

琉球王国



The Macaulay Lectur  
sponsored by the School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific  
Studies (SHAPS) and Center for Japanese Studies



# Royal Authority in the Kingdom of Ryukyu

**Dr. Gregory Smits**  
**Associate Professor of Japanese History**  
**Pennsylvania State University**

Centered on the island of Okinawa, The Ryukyu Kingdom began to emerge during the late fourteenth century, coalesced during the early fifteenth century, and became a small-scale empire during the late fifteenth century. In 1609, the Japanese domain of Satsuma successfully invaded Ryukyu, initiating a period of over two and a half centuries of strong Satsuma influence in the kingdom's affairs. Throughout the roughly 500-year life of the Ryukyu Kingdom, the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of royal authority was an ongoing process that shifted in response to Ryukyu's changing domestic and international environment. This process might be likened to the Ryukyuan court engaging in a complex dance with agents within Ryukyu and with the powerful countries that surrounded the island kingdom. The most important partner in this dance was the Chinese court. Investiture by the Chinese emperor was the cornerstone of the authority that Ryukyu's monarchs and their officials wielded in their attempts initially to expand their empire and later to preserve it vis-à-vis strong Japanese pressure. This talk examines the functions and evolution of select elements of Ryukyuan royal authority in the realms of ideology, religion, ritual and symbolism, and foreign relations.

**April 13, 2007 (Fri.)**  
**5:30 – 7:00 pm**  
**Center for Korean**  
**Studies Auditorium**

This lecture is free and open to the public. For disability access, please contact the Center at 956-2665 or [cjs@hawaii.edu](mailto:cjs@hawaii.edu)

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
An Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action Institution

