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**Uzagaku: Chinese music performed in the Ryukyuan Court**

Panel: Past and Future of Okinawa Music and Art

According to *Chuzan Seikan*, the first official history of Ryukyuan (Chuzan) Kingdom compiled by the royal government in 1650, 'the Emperor of the Ming (China) sent the members of 36 (i.e. a large number of) families from the district of Fujian province to Ryukyu in 1392, and it was from this time that the rites and music of China began to be practiced also in the Ryukyuan court.' It is not known precisely that the music was what 'the rite and music' referred to at that time, but assuming that the music was similar to that of the Uzagaku and Rujigaku genres handed down within Okinawa until 1879. Uzagaku was generally performed indoors, while Rujigaku was a type of outdoor processional music featuring instruments such as the reed pipe known as *sona*, the *rappa* trumpet, and drums. Uzagaku instruments included about 18 different instruments such as pipa, yueqin, yangqin, huqin, sanhsien, erhsien, sona, drum, and gongs.

In my recent research on the theme of Uzagaku, the similar ensembles are found in the mainland Japan ('Ming-Qing' Music), Taiwan, and Vietnam. Although the indigenous root of Uzagaku is not yet known, it should be noticed that Uzagaku is a genre which has a close association with the music culture of its neighboring countries of Asia, where had been politically and socially related with the Great China from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century.