

No.6; *Inu* (a dog) The reason why dogs raise their leg up when the nature call.
- Summary-

Keywords; *Inu* (a dog), *Kadeshigā*, a legend of Okinawa, a dog and an incense burner



Haisai, Kijimun Yaibin! (Hi! I'm Kijimun!)

According to the Oriental Zodiac, the September is the month of dog. In Ryukyu, dogs have been good friends of human from the prehistoric age. It is said that the dogs in the prehistoric age were similar to Japanese *Shibainu*.



**Kadeshiga (Kadeshi spring),
Picture taken by the author**

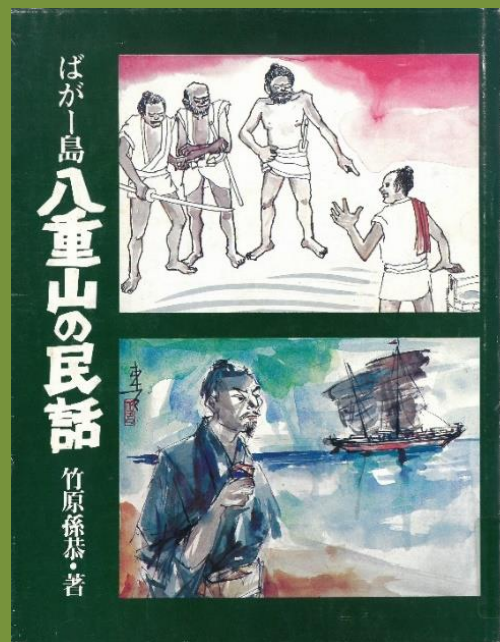
The most famous legend of a dog in Ryukyu is the story of a wise dog, which finds spring water and lets the human know the spring when people were suffering from a drought. Spring water in Ōsato, Itoman city, named *Kadeshigā* (Kadeshi spring) is well known with this legend.

And now, there is also an old tale about a dog in Ryukyu.

A long, long ago, a dog had only three legs. Because of that, the dog had a difficulty to walk and to find something to eat. So, the dog said to the God, "My lord, could you kindly give me one more leg, please." The God said to other animals, "Well, you are sorry. Is there anyone who can give a leg to the dog?" A cat said, "No, if I give it a leg, I will lose my comfort." And a centipede said, "I need every my legs!" The God was stumped, no one said "Yes." Then, the God noticed that before him, there was an incense burner. In those days, incense burners had four legs. The incense burner said to the God. "My lord, I'm always sitting, so, I can give one of my legs to the dog." The God was happy to

hear that. He took the burner's leg and put it to the dog. Since then, incense burners have only three legs. The dog thought that it should keep its leg clean because it was a gift from the God, therefore dogs always raise their leg when they relieve themselves. And they lived happily ever after.

There are a lot of tales about dogs, like a dog who married a human female. Why don't you try to look for these Okinawan folk stories!



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Reference: Takehara Magoyasu, "Bagā jima, Yaeyama no Minwa," Daidō Design Center, 1978