

## Measures against Wild Boars in Yaeyama, Ryukyu:

— The Public World on Paper and the Private World in Drawings in the Early Modern Era —

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To prevent wild Ryukyu boars from ruining farm crops and thereby secure tax revenue, the Shuri Royal Government in the early modern era ordered farmers in writing to protect their harvests by building fences between their farms and habitats of wild boars to keep them out. Unfortunately, those fences often collapsed, and residents went to a great deal of trouble to repair them. Building fences alone was not an adequate measure against harmful wild boars.

Residents engaged in massive hunting in hopes of resolving the problem, but the government viewed hunting for pleasure or food as an unnecessary luxury. Thus, it abhorred and banned such activities on paper. In reality, however, the ban was only a façade. The government and its officials used boar meat for various purposes — including feasts for state guests — throughout the early modern era.

Hunting activities were recorded not in documents but in drawings. Artists hired by merchants who ruled Yaeyama were supposed to draw foreign ships and crews to let the government know what they were like. Yet, the last drawings by those artists that remain today vividly depict the lives of common people, and some portray hunting activities. On the public side, hunting was banned on paper, but it was depicted in private drawings.

This paper aims to fully and accurately describe people's lives in Yaeyama in the early modern era by looking at documents that supposedly banned hunting and drawings that depicted hunting scenes as part of people's daily lives.