



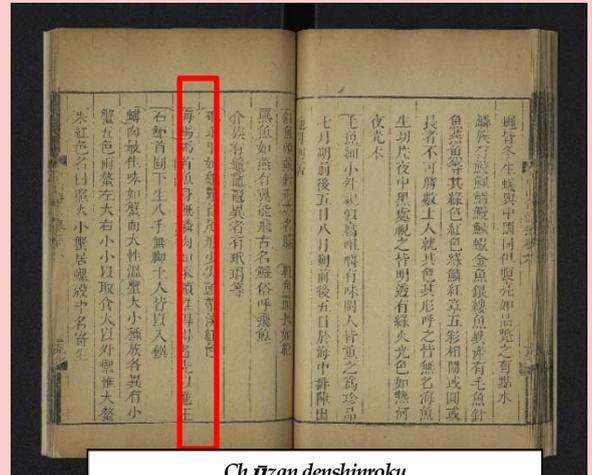
No.12 Tatsu (a dragon)

Keywords: a dragon, Tatsu, Chūzan denshin roku

Haitai and Haisai! It's Kijimun. It has already been March! All the graduates, I would like to congratulate on your graduation! By the way, the story for concluding this school year is about a dragon...or not?

• "Ryukyu boom"

Even in the mainland of Japan, during the Edo period, there was a movement what we called the "Ryukyu Boom". "Edotate" indicates an event where the Ryukyu Kingdom dispatched the tributary envoys to Edo every time when either the Tokugawa *shōgun* or king of Ryukyu changed. It began to be conducted after Satsuma's 1609 invasion of Ryukyu. *Keigashi* was sent for a change of the Tokugawa and *Shaomshi* was sent for the king of Ryukyu. A total distance of the one-way trip reached nearly 2,000 km. The itinerary from Kagoshima, was to cross through the Seto Island sea along the west coast of Kyūshū, then they forged through Tōkaidō from Ōsaka. While the group of envoys was gorgeously marching and playing music throughout various regions on route, people gathered to observe the spectacle of the procession. The "*Gakudōji*", that was formed with good-looking young men was especially popular among the audience.



Chūzan denshinroku

"Sakamaki/Hawley Collection No.HW782 (6)"

• The creature that appears on "Chūzan denshinroku bussankō"

Many varieties of materials such as books and drawings created by scholars, which referred to the Ryukyuan envoys and the Ryukyu Kingdom, were published on the occasion of the procession to Edo. Tamura Noboru (Ransui) who was a scholar of herbalism wrote "*Chūzan denshinroku bussankō*" (1769). A work that described plants and animals with their images, which appears in "*Chūzan denshinroku*". Xu Bao Guang who came from the Qing Dynasty completed the book after he returned to the Qin Dynasty.



"Chūzan denshinroku bussankō"

Sakamaki Hawley Collection No.HW666-1

In the second volume, an animal named "*kaiba*" is examined by the author.

Another name of *kaiba* is "sea dragons" and there is a picture of it in "*Chūzan denshinroku bussankō*". A transcription of Chinese classics into Japanese in the sixth volume of "*Chūzan denshinroku*" says, "It has a neck of a horse and body of a fish. No scales, fat is like a pig. Very difficult to obtain. If it is obtained, it has to be offered to a king first"

Do you notice something is strange?

Although "*kaiba*" is another name of "sea dragons", the name also indicates other marine mammals such as "seals" or "walruses" and the Ryukyuan interpreted it as "dugongs". This is a probable reason why people in Edo inserted a picture of "sea dragons" as they likely misunderstood that "*kaiba*" meant the same as "sea dragons"?

This is such an interesting mistake caused in the period when searching for images was not as easy as our present time.

参考文献：当山昌直「琉球の「海馬」(ジュゴン)の名称について」(『史料編集室紀要』no.34, 2011年)

