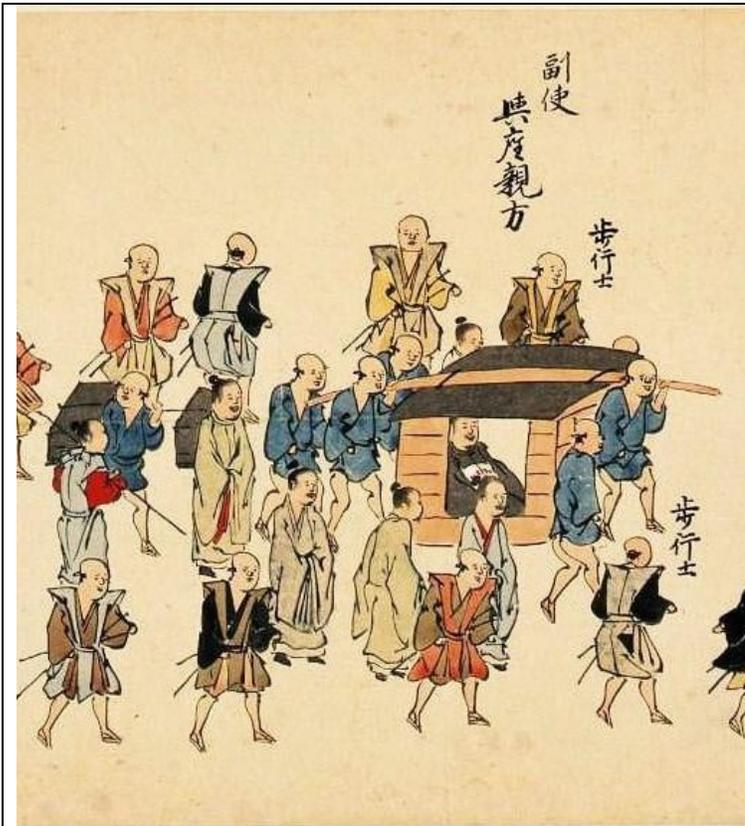


Fig. 1-8:

Ryūkyū-jin tōjō no gyōretsu
琉球人登城之行列
(Procession of Ryukyuan
Enroute to Edo Castle)

Detail depicting vice-envoy
Yoza ueekata and his
entourage

Anonymous, c. 1710
Handscroll, ink and colors on
paper

Sakamaki-Hawley Collection,
University of Hawai'i at
Mānoa Library



Fig. 1-9:

*Ryūkyū-oku ryōshi tōjō no
gyōretsu emaki*
琉球国両使登城之行列繪
卷
(Illustrated Handscroll of the
Procession of Ryukyuan
Ambassadors to the Capital)

Detail depicting vice-envoy
Yoza ueekata and his
entourage

Kanō Shunko 狩野春湖
c. 1710
Handscroll
ink and colors on silk

British Museum,
1886,0309,0.1-2



Fig. 2-1:

Shijūnikoku jinbutsu zusetsu (detail)
四十二国人物図説

1836

Okinawa Prefectural Archives
#T00015112B.

Image reproduced in *Edo nobori*. Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education. p38.

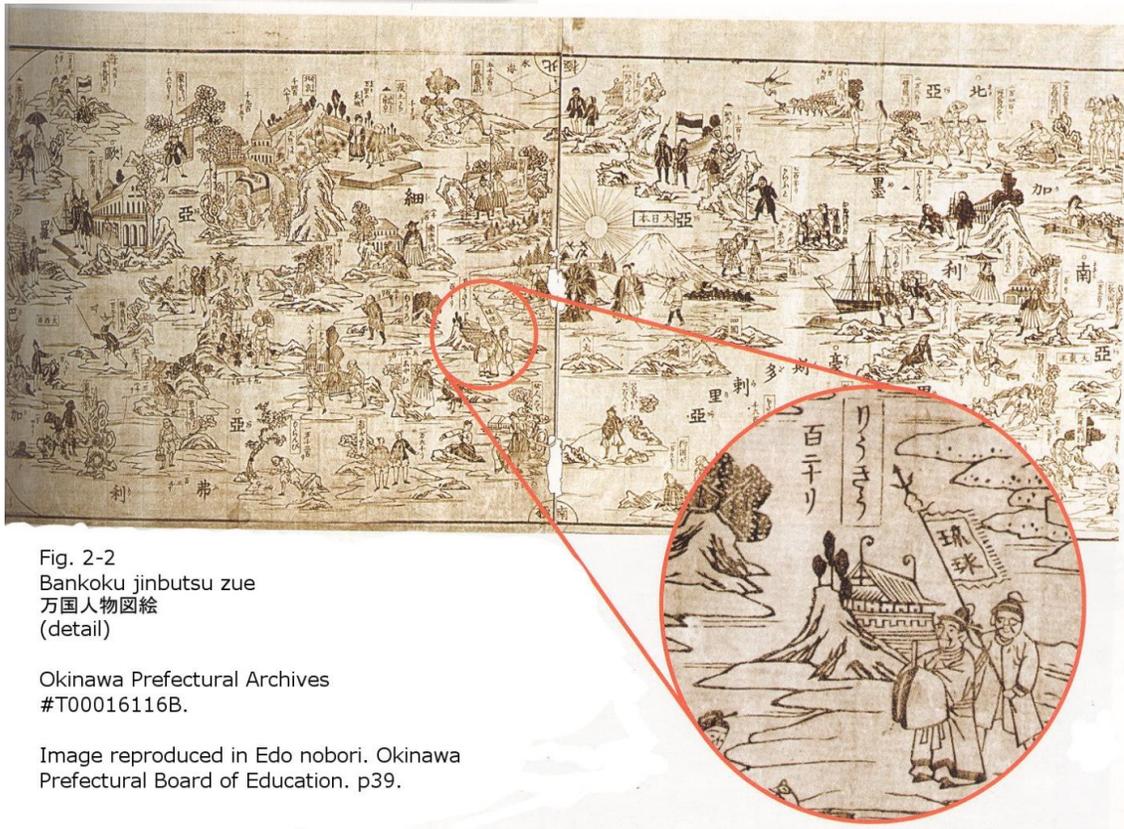


Fig. 2-2
Bankoku jinbutsu zue
万国人物図絵
(detail)

Okinawa Prefectural Archives
#T00016116B.

Image reproduced in *Edo nobori*. Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education. p39.



Fig. 2-3:
Ryūkyū chūzan-ō shisha tōjō gyōretsu zu (detail) 1764
 琉球中山王使者登城行列図
 Okinawa Museum & Art Museum



Fig. 2-4: *Sangoku tsūran zusetsu* 三国通覽図説 1785
 Hayashi Shihei 林子平
 Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library
 Registration numbers HW 552-553

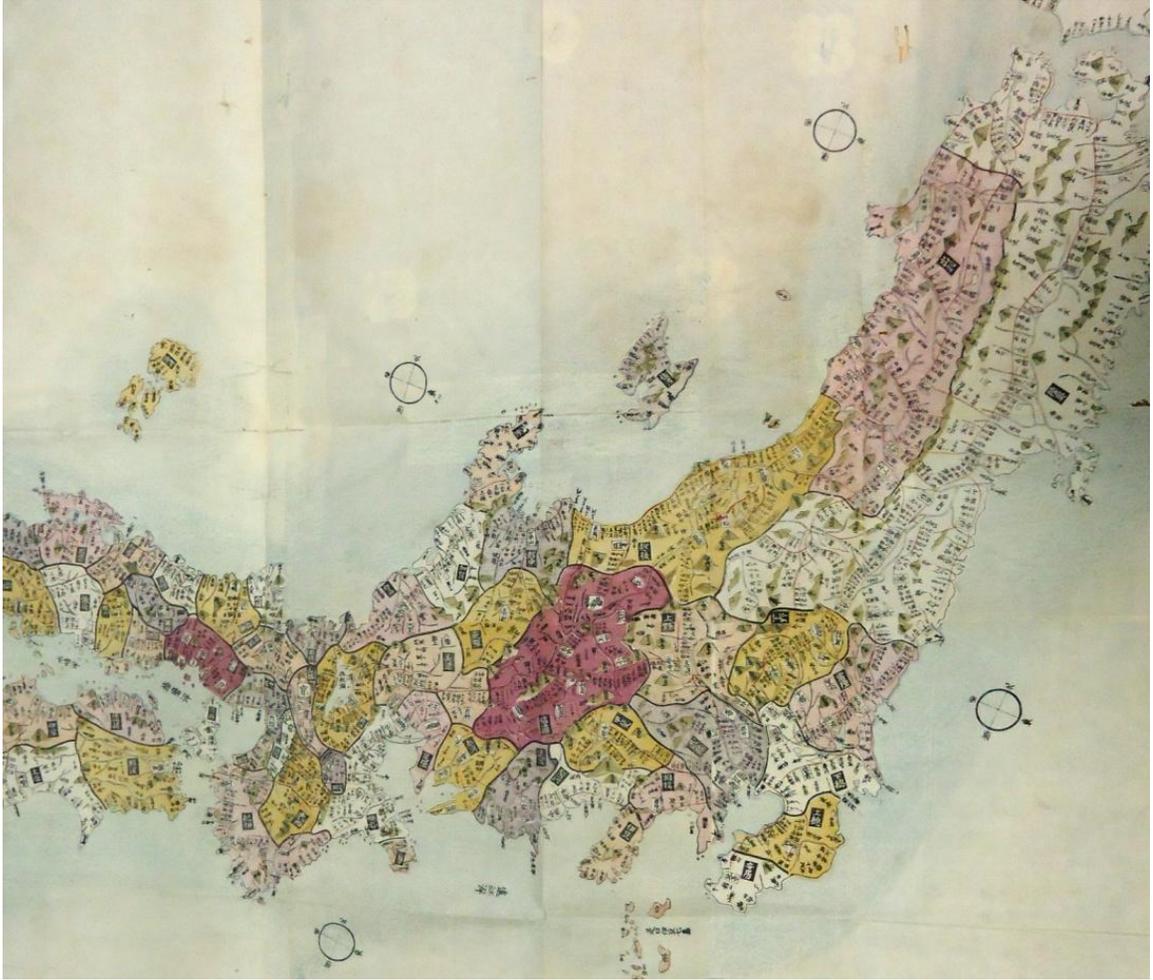


Fig. 2-5:

Dai-Nippon-koku zenzu (detail) 大日本国全図 1829

Part of set *Bankoku yochi no zu* 萬国輿地之図

Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library

Registration number HW 704

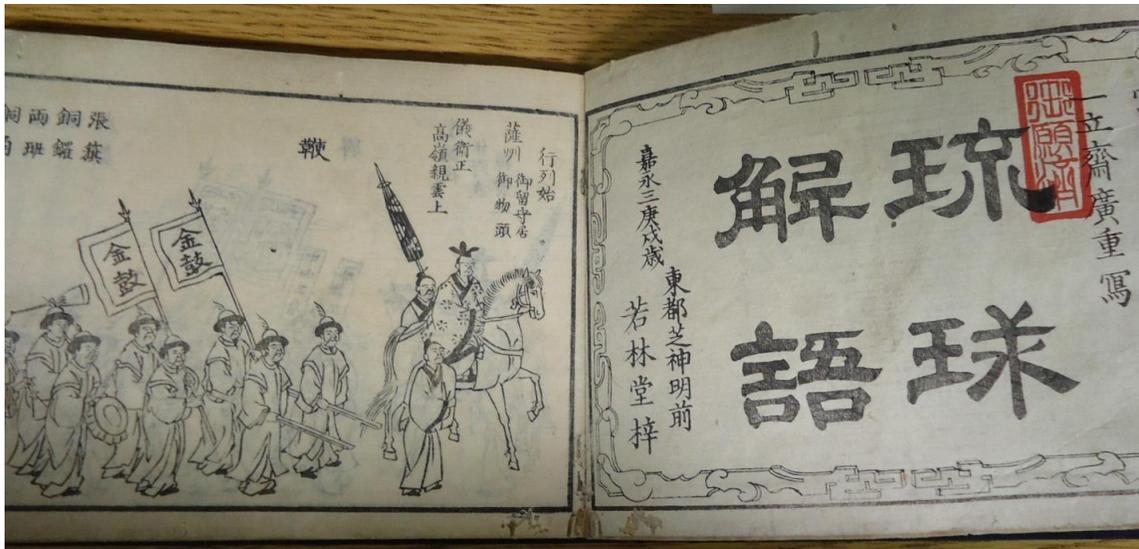


Fig. 2-6: *Ryūkyū kaigo* 琉球解語 1850
 Illustrations by Ichiryūsai Hiroshige 一立齋廣重
 Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library
 Registration Number HW 449 C2



Fig. 2-7:
Ryūkyūjin daigyōretsuki 琉球人大行列記 (detail) 1752
 Benshōdō 辨装堂. Anan Shirōemon 阿南四郎右衛門 (publisher)
 Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library
 Registration Number HW459



Fig. 2-8:
Ryūkyūjin daigyōretsuki 琉球人大行列記 (detail) 1752
 Benshōdō 辨装堂. Anan Shirōemon 阿南四郎右衛門 (publisher)
 Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library
 Registration Number HW459



Fig. 2-9:
Chōsenjin uki-e
 朝鮮人浮き絵

Hanegawa Tōei
 羽川藤永
 1748

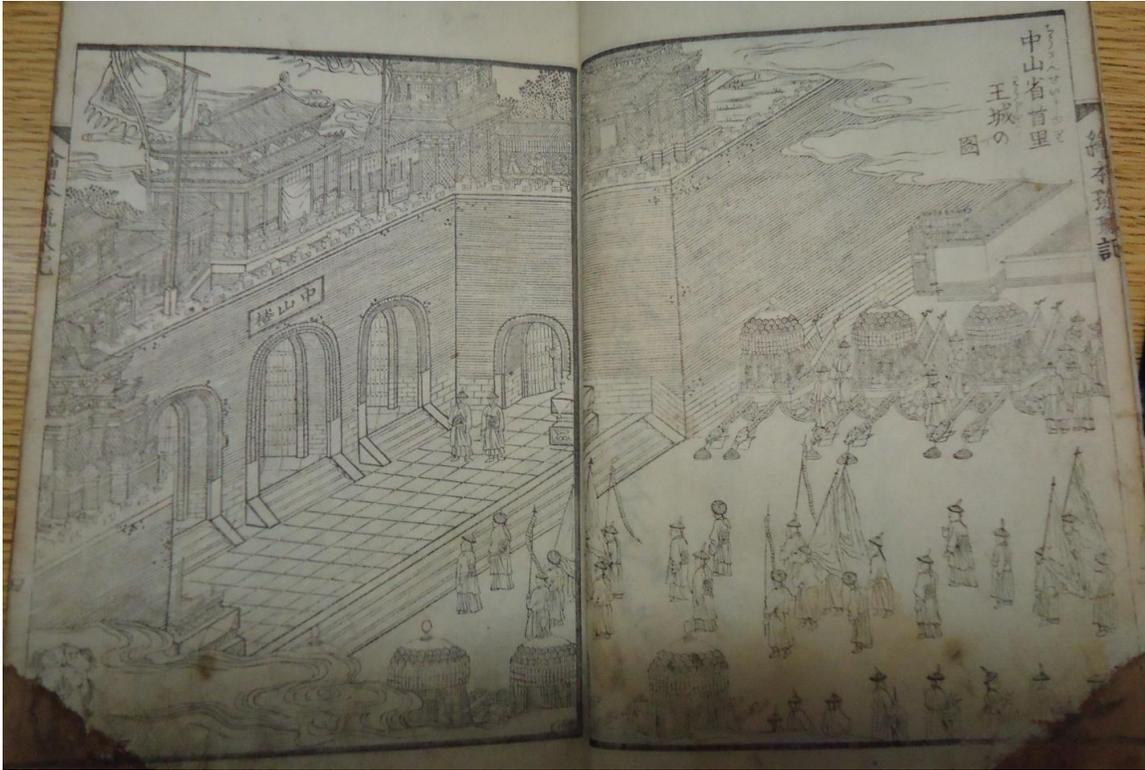


Fig. 2-10:
Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki: Tametomo gaiden 鎮西琉球記・為朝外傳 (detail) 1835
 Miyata Nanboku 宮田南北, Yoshida Jihee 吉田治兵衛, and
 Tenman'ya Yasubee 天満屋安兵衛 (publishers)
 Sakamaki-Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library
 Registration Number HW606



Fig. 2-11:
Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki: Tametomo gaiden 鎮西琉球記・為朝外傳
 (detail)



Fig. 2-12:

Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki: Tametomo gaiden
鎮西琉球記・為朝外傳
(detail)
1835

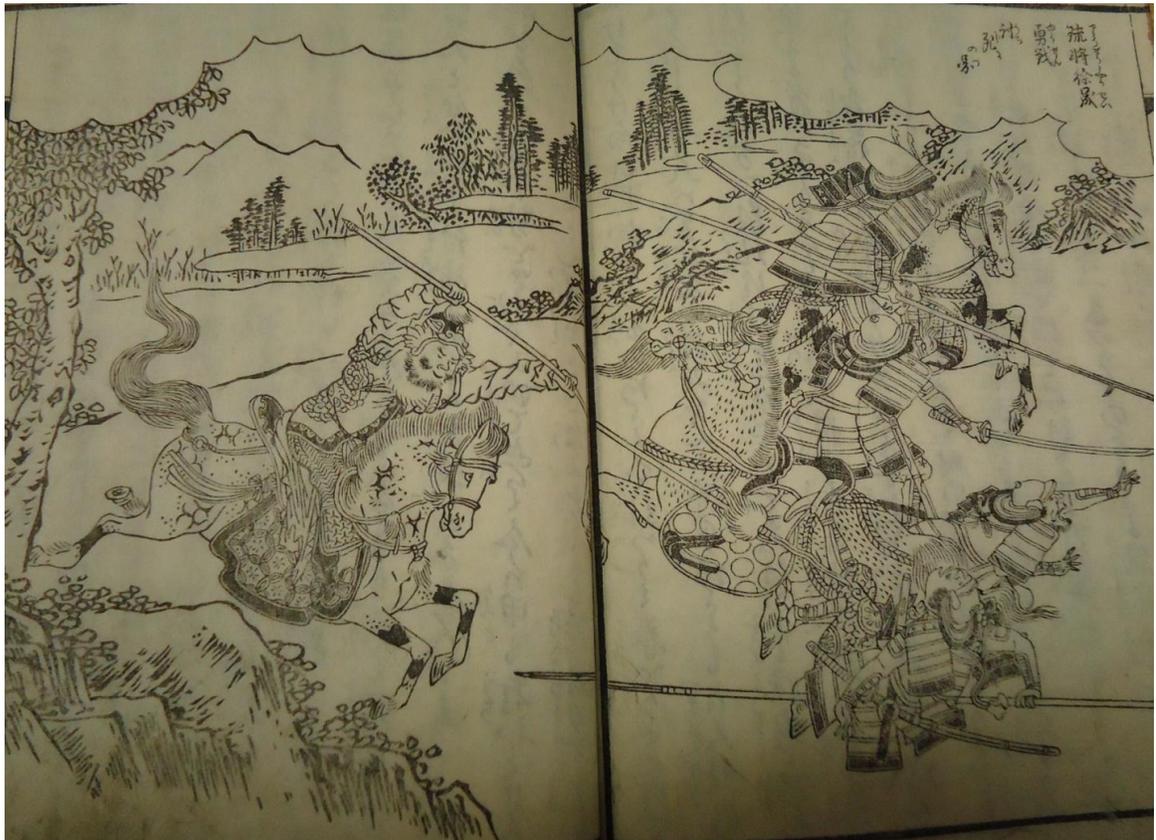


Fig. 2-13:

Chinzei Ryūkyū-ki: Tametomo gaiden 鎮西琉球記・為朝外傳 (detail)



Fig. 3-1: "Sunset Glow at Jungai" (筍崖夕照, *Jungai sekishō*) 1832
 From series *Ryūkyū Hakkei* Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎
 Woodblock print. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Accession number 21.6703.

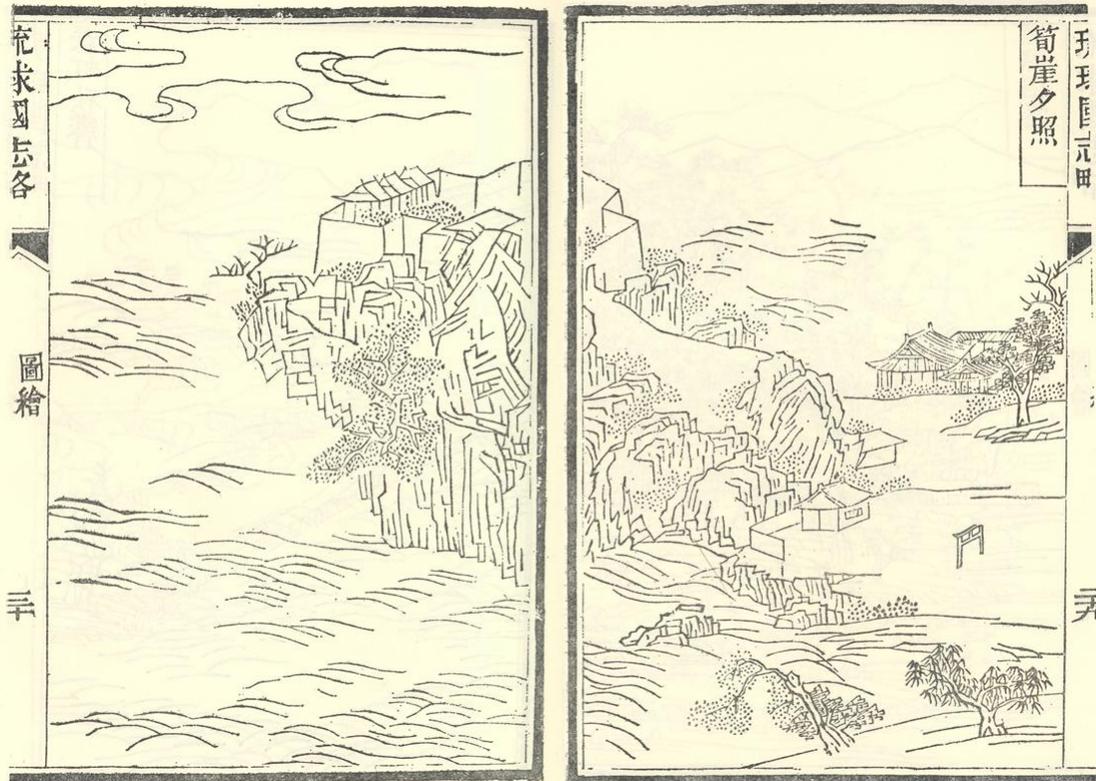


Fig. 3-2: "Sunset Glow at Jungai" (筍崖夕照), *Liuqiuguo zhilue* 琉球国史略.
 Reprint. Shanghai: Commercial Press 商務印書館, 1936.

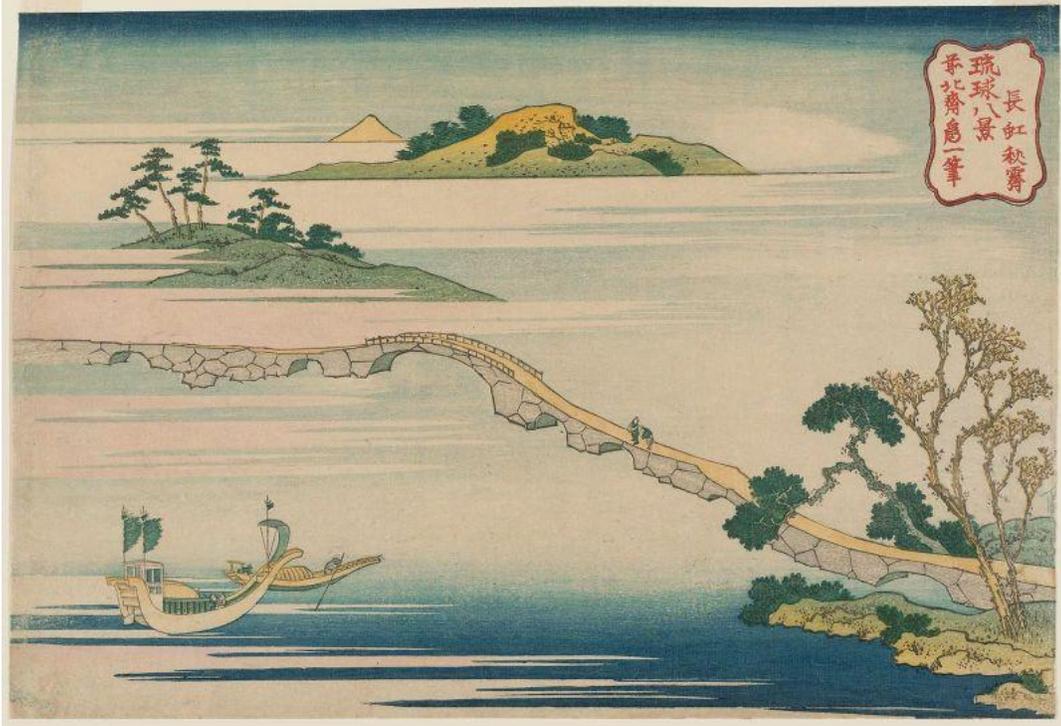


Fig. 3-3: "Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō" (長虹秋霽, *Chōkō shūsei*). MFA 21.6705

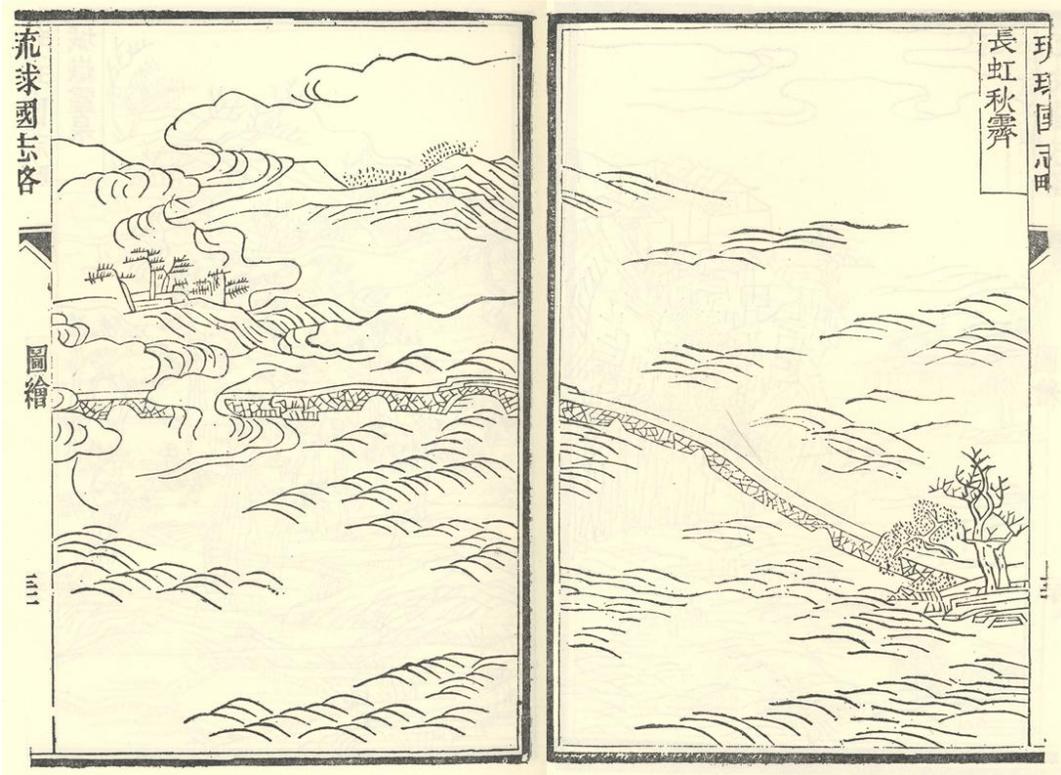


Fig. 3-4: "Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō" (長虹秋霽). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.



Fig. 3-5, Above Left:

“Clear Autumn Weather at Chōkō” (長虹秋霽) detail, from Hokusai’s *Ryūkyū Hakkei*.

Fig. 3-6, Above Right:

“Banana Garden at Chūtō” (中島蕉園) detail, from Hokusai’s *Ryūkyū Hakkei*.



Fig. 3-7: "The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai" (臨海湖聲, *Rinkai kosei*). MFA. 21.6702

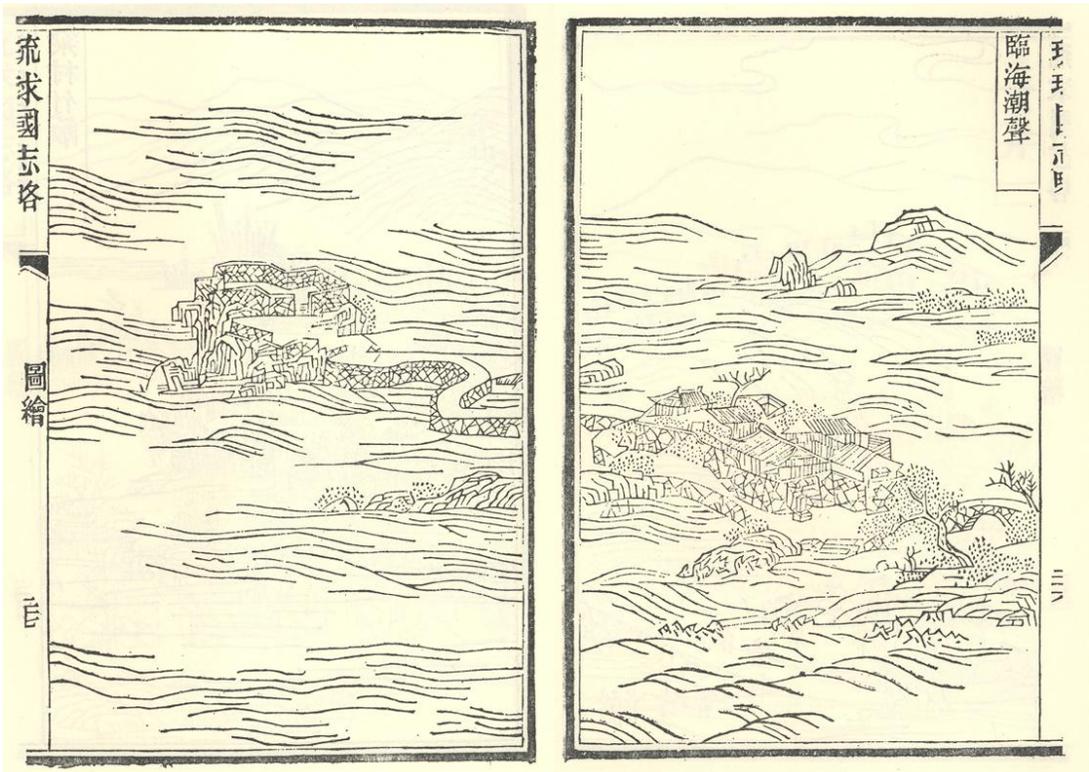


Fig. 3-8: "The Sound of the Lake at Rinkai" (臨海湖聲). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.

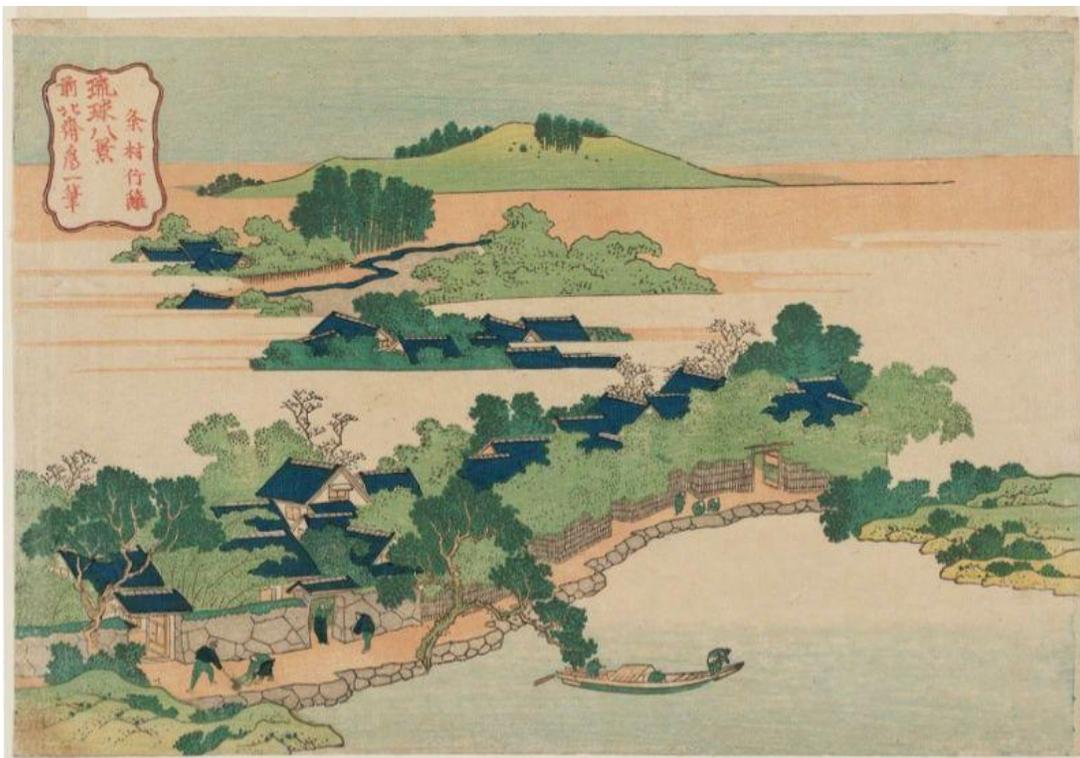


Fig. 3-9: "Bamboo Grove at Beison" (糸村竹籬, *Beison chikuri*). MFA 21.6707



Fig. 3-10: "Bamboo Grove at Beison" (糸村竹籬). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.



Fig. 3-11: "Banana Garden at Chūtō" (中島蕉園, *Chūtō shōen*). MFA 21.6704

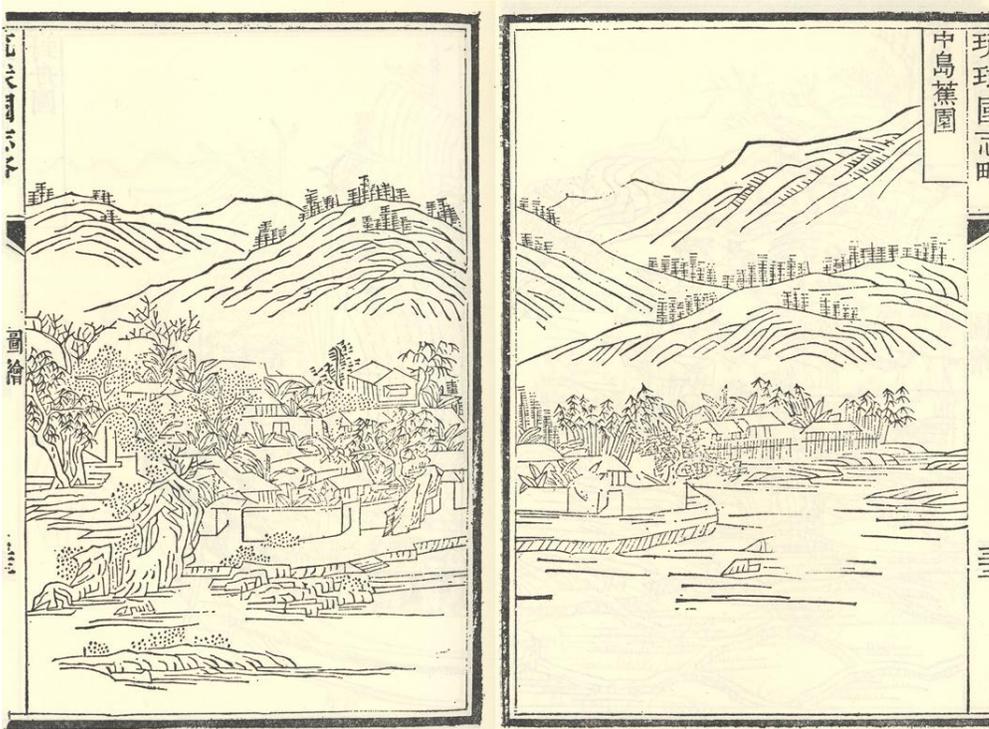


Fig. 3-12: "Banana Garden at Chūtō" (中島蕉園). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.



Fig. 3-13: "Night Moon at Senki" (泉崎夜月, *Senki yagetsu*). MFA 21.6706



Fig. 3-14: "Night Moon at Senki" (泉崎夜月). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.



Fig. 3-15: "Sacred Fountain at Castle Peak" (城嶽靈泉, *Jōgaku reisen*). MFA 21.6708



Fig. 3-16: "Sacred Fountain at Castle Peak" (城嶽靈泉). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.



Fig. 3-17: "Pines and Waves at the Dragon Cavern" (龍洞松濤, *Ryūdō shōtō*).

MFA 21.6709



Fig. 3-18: "Pines and Waves at the Dragon Cavern" (龍洞松濤). *Liuqiuguo zhilue*.



Fig. 3-19: "Sazai Hall of the Temple of the 500 Arhats" 五百らかん寺さざみどう
 From series "36 Views of Mt. Fuji" 富嶽三十六景 Katsushika Hokusai c. 1829-1833



Fig. 3-20:
 "Yōrō Waterfall in Mino province" 美濃国養老の滝
 from series "A Tour of Waterfalls in Various Provinces" 諸国滝廻り
 Katsushika Hokusai
 c. 1831-1832



Fig. 3-21, Above: "The Kintai Bridge in Suō province" すほうの国きんたいばし
 From Hokusai series "Remarkable Views of Bridges in Various Provinces" 諸国名橋奇覧

Fig. 3-22, Below: "Ejiri in Suruga Province" 駿州江尻
 From Hokusai series "36 Views of Mt. Fuji"



Fig. 3-23, Left: The villain Amawari (O: Amaohe). From the Okinawa Times recording of a 19 November 2010 performance of the Ryukyuan *kumi udui* 組踊 play *Nidō tichi uchi* 二童敵討 at the National Theatre Okinawa 国立劇場おきなわ.

Fig. 3-24, Right: The character Princess Iron Fan from “The Journey to the West,” as seen in a Peking opera (*jingju*) performance.



Fig. 3-25: The residence of the Uezu Family, Gushikawa Village, Okinawa 18th century

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Fig. 3-26: The East *chuihuamen* 垂花門 (J: *suikamon*) at Enchōen 燕趙園, a Chinese garden in Tottori Prefecture, Japan.

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