

# EXCAVATIONS AT SUMIYA AND OTHER SAKISHIMA SITES: VARIATIONS IN OKINAWAN LEADERSHIP AROUND AD 1500

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper is concerned with the variability of the vestiges of power which can be seen in prestate societies and the expansion process of an island polity. From roughly AD 1300 to 1500 the Sakishima Islands, to the south of Okinawa, were gradually incorporated into the Chuzan Kingdom with its capital in southern Okinawa at Shuri. The pattern of political expansion first encompassed the Miyako Islands, which submitted tribute and adopted chiefly burial patterns. In the late 1400's the Yaeyama islands were drawn into the control of Okinawa.*

*The Sumiya Site, Hirara City, Miyako Island, Okinawa Prefecture, has been occupied from the 13th century AD to the present. Despite substantial disturbance, it provides evidence of the life of the inhabitants of Miyako before and after their incorporation into the Ryukyu Kingdom around 1500, in the form of abundant Chinese and Japanese trade ceramics, faunal remains and metal objects. Large ceramic vessels and the remains of large shellfish suggest that some feasting took place both in the early and later periods of the site's occupation. Some of these later structures may have been administrative buildings. In contrast, site excavations in the Yaeyama islands indicate less concentration of power and looser organization. Ethnohistoric sources seem to support the archaeological conclusions, with some divergences. In conclusion, I discuss differences in local leadership and its articulation with the Ryukyu Kingdom.*

In this paper I discuss sites in the Sakishima Islands, which lie to the southwest of Okinawa, in southwestern Japan. From the 12th to 15th centuries AD, the Miyako Islands came to be dominated by local leaders who sent tribute to the kingdom of Okinawa, beginning in 1390. At the end of the 15th century these leaders assisted the forces of the

Ryukyu Kingdom in the conquest of the Yaeyama Islands, which lie to the south of Miyako. From the early 16th century they became officials in the Ryukyu Kingdom. I first describe finds from Sumiya and other sites from Miyako Island. Then I summarize finds from comparable sites in the Yaeyama Islands. After a discussion of relevant local history, I discuss variability in leadership and its articulation with the Ryukyu Kingdom.

## GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

Okinawa and the Sakishima Islands are part of the subtropical Ryukyu archipelago, a chain of islands extending 1000 km from Kyushu to Taiwan (Figures 1a, 1b). The islands, which are separate from the continental shelf, were formed during the Tertiary by a series of depressions in the East China Sea. Okinawa and its off-lying islands comprise a total of 1438 km<sup>2</sup>. Okinawa is geologically complex with forested mountain ridges in the north and raised limestone regions in the south (Pearson 1969:12; 2001). The Sakishima Islands are composed of two cultural and geographic island subgroups, Miyako and Yaeyama. The Miyako Islands are about 270 km southwest of Okinawa, while the Yaeyama Islands are about 411 km from Okinawa. Taiwan lies 277 km to the west of the centre of the Yaeyama Islands. Miyako and its off-lying islands, Irabu, Ikema, Korima, Tarama and Minna, comprise an area of 227 km<sup>2</sup>. They are comprised primarily of raised coral limestone, and have low undulating terrain, little surface water, and almost no forest resources.

In the Yaeyama Islands, surrounding the high, geologically complex islands of Ishigaki and Iriomote, are the low islands of Taketomi, Kuroshima, Hateruma, Hatoma and Aragusuku. Ankei (1989) notes that the cultivation systems of Iriomote come from the south, while those of the low lying coral islands come from the north. The low islanders cultivated wet rice on Iriomote, which had abundant water and rich soil, but was unsuitable for settlement in some areas because of malaria. The traditional rice of Iriomote,

*Oryza sativa javanica*, is different from varieties on Okinawa and is thought to come from Taiwan or Southeast Asia. The large yam, grown on Iriomote from cuttings, is also of southern origin. Yonaguni, lying between Iriomote and Taiwan, is a high island with ample water and some forested areas. The total area of Yaeyama including Yonaguni is 585 km<sup>2</sup>. The Yaeyama Islands lie about 350 km northeast of the northernmost Islands of the Philippines, the Batanes Islands. The Black Current of the western Pacific flows from the Philippines northward through these islands, then to the east and west of Kyushu. Malaria, which may be endemic or introduced from Southeast Asia at the time of trade contacts, affected the population of almost every island in Sakishima, making the expansion of communities dependent on irrigated cultivation very difficult until its eradication in the 1960s.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SETTING

Holocene populations have lived in Sakishima for over 4000 years (Kin 1994, Ohama 2002). Five archaeological periods are recognized (Table 1). At present there is a hiatus of 800 years between Periods 1 and 2 (Ohama 2002).

Detailed accounts of Sakishima archaeology are presented by Takemoto and Asato (1993), Mori (1994), and Ohama (1999). In addition to a large number of excavations, site reconnaissance has produced detailed maps of site locations, and general artefact lists from informal surface collecting (Okinawa Ken 1979, 1980, 1994a). Mori's detailed analysis of sites on Ishigaki Island (Mori 1994) gives an idea of the distribution of sites. Of a total of 89 sites, 6 were from Period 1, 18 from Period 2, 48 from Period 3 and 17 from Periods 4 and 5. A few sites had more than one component.

#### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

In studying the expansion of the Chuzan Kingdom I am concerned with the interplay of internal and external authority in aspects of daily life such as site architecture and function, burial facilities and religious expression, and long distance trade. Two questions can be posed. The first concerns the nature of political power and leadership in the Sakishima Islands before and during the expansion, and the second concerns the nature of political control exerted by the Chuzan authorities. How did these change during the build up of local power in the 15th century and the actual takeover by the Chuzan Kingdom in the 16th century?

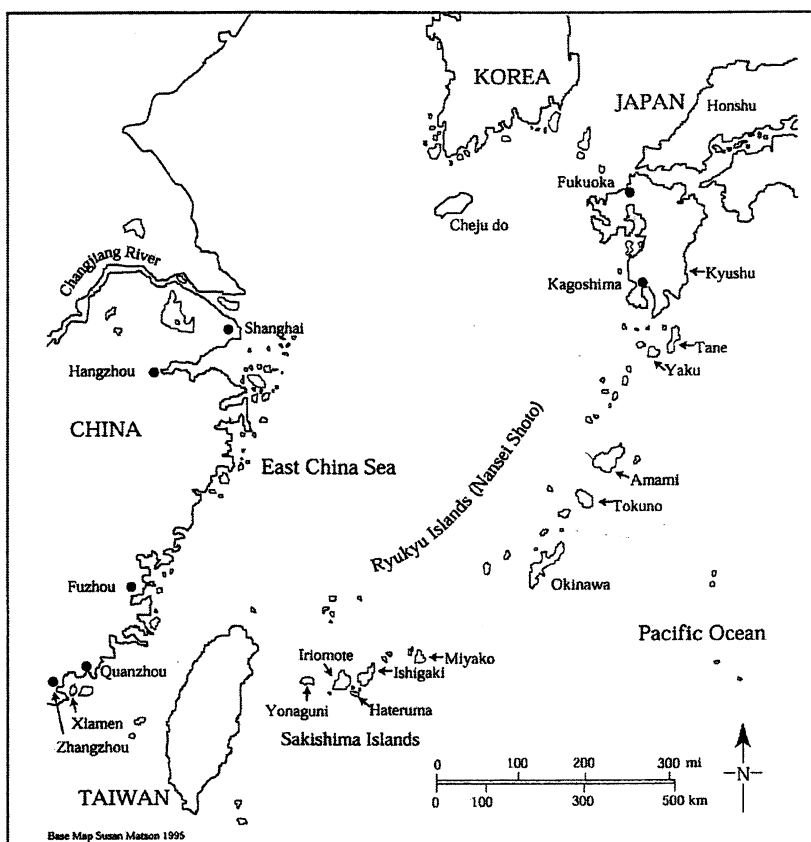


Figure 1a: Location of Sakishima Islands in East Asia.

Okinawan writers have spoken very generally about the leaders of Sakishima. Inamura (1972:143) has used the Japanese term *shucho* (chief) to describe the 15th century leaders of Miyako. Sakiyama (1973:66) also used the term *shucho* for the leaders of Yaeyama, noting that earlier writers had questioned the use of this term, whereas Ohama (1999) has used the term *eiyu* (hero or great man). The nature of political leadership has remained vague in both historical and archaeological writing.

Feinman and Neitzel (1984) and Hayden (1995) have refined our perspectives on pre-state sedentary societies and have described the kinds of decisions taken and the various degrees of authority held by leaders at various levels of complexity. Feinman and Neitzel state that "research should focus on long term change in specific societal attributes at a regional scale" (1984:45). They focused on specific functions and duties of leaders, variation in patterns of succession to leadership, the physical manifestations of different status categories and decision making hierarchy (1984:47). The functions of leaders include a range of economic activities such as distribution of goods, storage, tribute collection, organization of feasts and support of the poor. They are involved in ideological, administrative and

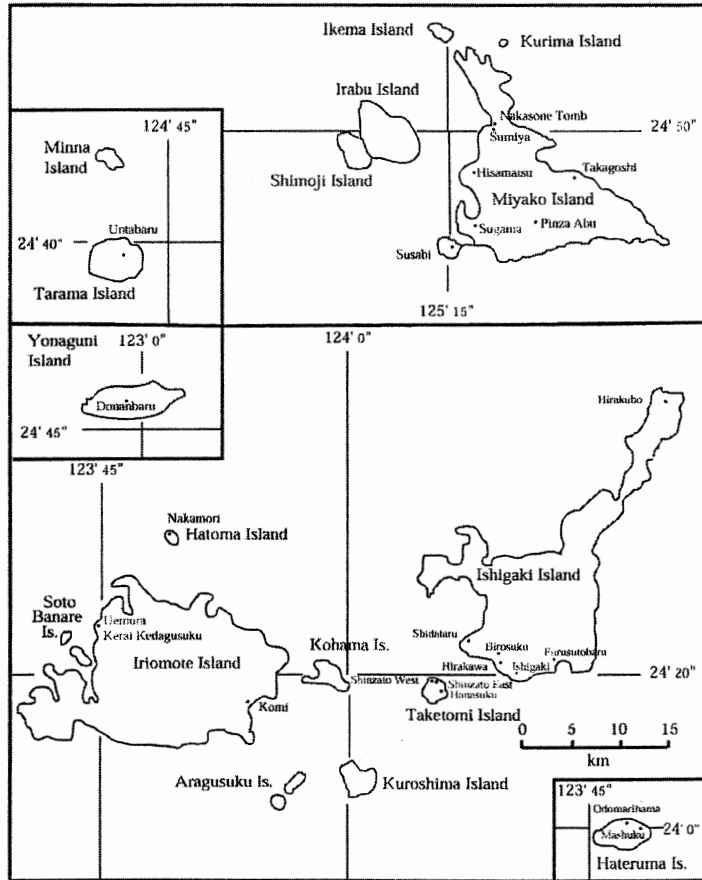


Figure 1b: Location of major sites mentioned in the text.

judicial activities. They also keep information on territorial boundaries and genealogical histories and control trade, declare war, make alliances and host guests. Feinman and Neitzel found that the responsibilities and tasks of leaders were patterned and functionally interrelated. Leaders with more duties to perform tended generally to have more status markers. Societies were grouped according to the number of administrative levels, from one (lineage head or village chief) to three (village chief, district chief and paramount chief), and it was found that the degree of status differentiation was strongly associated with the number of administrative levels.

Hayden examined characteristics of societies, from egalitarian to chiefdoms, and proposed a number of strategies used by leaders to gain and maintain power. He identified three types of society based on these strategies, and outlined some archaeological correlates. In Despot Societies, surplus and prestige exchange are limited and there is a high incidence of warfare and reciprocal feasting to maintain relations with military allies. In Reciprocator Societies, which are more complex than Despot Societies, there are warfare, feasting facilities, public architecture,

corporate group residential structures, enlarged exchange spheres for obtaining prestige goods and greater production and circulation of them. Slight differentiation of domestic structures according to socio-economic inequalities can be seen, and wealthy burials include grave goods for children. Animal domestication occurs in suitable areas. In Entrepreneur Societies, there are elaborate grave goods, specialized feasting and ritual structures, cooking facilities, prestige serving vessels, monumental structures, large regional exchange networks. Hayden notes that "there may be alternative evolutionary trajectories in terms of specific strategies used at each level" (1995:72).

These schemes provide a framework for considering social political change in Sakishima. Hayden included feasting in all three types of societies. Do all chiefs feast? In an ethnographic and ethnohistoric sample of 63 pre-state societies in North, Central, and South America, Feinman and Nietzel (1984:48) found that chiefs conducted feasting in 24 cases, and that they were more likely to be involved in feasting when they performed a large number of different tasks. The hosting of visitors displayed a similar pattern. Special houses occurred in 23 cases of 51, and special burials in 17 out of 51 cases (1984:58). Helms (1988) added important dimensions to the consideration of leadership in her exploration of realms of knowledge and skill.

While Hayden discussed archaeological correlates of different leadership strategies, Junker (1999) has described a detailed case in the Philippines. She selected categories of archaeological data useful for exploring power, such as energy invested in residential architecture. She looked for changes in the sizes of post holes and the presence of surrounding walls. She sought evidence of site hierarchy in differences in total site area. Differences in the densities of Chinese trade ceramics of different quality, such as fine Jingdezhen ceramics and coarse ceramics from Fujian and Guangdong, were explored as indicators of chiefly competitive feasting, as well as evidence of changes in the production of iron weapons. She also looked for evidence of attached craft specialization in the form of standardized fine local pottery, and she used faunal analysis to look for evidence of better cuts or different meats in elite households.

Stark (1990) reviewed models for interregional relations between small distant polities or provinces and large expansionist states, examining different forms of exchange and appropriation, local production, local political hierarchy, and settlement patterns. Her models covered a range from direct administration to indirect administration, asymmetrical alliance, elite relations, independence and independent competition. While her goal was to explore the nature of

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Table 1: Sakishima site chronology

Period	Date	Major Characteristics
5. Panari Period	17th-19th century	Panari shell tempered pottery, shapes imitate Okinawan hard fired ceramics. Okinawan, Yaeyama, Japanese hard fired ceramics. Iron slag, <i>tuyères</i> , bone tools. Cultivated rice, millet, no stone tools.
4. Nakamori Period	14th-17th century	Reddish earthenware, flaring mouth, lugs slightly lower on body than Shinzato Period. Some steatite tempered vessels. Yuan, Ming trade ceramics, walled settlements. Iron slag, <i>tuyères</i> , bone tools, no stone tools. Cultivated rice, millet. Song to Ming coins.
3. Shinzato Period	12th-13th century	Reddish earthenware, rectangular mouth, 4 external lugs, flat bottomed, imitates imported soapstone cauldron. Southern Song (few Northern) ceramics, stone tools, cultivation of rice, millet.
2. Aceramic Period	(?) 500 BC-12th century	Diagnostic <i>Tridacna</i> and stone adzes. Remains of wild boar, shellfish. Tang coins, no cultivation, no pottery.
1. Shimotabaru Period	4000-500 BC (?)	"Thumb nail impressed" coarse ceramics, stone adzes, remains of wild boar, shellfish, no cultivation.

control over the Mexican Gulf Coast exerted by the Central Highlands, her models provide important perspectives for understanding state expansion in general. She notes that archaeological correlates will vary in different regions and local conditions.

#### SUMIYA SITE, MIYAKO ISLAND

The Sumiya site has been the administrative center of Miyako Island since the 15th century AD, first as a chiefly settlement in the 15th and 16th centuries, then as the site of a local administrative center of the Ryukyu Kingdom from the early 16th to the late 19th century, and finally as the administrative center for Hirara City, the central city of Miyako Island and its outliers. A modern city hall stands to one side of the site and part of the area which was excavated comprised the Ogden Building for the city Social Welfare Division under the US Civil Administration from 1945 to 1972. (The building was named for a US administrator.) A large scale excavation of about 3300 m<sup>2</sup>, consisting of excavation units of 4 m x 4 m, was undertaken for 11 months beginning in April 1990. An earlier excavation occurred in 1982 (Okinawa Ken 1983, 1992, Hirara Shi 1999). Analysis of the distribution of trade ceramics (Table 2) shows evidence of occupation through eight centuries. In the site report, different types of ceramics were dated to different time spans because their known rates of change vary; therefore the table cannot be divided into non-overlapping time units and the trends are blurred. In addition, disturbance has carried later ceramics into the earlier layers. Nevertheless, the table shows a strong presence of trade ceramics in the 14th and 15th centuries (celadon bowls),

15th and 16th centuries (blue and white bowls), and the 17th and 18th centuries (Fujian blue and white bowls and Satsuma ceramics).

The Sumiya Site yielded many features such as building foundations and pavements, post holes, storage and refuse pits, and burials, the interpretation of which has been complicated by extensive disturbance. The report suggests that the excavators had difficulty in recording contextual interrelationships, perhaps because of the routinised nature of large government sponsored salvage excavations in the region. The dating of the structures found in the site is crucial to its interpretation; hopefully, this will be clarified in future reports. Features were divided into the following types: structures, stone arrangements, post holes, pits, hearths and burials. The relationship of features to the stratigraphy is not clear in the report. Remains of at least 12 structures were recovered, but only 2 have been dated conclusively by associated artefacts (Nos 1 and 2, 14th century AD). The community probably began in the 13th century, judging from early types of Chinese white ware, Japanese soapstone cauldrons, and soapstone tempered pottery.

It appears that pit dwellings are an early type (14th to first half of 15th century), followed by buildings built on the ground surface (late 15th to early 17th century), and buildings which are supported by pillars or posts (Takemoto and Asato 1993:227). Structures Nos. 3, 4, and 5 are possibly administrative buildings dating to the 17th century or later, and No. 9 is also a large building showing successive construction using posts in holes. No. 4 with its postulated

Table 2: Distribution of trade ceramics in the Sumiya Site, Miyako Island

Date (centuries)	Layer	12th-13th		14th-17th		17th-19th		Total No.	Total %
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Grey Stoneware	1	35	19					35	0
(p.154)	Ogden	16	9					16	1
	2a	66	36					66	1
	2b	11	6					11	0
	3	4	2					4	0
Chinese Ceramics									
Celadon bowls	1	5	3	751	19			756	11
Rims, Bases	Ogden			270	7			270	4
Dated	2a	3	2	1081	27			1084	15
(Tables 1, 2)*	2b			89	2			89	1
	3			18	0			18	0
Celadon plates	1			128	3			128	2
(Table 5)*	Ogden	1	1	72	2			73	1
	2a			199	5			199	3
	2b			12	0			12	0
	3			2	0			2	0
White ware bowls	1	8	4	139	3			147	2
(Tables 7, 8)*	Ogden	5	3	68	2			73	1
	2a	21	12	233	6			254	4
	2b	4	2	7	0	1	0	12	0
	3			6	0			6	0
White ware plates	1			37	1			37	1
(Table 10)*	Ogden	1	1	15	0			16	0
	2a	1	1	55	1			56	1
	2b			2	0			2	0
	3			1	0			1	0
Blue and white bowls	1			198	5	541	18	739	11
(Jingdezhen)	Ogden			79	2	124	4	203	3
(Tables 12, 13)*	2a			190	5	213	7	403	6
	2b			2	0			2	0
	3			1	0	1	0	2	0
Blue and white plates	1			54	1	56	2	110	2
Jingdezhen (?)	Ogden			25	1	19	1	44	1
(Table 15)*	2a			66	2	11	0	77	1
	2b			2	0			2	0
Blue and white bowls	1			127	3	322	11	449	6
Fujian, Guangdong	Ogden			31	1	144	5	175	2
	2a			72	2	58	2	130	2
	3			1	0			1	0
Hizen ceramics	1					174	6	174	2
(Table 16)*	Ogden					106	4	106	1
	2a					69	2	69	1
Satsuma ceramics	1					542	18	542	8
(Tables 20-24)*	Ogden					316	11	316	4
	2a					248	8	248	3
Total		181	100	4033	100	2945	100	7159	100
		181	3	4033	56	2943	41	7159	100

Data from Hirara Shi (1999) \* refers to tables in Hirara Shi 1999. 0% indicates less than 1%

tile roof may be elite or administrative. My interpretation is that the large structures date to the period after 1500. Other architectural remains consist of rectilinear areas paved with rough coral chunks. Children's burials, dating to the 16th to 17th centuries, have been found under these pavements, the remains placed in rough rectangular box-like cists made of chunks of coral limestone. These cist burials are thought to date to the 16th-17th centuries. Pavement dimensions are roughly 4 m x 4 m. They may be house floors, with child burials beneath the floor. Post holes are scattered through the site, one group in the northwest appearing to be the remains of an elevated granary. Pits of various kinds are tabulated in the report, but are not numbered in the site plans, making it impossible to clarify their patterning. Sixty four were dated by associated trade ware sherds; of these, 17 contained sherds dating to the 16th century or earlier, while 7 contained sherds dating to the 16th to 19th centuries. The others have sherds from both periods, the result of continuous occupation and extensive disturbance. The substantial number of post molds dated to the 16th century or earlier indicates extensive construction during the centuries before Chuzan direct control.

Analysis of shellfish remains from the site showed that in the lower layers, dating to the 15th century, shells from the outer ocean and from coral areas, such as *Strombus luhuanus* and *Turbo argyrostoma*, were abundant (Hirara Shi 1999:297). Layer 2 and below are the layers of occupation which predate the arrival of officials from Shuri. Shells from this period include *Tridacna*, which could be used for shell weights, or *Turbo* shells, the *operculi* of which were used for tools. Shellfish meat was also eaten. The shellfish from the upper layers, very large *Turbo*, *Trochus niloticus* and *Tridacna*, were used for official feasts for Shuri representatives, including law enforcement officials. The lower layer shells are similar to those from other fortified sites, from inner bays, rocky areas, tidal river mouths. There are no shells from mangrove areas or terrestrial shells.

Fragments of slag and iron cauldrons were found in the Ogden area, also in Layer 2. Some iron nails were also found in the same areas, as well as four knife blades, primarily from Layer 2, and two longer blades which could be swords. A few small fragments of iron slat armor were also noted. There is no evidence of actual iron smithing on the site (tuyères or crucibles), but it definitely occurred on Miyako Island at this time. Both iron sand and iron ore appear to have been used as raw material. The original material of some of the artefacts seems to be the region of northeast China and Korea. It is likely that the inhabitants used worn out iron cauldrons to make wrought iron, and then worked the wrought iron (Hirara Shi 1999:160). There were also four bone spear points from Layers 2 and 3, thought to have been used for hunting or fishing.

Two *magatama*, or curved pendants, were recovered from Layers 1 and 2. No specific details were given on their context. Okinawan traditional hairpins (*kanzashi*), worn by both men and women, were recovered from the Ogden area, which is completely disturbed, so no precise context is available. A total of 51 specimens, 31 for males, 17 for females, and 3 unidentified, were recovered (Table 3). *Kanzashi* were distinctive ornaments of the Ryukyu Kingdom, dating no earlier than the 17th century (Maehira 1983), and indicating the adoption of Okinawan custom by the Miyako islanders or the presence of migrants from Okinawa. Those with narrow spoon-shaped heads were worn by females and those with broad spoon or floral style heads were for male use. The Okinawan ranking system specified certain materials for different social ranks. The specimens from Sumiya were made of 5 different materials. According to Maehira (1983), the highest ranks of officials had gold and silver hairpins, copper being included in the system from the 17th century for people of lower rank. Brass was used by farmers and turtle shell for rich farmers and servants of elites. In the Meiji Period (1868-1912), aluminum or duraluminum was used for commoners. Since the Sumiya report gives only a distribution chart with no commentary we must wait for a more detailed treatment. For the present it seems that the hairpins may have come from burials of officials of the Ryukyu Kingdom, which were destroyed when the Ogden Building was constructed in the early days of the US Occupation. It is difficult to find an alternative explanation for their presence.

Two hundred and eighty nine sherds were taken from a sample of over 7000 sherds. The report provides detailed identification and scale drawings of these 289 sherds but does not give their provenience, so it is impossible to relate concentrations of ceramics to features. Fifteen out of 289 recognizable vessels were large pieces for serving or display. Five were dated to the 14th and 15th centuries, the period of Miyako independence. These included two large early Ming celadon plates ("chargers"), 46.2 and 28.6 cm in diameter (Hirara Shi 1999:88, Nos 86 and 87) and three large celadon serving bowls (1999:88, No. 12, 13, 90). Two were dated to

Table 3: Metal hairpins from the Sumiya Site, Miyako Island

Material	Male	Female	Unclear
Copper	20	11	3
Silver	1	1	
Gold	1		
Duraluminum	3		
Brass	6	5	
Total	31	17	3

the 15th-16th centuries, the time of the control of the Chuzan Kingdom, two to the 16th-17th centuries and six to the 17th century or later. Without similar quantitative comparative data on vessel size from other sites it is not easy to assess the wealth or power of the residents of Sumiya but it seems clear that large vessels were decidedly rare. The number of Jingdezhen type blue and white sherds (621) was almost three times the number of Fujian blue and white sherds (231), Jingdezhen being predominant in the mid and late 16th century and Fujian blue and white predominant in the 17th century (Hirara Shi 1999:76).

For the purposes of understanding local societies during the second millennium AD, the excavation confirmed several important points. Early overseas trade began by at least the 13th century, and was vigorous in the 14th and 15th centuries, before the takeover by the Ryukyu Kingdom in the late 16th century under King Sho Shin, who reigned from 1477-1522. Following the domination of the Ryukyu Kingdom by Satsuma in 1609, the Sumiya site continued to serve as an important center in the 17th to 19th centuries.

Ohashi, in his summary of the ceramics from Sumiya (Hirara Shi 1999:76), notes that the place of manufacture of the trade ceramics varied temporally. The celadons from Sumiya and other sites dating to the late 14th and 15th centuries are primarily from the Longquan region of Zhejiang Province; the blue and white wares from the 16th century are from Jingdezhen in Jiangxi; and the blue and white wares from the 17th century and later are from Fujian Province, particularly the Zhangzhou area.

#### MIYAKO GRAVE SITES

Imposing stone tombs in both Miyako and Yaeyama have been linked in tradition to the chiefs of the 16th century by writers such as Inamura (1972), Kaneko (1964), and Toma and Nakama (1983). The most elaborate examples, termed *miyaaka*, are found in the Miyako Islands, in Hisamatsu (Matsubara), Irabu, and Hirara. The Hisamatsu examples are large stone cists sitting in or on a terrace enclosed by a large row of upright stone slabs (Kaneko 1964:122). The Akoba Miyaaka is a large stone cist surrounded by a rectangular enclosure of slabs, 5.2 m x 3.8 m. The Busagi Miyaaka, a few metres to the east of the former, is a double enclosure containing three stone cists and a several dolmens. Inamura (1962) provides an account of an excavation in 1897 of an unnamed tomb, lying 10 m to the west of the Busagi Tomb. It was covered with soil and tree roots at the time of its discovery. It yielded a stone adze, hammer stone, stone weight, and other stone artefacts. Reddish brown earthenware vessels, of wide and narrow mouthed types, and perforated handles, were found on top of the coffin lid. Inamura estimated that it would take six individuals to move the coffin lid into place (1962).

The Hisagai example, also in Hisamatsu, is a two level terraced tomb with stone cists and dolmen. The Susabi Miyaaka, Irabu Village, Irabu island, is a two level tomb terraced with large stone slabs, containing at least three large stone cists (Kaneko 1964:132). The tomb of Kawamitsu Uputuna, located at Sugama, Shimoji cho, has a cut stone wall 1.8 m high of stones 30 cm x 30 cm x 150 cm. At present only the outer stone wall remains. Another example is the Surumiya Miyaaka on Kurima Island (Education Commission 1975:126). The most imposing of the chiefly tombs on Miyako is the tomb of Nakasone Toyomioya, who led the Chuzan forces against Akahachi and later became the leader (*kashira*) of Miyako (Sunagawa 1983a) (see below). Built against a steep natural slope it has two interior chambers, front and back, which are still used by the descendants for burial. The facade consists of 17 cut limestone steps and there are seven standing stones on the roof.

Nakasone Toyomioya must have lived at the Sumiya site. His father-in-law, the chief Akagi Tatoya, is said to be buried at the Hisagai tomb site in Hisamatsu. On Tarama, there is the tomb of Untabaru Toyomioya, a retainer of Nakasone Toyomioya and his wife, who assisted in the subjugation of Akahachi. His family genealogy states that he became chief of Tarama and Yonaguni (Nakama 1983; Oyama 1983). Two house or casket shaped stone cists with sloping roof are surrounded by a limestone wall 70 cm high with an arched gate. None of the large elite burials on Miyako or Yaeyama dating from the 14th to 16th centuries contain any grave goods; later burials often have Japanese, Okinawan, or Fujian ceramics placed on top or in front of them.

#### YAEYAMA SITES

In Yaeyama, a substantial number of sites have been excavated and some have undergone substantial survey and mapping. There are also a number of beaches in Yaeyama with dense scatters of trade ceramics. George Kerr termed some of these "trading beaches" (Kerr 1982:117). He proposed that these beaches may have been visited by itinerant trading vessels, that there may have been storehouses nearby, and that the sherds on the beach were from discarded broken wares. The beach at Komi and the offshore island of Pinishi, Iriomote, are good examples. The ceramics found there have been dated by Kamei (1982:131) to Early Ming. The beach at Shidataru (Kudo), Ishigaki, may have been the scene of a wreck, since no adjacent storehouse or settlement has been found (Ohama 1994). Kamei (1982:135) dated its ceramics to Early (1982:131) and Middle Ming. Stylistic dating of ceramics from these sites indicates that the vigorous trade took place at the time of the heroic leaders, not after the consolidation of power by Shuri.

Table 4 presents data on site features from selected sites. While site information is often incomplete and the area excavated varies widely, there appears to be a change from un-walled, smaller settlements in Period 3 to walled, larger settlements in Period 4. House size seems to be variable in both periods. Elevated storehouses appear in Period 4. The pattern at Hanasuku, of two large houses, shrines, and attached smaller houses may point back to the founding families who came to Taketomi from the north (see below).

Evidence of artefacts and slag were reported for Donanbaru, Uemura, and Kerai Kedagusuku, but not for the other sites. Many Sakishima sites dated to Periods 3 and 4 display evidence of iron working at the community level. Iron making is often related to ancestral shrines (*utaki*) through archaeological remains and oral tradition (Ohama 1999). Products made from reworking fragments of imported cauldrons include arrowheads, knife blades, pins, chisels, nails, and cultivating tools (Oshiro 1989). Armor composed of thin iron slats, recovered from some Yaeyama sites, was imported from the Japanese main islands (Pearson 1999: 294). It should be noted that bone spear points were recorded from Birosuku (7), Ishigaki (24), Furusutobaru (4) Kerai Kedagusuku (1) and Sumiya (4), probably used for hunting or fishing.

I have compared the trade ceramics recovered from Yaeyama sites with those found in Sumiya in terms of wares and functional forms of celadon vessels (Tables 5, 6). Virtually every site has a predominance of celadon, those with later components also having blue and white. The celadon is generally in the form of bowls, which are consistently small in diameter. Several Yaeyama sites had forms such as wine bottles and cups, suggesting some prestige related activities. In particular, the Uemura and adjacent Kerai Kedagusuku sites yielded these forms, and their elite status is corroborated by the ethnohistorical sources (see below). The Kerai Kedagusuku site yielded 20 fragments of Okinawa style hairpins from Layers I and II (Okinawa Ken 1997:89), which both yielded ceramics from the 16th to 17th centuries. The site was occupied at the time of Shuri control. As with Sumiya, Okinawan status markers were adopted.

In the case of coins, only two sites yielded Song coins (Table 7). They were found scattered in the fill of the Birosuku and Sumiya sites and cannot be associated with particular individuals or social groups at this time. We do not have a way of relating them to political leadership. I have also reviewed the distribution of jade and metal ornaments in the sites, to determine whether their context might yield clues as to differences in status. While curved jade pendants (*magatama*) were the badges of office of priestesses in traditional Okinawa (Shimoji 1996), it is not clear whether they were markers of high status in ancient times. The Korean

account (see below) suggests that their use was not restricted to elites. Curved pendants were not associated with burials or other features, suggesting that they were accidentally lost rather than deliberately buried and that they were not considered rare or precious. Other glass beads were also reported. The absence of grave goods or special burial treatment in the burials from Ishigaki and Hirakawa suggests a lack of social inequality. A few above ground cist burials in Yaeyama may reflect emulation of Miyako styles or migration from Miyako.

#### HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS

Five types of historical documents illuminate political life in the Sakishima Islands from the late 14th to 17th centuries.

1. Chuzan government-sponsored accounts. The *Chuzan Seikan* (*Mirror of the Ages of Chuzan*) (Haneji 1983) completed in 1650 (Sakamaki 1963:28), The *Chuzan Seifu* (*Chuzan Genealogy*) (1701-1874) (Yokoyama *et al.* 1941), and the *Kyuyo* (a kind of poetic name for Ryukyu) (1743-1745) (Miyazato 1929). These provide accounts of the major political events of the Ryukyu Kingdom as well as some miscellaneous descriptions.
2. Accounts written in the Sakishima Islands. Many accounts were written in the early 18th century. These include the *Utaki Yuraiki* (*Historical Records of Local Shrines*), written as a report on Miyako religion, history and local traditions to the Shuri government in 1707. It is part of a larger undated account called the *Miyako Kyuki* (*Old Records of Miyako*) (Sunagawa 1983b). These materials were used extensively by Inamura (1953, 1972) for his discussion of the early history of Miyako. The *Yaeyamajima Yuraiki* (*Historical Records of the Yaeyama Islands*) was compiled in the 18th century for transmittal to the *Kyukiza* (*Office of Old Records*) of Chuzan in Shuri (Higa 1940). The *Kerai Kedagusuku Yuraiki*, a genealogical account of the Kerai Kedagusuku Family of Sonai, Iriomote, was written from 1725-1745 (Ishigaki Shi Somubu 1991; Sakiyama 1983a). Other family genealogies retained in hand written form in private houses are also very important sources of information.
3. Songs and legends. Traditional songs of the priestesses of Miyako, which have been interpreted by historians such as Inamura (1972). Traditional accounts were used by Ouwehand (1985) in his discussion of the early history and legends of Yaeyama. These often describe the heroic exploits of proto historic figures. Ouwehand described a period prior to 1500 called the *burya* time, as the "time of local rulers, each holding sway over a number of houses grouped together in small clusters" (1985:51). Ouwehand proposed that although there were stories of rivalry and fights, such instances were relatively rare. Ohama (1999:137) noted that sites yielding



Table 4: Yaeyama sites and features

<p><b>Period 3</b>                  Birosuku, Ishigaki Island, Layer 2 (Ishigaki Shi 1983; Okinawa Ken 1994a:14; Takemoto and Asato 1993:253). 2 oval dwellings, marked by shallow depressions and post molds, the first, with no interior hearth, consists of 10 post molds, has a diameter of about 3 m. Second, also oval with a diameter of about 3 m had interior hearth about 1.2 m long and 20 cm deep. Also post molds of platform structure thought to have ritual use, 2 curved pendants (<i>magatama</i>) and 1 small glass bead found in association. Row of hearths about 1 m in diameter, found in another part of the site. No site plan provided in report.</p> <p>Shinzatomura East, Taketomi Island (Takemoto and Asato 1993:255; Okinawa Ken 1994a:33)                  Site is divided into east and west components, dividing point being an ancient well. East section is dated to 12th to 13th centuries. Rectangular post mold arrangement 6.8 x 4.8 m was uncovered.</p>
<p><b>Period 4</b>                  Shinzatomura West, Taketomi Island (Okinawa Ken 1994a:33). This component has house features with post molds, surrounded by stone walls. Openings about 70 cm wide between adjoining house compounds. No arterial internal road in settlement, only single gate to outside. Communal open plaza-like space. Seventeen houses were recorded and 4 were excavated. These were house compounds comprised of several buildings. Compound No. 1 had three houses, and one possible elevated storehouse; Compound No. 2, three houses and two possible elevated storehouses; Compound No. 3, one latrine; Compound No. 4, two house sites.</p> <p>Birosuku, Ishigaki Island, Upper Layer (Ishigaki Shi 1983; Kin 1983). Rectangular structure with 7 post holes, dated to 14th century. Associated with a drainage ditch. Stepped feature 1.2 m x 1.6 m may be a latrine. Kin (1999:71) proposes that site was walled at this time.</p> <p>Hanasuku, Taketomi Island (Okinawa Ken 1994a:29; Ono 1997, 1999:37; Nakamori 1999). Site lies on a ridge about 15 m above sea level, with defensive walls as high as 4 m. Village site about 500 m east-west, 200 m north-south, containing about 40 clustered dwelling sites in bilaterally symmetrical arrangement. In each half, Hanasuku and Kumara, there is a large house in a single enclosure 30 m x 30 m surrounded by 7 or 8 medium and small dwelling areas comprising a block 50 m x 60 m. Around these are more enclosed dwelling sites, and each of the major blocks has an ancestral shrine (<i>utaki</i>) attached to its corner.</p> <p>Donanbaru, Yonaguni Island (Okinawa Ken 1988). Difficult to determine from the narrow trench excavation. Possible elevated dwellings or storehouses, some post molds had stones in them, as if they were pillar bases. Blacksmith area was located. Trade ceramics, particularly Chinese celadon. date from the beginning of the 14th century to the beginning of the 16th century.</p> <p>Furusutobaru, Ishigaki Island (Ishigaki Shi 1977, 1984, 1991; Toma 1983; Takemoto and Asato 1993:253; Okinawa Ken 1994a:8; Shimoji 1999). Situated on a limestone ridge overlooking Miyara Bay. Fifteen walled enclosures have been identified. Enclosures 1-4 are in a line with the seaward edge of the ridge while the others form a row further inland. Spaces of 190 m between Nos and 4 and 5, 40 m between 5 and 6, and 40 m between the two rows of enclosures may be the result of earlier damage to the site. Enclosures 1 and 2 have been excavated. No. 2 had walls up to 2 m thick with a single entry way and central hearth. The large hearth was 130 cm x 85 cm and 10 cm deep. In No. 2 there were 100 post molds, some containing stone wedges. No clear pattern could be interpreted. Enclosure 5 had an interior area of 600 m<sup>2</sup>. The walls were 1.8 and 2.5 m thick. No. 15 enclosure was a rectangle with length and width of 23 m and 20 m respectively. Burials with 17th century, mostly 18th century Tsuboya or Chinese ceramics are later than the main site occupation. This site is known as the residence of the rebel leader Oyake Akahachi (see below).</p> <p>Uemura, Iriomote Island (Okinawa Ken 1991a; Takemoto and Asato 1993:262) Excavation of 500 m<sup>2</sup> took place around an area known from tradition to be used for blacksmithing. It was divided into Area 1 dated to the late 15th to 16th centuries and Area 2, dated to mid 14th to mid 15th centuries. In Area 1 there was an accumulation of chunks of coral 1.7 m. x 3.1 m. Along its northern edge was an area of burned earth, sand and iron slag 20 to 25 cm in diameter, which appears to be a blacksmith's hearth.</p> <p>Kerai Kedagusuku, Iriomote Island (Okinawa Ken 1997). Traditional house site of the leader, Kedai Kedagusuku, on the Sonai peninsula above the modern site of Sonai. Area said to be traditional iron working area had a stone platform surrounded by pits containing slag, but no tuyeres recovered.</p> <p>Ishigaki, Ishigaki Island (Ishigaki Shi 1993a). Eight single flexed burials, no grave goods.</p> <p>Hirakawa, Ishigaki Island (Ishigaki Shi 1993b). Five single flexed burials, no grave goods.</p>

PEARSON: EXCAVATIONS AT SUMIYA AND OTHER SAKISHIMA SITES

Table 5: Trade wares from Sakishima sites

WARE	SOURCE	SITES								
		Birosuku	Furusutobaru	Takagoshi	Ishigaki	Hirakawa	Uemura	Kerai	Donanbaru	Sumiya
Total No. of sherds		226	192	1987	98	189	516	4879	548	9173
MAJOR CHINESE WARES										
Brown Glazed	Fujian, Gwangdong	12%	?	84%	?		39%	32%	17%	17%
Celadon	Zhejiang, Fujian	86%	96%	4%	74%	90%	30%	25%	64%	29%
White Ware	Fujian		4%	11%	12%	10%	4%	10%	18%	8%
Blue and White	Jiangxi, Fujian				12%		24%	27%		31%
Black Glazed	Fujian	0%								
MINOR CHINESE WARES										
Qingbai	Fujian			0%			0%	0%		
Oil Spot	Fujian	0%					0%			
Tea Container	Fujian	1%					1%		1%	
Green Glazed	Fujian?							0%		
Red overglaze	Jiangxi						0%	0%		0%
Dark blue purple	South China						0%			0%
OTHER ASIAN WARES										
Thai Earthenware	Thailand							0%		
Iron Painted Thai	Thailand							0%		
JAPANESE WARES (17th century or later)										
Imari Blue and White	Kyushu						2%			
Other Japanese								5%		16%
Total Percent		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

0% indicates less than 1%. ? indicates that data on brown wares are not available.

Chinese trade ceramics are often called *bushi no ya* (houses of the aristocrats), and graves are sometimes called *yamato haka* (Japanese tombs), suggesting that people from the north may have come to Yaeyama at this time.

4. A detailed account of Korean castaways who drifted in a storm from Korea to Yonaguni Island in 1477 and from Yonaguni via many islands to Okinawa, Hakata and finally back to Korea, in 1479 (Iha 1974).
5. Chinese accounts, such as the Yuan Dynasty account in the *Wenzhou Fuzhi* and *Yuan Shi* of 60 Miyako islanders found drifting off the China coast in 1317 in two boats. They stated that they were on their way to Malacca to

trade (Kamei 1997:42; Kaneko and Melichar 1972:15; Kerr 1958:117; Shimoji 1999:230).

6. Inscriptions on stone monuments in Shuri. The conquest of Yaeyama took place at the height of Okinawan power, during the long reign of King Sho Shin (1477-1526). His achievements were summarized in inscriptions on monuments such as the *Momourasoe Rankan no Mei* (Hundred Urasoe Balustrade Inscriptions), dated to 1509, and the *Kokuotokuhi* (Monument in Honor of the King) erected in 1522 to the east of the Shurei Mon (Gate) in Shuri (Miyagi 1996:87). The suppression of the rebellion in Yaeyama and the strengthening of control over subject islands are mentioned as some of his primary achievements.

Table 6: Functional types of celadon vessels and bowl rim diameters from Sakishima sites

		Birosuku	Furusutobaru	Ishigaki	Takagoshi	Hirakawa	Uemura	Kerai	Donanbaru	Sumiya
n		n=194	n=196	n=72	n=97	n=170	n=156	n=69	n=352	n=2698
Bowl	Wan	0.99	0.9898	0.81944	0.87629	0.8	0.81	0.73913	0.92614	0.82172
Dish	Sara	0.01	0.0102	0.125	0.09278	0.09412	0.15	0.11594	0.0625	0.15345
Plate	Ban			0.05556	0.03093	0.05882	0.02	0.02899	0.00568	
Deep Bowl, Jar	Hachi					0.01176		0.04348		0.00964
Cup	Hai							0.01449		0.00074
Bottle	Hei							0.01449	0.00284	0.00741
Wine Presentation Jar	Shukai Tsubo									0.00185
Presentation Jar Lid	Futa									
Narrow Necked Jar	Tsubo					0.02353	0.01			
Jade Spring Bottle	Yuhuchunping									
Lidded container	Fukuromono									
Incense Burner	Koro			0.01389		0.01176	0.01	0.02899	0.02899	0.00519
Pouring Vessel Ewer	Suichu									
Small Box	Gosu									
Mortar	Suribachi									
Flower Vase	Meiping									
Lid	Futa							0.01449		
Handle										
Unidentified							0			
Total		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Average Mouth Diameter of Celadon Bowls from Sakishima Sites (cm)										
n		n=30	no data	5	13	2	4	26	18	24
Average Diameter		17		13	14	14.3	15.2	14.4	14.5	14.5

0% indicates less than 1%.

From these accounts, it is possible to piece together some of the events in the consolidation of Chuzan control of Sakishima, beginning with the first offerings of tribute in 1390 to the establishment of government warehouses for tribute in Miyako around 1522 and Yaeyama in 1524.

In the 13th century these islands were independent of Okinawa but were involved in vigorous private trade with people from both the north and the China coast. Alliances between leaders on Miyako and the Chuzan Kingdom began in the late 13th century. In return for their allegiance, leaders on Miyako must have received support for consolidating their local power. Traditional accounts indicate that some extended families migrated from Okinawa and other islands

in the Ryukyus to islands such as Miyako (Inamura 1972) and Taketomi (Nakamori 1999:81; Nakasone 1990:97; Okinawa Ken 1994b:5). In 1390, Miyako and Yaeyama began to send tribute to Chuzan (Naka 1993:134). Nakasone (1990:99) states that Miyako may have been somewhat unified by 1390, when the leader Nakasone went to Okinawa and was rewarded for his allegiance by King Satto. At that time it is said that he presented tribute to Shuri along with the chiefs of Yaeyama. Nakasone mentions that in the *Chuzan Seikan*, when Chuzan sent tribute to the Ming, the tribute ship made stops in Miyako and Yaeyama, so their inhabitants were definitely aware of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Miyako, being closer to Okinawa, served as a staging area

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Table 7: Chinese coins from Sakishima sites

Coin	First Minted All dates AD	Sites	
		Birosku	Sumiya
TANG 618-907			
Kaiyuan Tongbao	621	*, ** 2	
NORTHERN SONG 960-1126			
Chunhua Yuanbao	990	1	
Xiangfu Yuanbao	1008	1	
Tiansheng Yuanbao	1023	1	* 1
Huangsong Tongbao	1039	2	
Xining Yuanbao	1068	2	1
Yuanfeng Tongbao	1078	1	2
Yuanyou Tongbao	1086	* 1	2
Yuanfu Tongbao	1098	1	
Shensong Yuanbao	1101		1
SOUTHERN SONG 1127-1279			
Shaoxi Yuanbao	1190		1
Total		12	8

\*indicates perforation, \*\* indicates two perforations.

for the conquest of Yaeyama. Miyako probably received technical assistance from Shuri in the building of causeways, wells and agricultural schemes undertaken by its rulers who also invaded Yaeyama, particularly Yonaguni. Miyako leaders assisted Shuri in the invasion of Yaeyama and were rewarded with elite administrative positions from the Chuzan kingdom. They consolidated the tributary relationship with the construction of warehouses in the early 1500s. The religious network was created with the appointment of royal priestesses at the same time.

There was competition between rival chiefs. The raids of the Yonaha leaders are said to have taken place during the mid 14th century and to have involved hundreds of warriors (Kaneko and Melichar 1972:8). Kerr mentions two major factions on Miyako: the Nakasone family centered in Hirara and the Kanishigawa ship building family of the Sunagawa area. In the late 1400s, parts of Miyako appear to have been unified under the Nakasone family of Hirara, who gained cooperation of groups in the Hirara, Gusukube and Shimoji areas. Public projects initiated by the leader, Nakasone Toyomioya, included making wells and construction of the Shimoji Hashido causeway (Sunagawa 1983c), which can still be seen. Many of the leaders bore the title *toyomioya* (lit. abundant appearing father) which signified a Miyako leader of highest rank. Since Nakasone Toyomioya supported the Chuzan invasion of Yaeyama in 1500 and was rewarded for it with a title, head (*kashira*) of Miyako, he must have already given his allegiance to Shuri by 1500.

At the time of submission to Chuzan authority, various leaders gave up their swords. The famous sword, Kanemaru,

was given by Nakasone Toyomioya to King Sho Shin as a symbol of allegiance, and is described in the inscription on the monument, *Kokuoshotokuhi* (Monument in Honor of the King) erected in 1522 (Tomijima 1983). Kadena (1983) mentions several traditions of leaders (*anji*) surrendering precious swords when they gave allegiance to Sho Shin. Other chiefs appear to have co-operated with Nakasone, such as Kawamitsu Uputouna, who was chief of Shimoji around 1500 (Nakasone 1983). He is said to have taken part in the invasion of Yaeyama, and in the later invasion of Yonaguni and in the building of the Shimoji Hashido. A large stone tomb, the Kawamitsu Uputuna Miyaaka, is thought to be his. There is also an account of a chief of Tarama Island in the beginning of the 16th century (Oyama 1983). Tobaru Toyomioya was a retainer of Nakasone Toyomioya, who was given the title of *kashira* for his role in suppressing the Akahachi rebellion. He also joined in the suppression of the leader Onitora on Yonaguni. His family genealogy says that he was chief of both Tarama and Yonaguni. He is stated to have been a "path finder" of Tarama Island (Education Commission 1975:120), which seems to suggest that he had special navigation skills. In 1522, Nakasone formally swore allegiance to Shuri as ruler of Miyako, Yaeyama and Yonaguni (Kokubu and Kaneko 1963:83).

In Yaeyama, chiefs were situated on some of the islands by the 15th century, and formed alliances. The *Kerai Kedagusuku Yuraiki* account mentions a powerful leader, Kana, of Hirakubo, northern Ishigaki Island, who controlled herds of cattle and horses and a huge amount of rice and millet, 400 to 500 *koku* (1 *koku* = 47.6 gallons). Kerai Kedagusuku killed him, much to the relief of the surrounding villagers. Kerai Kedagusuku met Nagata Oya (see below) and formed an alliance. There are legends relating to leaders of Hateruma Island which Ouwehand, in his remarkable treatment of ethnohistory (1985:61), states may reflect actual events in the mid 15th century. One leader, Hateruma-born Oyake Akahachi, of the Ohama area, refused to pay tribute to Shuri for three years. Sakiyama (1973:72, 1983b) states that the Chuzan king prohibited the religious festival of the Irihiya Amari, so there may have been religious aspects as well as the withholding of tribute. Other leaders in the region refused to cooperate with him in the rebellion, which was crushed by forces from Shuri and Miyako in February 1500.

A prominent supporter of the Shuri forces was Nagata Oya, said to live in the time period 1456-1517 (Makino 1973, 1983). His sister was married to Oyake Akahachi. Makino states that his father was a descendant of the Shido clan of Miyako. He joined the forces of Shuri when they grouped at Komi, Iriomote, before they advanced on Oyake Akahachi. Following the defeat of Oyake Akahachi he was given the title of *Komi Dai Shuri Oyako* (Takara 1983b) and became the head (*kashira*) of Ishigaki. The leader of Hateruma,

Shishikadun, was also loyal to Shuri (Ouwenhand 1985:64). He was killed by the rebels, but his sons were later rewarded by the Shuri government for his sacrifice. Higa (1970:123) mentions that the priestess-official from Kumejima, Kimihae, took part in the campaign against Akahachi. Chuzan leaders stated that the chief priestesses of Shuri, Kumejima, and Yaeyama were like sisters and must be united. The wife of the *kashira* or head became the ranking priestess (*ufu amu*) in the Chuzan religious hierarchy. These elite were agents of the Chuzan kingdom.

In 1524 the Kuramoto or Royal Warehouse, for the collection of tribute, was built on Taketomi Island near Kaijibama and the extraction of tribute was centralized (Takara 1983a). In 1543 it was transferred to Ishigaki where it remained until the end of the 19th century. On the western side of Iriomote, the centre of settlement was the Sonai area. The founder of Uemura Village was Otake Sonaido Gisa, whose house site is known from local tradition (Ohama 1999:220). (Otake is the family name, Sonaido refers to the village, and Gisa is his personal name.) Otake is said to have been a blacksmith and the remains of smithing activities have been found at his traditional house site which is also the site of the Otake ancestral shrine where the god of cultivation is worshiped (Ishigaki 1991, Okinawa Ken 1991a). Kerai Kedagusuku Yoisho was given the title Dai Shuri Oyako, as a reward for his participation in the struggle against Akahachi (Sakiyama 1983a, Takara 1983b). Kerai Kedagusuku is thought to have lived in Sonai, as well as on Sotobanare Island, and to have founded a number of villages in western Iriomote – Funatsuki, Nariya, and Uehara. He is said to have traded with Southeast Asia. In 1510 Kerai Kedagusuku Sonaido subdued Yonaguni and it became politically part of Yaeyama. His activities are recounted in the Kerai Kedagusuku Yuraiki written in 1725-1745 (Kokubu and Kaneko 1963:81; Sakiyama 1983a). The traditional well and hearth of Kedai Kedagusuku are preserved (Ishigaki 1991:201). Dutch ships visited Iriomote and were occasionally stranded there in the period from 1522-1566 (Ouwenhand 1985:61).

According to Ouwehand's account (1985:60) there are two versions of Miyako expeditions to Yonaguni. In the first, the expedition by Nakasone Toyomiya, is said to have used Hateruma Island as a way station, fathering Nagata Bushi. In the second version, the leader of Yonaguni was the chieftainess Sanai Isoba, who was defeated by the invaders in 1522. These accounts give a different picture from the Korean account (see below).

Miyako leaders secured lumber from the forests of Iriomote for building houses and ships, even before Shuri's control was consolidated (Ishigaki Shi Somubu 1991:4). In the 17th century there were ship building facilities at Funaura and Komi (Okinawa Ken 1991b:85) and I expect that

shipbuilding was carried out earlier in the 15th and 16th centuries.

#### THE KOREAN ACCOUNT

The Korean account of Sakishima and Okinawa provides a valuable description of the region at the time of the heroic chiefs, before the Akahachi Rebellion of 1500 and the invasion by Chuzan. The Koreans were taking textiles from the south coast of Korea to Kyoto when they were blown far off course to Yonaguni in February of the lunar calendar, 1477 (Iha 1974). In the course of twenty nine months they travelled to eight islands, finally arriving in Okinawa and being taken by Hakata merchants back to Korea in 1479. The account of their journey, published in the Dynastic Annals of the Yi Dynasty, illustrates the different kinds of society which existed in Sakishima and Okinawa at that time.

After their arrival in Yonaguni, they were first housed in a temporary shelter on the beach and nursed back to health. They were taken by the islanders in simple open sailing ships with rudder and mast to Sonai (Iriomote), Hateruma, Aragusuku, Kuroshima, Tarama, Irabu and Miyako, before reaching Okinawa. Since they spent six months on Yonaguni, their description of that island is very detailed, and many of the subsequent islands were simply compared briefly with Yonaguni. They reported no evidence of sharp social status distinctions. The Yonaguni Islanders said directly that they had no chiefs (Iha 1974:63), even though two leaders, the heroic woman Sanai Isoba, and the strong man Onitora, lived at about the same time, according to local tradition.

The people did not use written characters. The Koreans did not mention status distinctions in dress or ornament, noting that women wore comma shaped stone pendants, and clothes made of hemp, dyed with indigo. They did not have linen, cotton, or silk. Their houses had no interior divisions or closets, and there is no mention of architectural embellishment. They had elevated storehouses in front of their residences, but did not seem to have centralized collective storage. They stated that people lacked metal cooking cauldrons, tripods, spoons and serving dishes, chopsticks or hard fired ceramics. (Hard fired ceramics and fragments of iron cauldrons have been found). They prepared rice beer using women's saliva to promote fermentation, but had no ritualized toasting. They had rice and millet, but preferred the former. The Yonaguni Islanders had blacksmiths but did not make the large plows familiar to the Koreans. They used a small plow for cultivating, thought to be a spatula like weeding tool (Kokubu and Kaneko 1963:99). While small iron daggers and spears were noted, there were no arrows or axes.

The islanders visited Sonai, Iriomote, after Yonaguni. Sonai had abundant timber which was traded to other islands, as well as yams as big as people (Iha 1974:66). Sonai

also traded rice and pigs to surrounding islands. While the Koreans visited Hateruma, Aragusuku, and Kuroshima before going to the Miyako Islands, they did not go to Ishigaki, the second high island of Yaeyama, which has a long history of settlement, becoming the administrative capital of Yaeyama in the 16th century. They also avoided Taketomi, a low island very close to Ishigaki where the first Shuri warehouse was built. Iha proposes that before Ishigaki became the political centre, settlement was limited because of malaria. However, many sites have been found on the low terraces along the south shore, and the southern area, near Ohama, was the center of the Akahachi rebellion. I expect that the Koreans travelled to the islands whose leaders were loyal to Chuzan, avoiding trouble among the dissidents on Ishigaki.

The Koreans noted differences between Yaeyama and the Miyako Islands. On Irabu and Miyako the women wore a large crystal bead on a string around their neck. The people produced a particular kind of textile, *miyako jofu*, later used as a tribute item. There were indoor latrines and people bought dogs to eat, and brewed malt liquor. The Koreans were taken to Okinawa, where the king rewarded and praised the sailors who transported them, giving them cotton cloth, food, and drink. They stayed in a government guest house near Tomari, which had a wood shingle (*itabuki*) roof, stone wall and gate, reception hall, and was adjacent to a government office and warehouse. They stayed as government officials from a Korean province. They were fed by local families. The queen, regent for Sho Shin, visited them in a long procession, with western style trumpets and hand-held fire cannons, and toasted them from pewter wine vessels and lacquer cups. She was followed by a young man 14 or 15 years old, identified by Iha as the young Sho Shin (Iha 1974:81), who also toasted them. The Koreans noted that the Okinawans usually served wine in metal vessels and cups. They had markets where the following goods were for sale: woven cloth, hemp clothes, knives, needles, vegetables, salt, fermented salted meat juice, dyed textiles from Southeast Asia, cotton, sandalwood, white woven cloth, black woven cloth and ceramics. The Southeast Asian (*namban*) textiles were the most prized. There were Chinese trading houses with tiled roofs and interior red painted walls. The merchants dressed like Ryukyu people and used chairs.

## CONCLUSIONS

In Periods 3 and 4, before the consolidation of power of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Miyako and Yaeyama societies had developed into the Great Man or Despot Type (Hayden 1995:29) with the appearance of cultivation, overseas trade and the arrival of new groups of people from the north. From this base, with stimulus from Okinawa Island, the chiefs of Miyako arose in the 14th and 15th centuries. They com-

peted with powerful leaders on Iriomote and Ishigaki and attempted to conquer Yonaguni. The Yuan Dynasty account of Miyako Islanders drifting near Wenzhou in Zhejiang, on the China coast, indicates that they had knowledge of voyaging to China or to the south. One of the reasons for the expansion of Chuzan to the south may have been to control access to these navigation routes. They appear to be closer to Hayden's Reciprocators (1995:42).

Tributary alliances between the chiefs of Miyako and the Ryukyu Kingdom provided validation and material support for their expeditions to Yaeyama, and they were rewarded with government positions after their successful campaign against Akahachi in 1500. The Miyako chiefs undertook public construction projects, overseas trade and military expeditions. The rich but confusing house data from Sumiya shows large and elaborate buildings which must have had administrative or storage purposes, but the dating is not clear. Judging from the distribution of ceramics, some of them belong to the 15th century. They participated in elaborate funerary rituals expressed in their stone cut tombs. The dry raised coral environment of the Miyako Islands must have imposed limits on agricultural production which would lead them to push for control of the rich high islands of Yaeyama. Despite its distance, Yonaguni would have been easier to invade than Iriomote or Ishigaki, where political control was in the hands of leaders such as Nagata, Akahachi and Sonaido. Alliances appeared among Miyako leaders and those in Yaeyama.

Leadership in Yaeyama was expressed somewhat differently from Miyako, with less emphasis on public works and funerary display. Miyako influence appeared in tombs found on Iriomote and Kuroshima, but they were not built on the scale of those of Miyako. In Yaeyama a large house structure was also noted at Shinzato East, and here are large enclosures at Furusutobaru, but other sites lack large houses. Feinman and Neitzel (1984:58-59) in their study of prestate sedentary societies found that special houses occurred in 23 cases out of 51, and special burials in 17 out of 51 cases. From this sample, it is clear that not all leaders necessarily have special houses, feasted, or have special burials.

Feinman and Neitzel found that societies with one or more levels of decision making are periodically confederated, depending on specific circumstances. Three kinds of confederations appeared in Sakishima. Miyako chiefs created federations among themselves. They also formed alliances with lesser leaders in Yaeyama. Finally, the leaders from the high islands of Iriomote and Ishigaki attempted to organize or control leaders from the outlying low islands. In Sakishima there was a kind of interlocking of two kinds of leaders who displayed characteristics of Despots and Reciprocators. The attributes of leaders in other places, such as the Philippines,

such as feasting and sponsorship of the production of iron weapons (Junker 1999:314, 337), do not seem to have been important in Sakishima. In addition, the role of trade ceramics in feasting and display is present but not abundant until the islands were under the control of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Thus, the strategies and manifestations of power are quite variable, as proposed by Hayden (1995:72). While some trade ceramics may be prestige items, many were practical commodities. Ceramics are ubiquitous on all sites.

The reign of Sho Shin (1477-1526 AD) was the economic and cultural peak of the Ryukyu Kingdom and expansion into the Sakishima Islands and the consolidation of the internal tributary system was one of his major accomplishments. How much control was Sho Shin able to achieve? Based on Stark's models (1990:248), a shift can be seen from asymmetrical alliance through indirect administration to direct administration. Indirect administration with some tribute extraction began in Period 3, and was formalized in period 4. By period 5, direct administration by Okinawa and Satsuma was achieved. Two types of data from Sumiya illustrate the consolidation of power of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Okinawan style metal hairpins recovered from the disturbed Ogden area indicate the presence of different social ranks, following Okinawan custom, at least among those associated with the administrative center. Since hairpins were found at Kerai Kedagusuku on Iriomote it seems that this ranking system also extended to other islands. From Sumiya, remains of large shellfish indicated to the excavators that choice sea food was served at feasts in the administrative center. Similar large gastropods were found at the official warehouse site on Ishigaki as well.

In Stark's models of the shift from asymmetric alliance to indirect administration and finally to direct administration, changes occur in exchange and appropriation, local production, political hierarchy and settlement patterns. With the shift from asymmetric alliance to indirect administration, tribute extraction takes over from gifts and prestige goods. Local ritual and ideology are replaced by imperial symbols and some imperial personnel begin to appear at the top of the hierarchy for taxation or administration. This shift can be seen around 1400 in Miyako and 1500 in Yaeyama. The achievement of direct administration appears in the early 16th century in Miyako with the construction of Okinawan style tombs and the appointment of royal officials for tax collection and administration.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank colleagues in Okinawa, Miyako, and Yaeyama for generous assistance on many occasions.

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