

ריו ג'ין



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# Ryūjin



Princess Tamatori steals Ryūjin's jewel, by Utagawa Kuniyoshi.

**Ryūjin** or **Ryōjin** (龍神 “dragon god”), also known as **Ōwatatsumi**, was the tutelary deity of the sea in Japanese mythology. This Japanese dragon symbolized the power of the ocean, had a large mouth, and was able to transform into a human shape. Ryūjin lived in Ryūgū-jō, his palace under the sea built out of red and white coral, from where he controlled the tides with magical tide jewels. Sea turtles, fish and jellyfish are often depicted as Ryūjin's servants.

Ryūjin was the father of the beautiful goddess Otohime who married the hunter prince Hoori. The first Emperor of Japan, Emperor Jimmu, is said to have been a grandson of Otohime and Hoori's. Thus, Ryūjin is said to be one of the ancestors of the Japanese imperial dynasty.

## 1 Alternative legends

According to legend, the Empress Jingū was able to carry out her attack into Korea with the help of Ryūjin's tide jewels. Upon confronting the Korean navy, Jingū threw

the *kanju* (干珠 “tide-ebbing jewel”) into the sea, and the tide receded. The Korean fleet was stranded, and the men got out of their ships. Jingū then threw down the *manju* (満珠 “tide-flowing jewel”) and the water rose, drowning the Korean soldiers. An annual festival, called *Gion Matsuri*, at Yasaka Shrine celebrates this legend.

Another legend involving Ryūjin is the story about how the jellyfish lost its bones. According to this story, Ryūjin wanted to eat monkey's liver (in some versions of the story, to heal an incurable rash), and sent the jellyfish to get him a monkey. The monkey managed to sneak away from the jellyfish by telling him that he had put his liver in a jar in the forest and offered to go and get it. As the jellyfish came back and told Ryūjin what had happened, Ryūjin became so angry that he beat the jellyfish until its bones were crushed.

## 2 In Shinto

*Ryūjin shinkō* (竜神信仰 “dragon god faith”) is a form of Shinto religious belief that worships dragons as water *kami*. It is connected with agricultural rituals, rain prayers, and the success of fishermen.

## 3 In popular culture

- Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto from the anime *Bleach* uses a Zanpakutō called Ryūjin Jakka (translated by Viz Media to be Flowing Flame Blade). It's Zanpakutō Spirit is mostly immense hot flames.
- In the comic book “World War Kaiju” the Kaiju codenamed “Fat Man” is referred to as RyuJin by the Japanese when he destroys Tokyo.
- In-Game Grand Chase RyuJin is the second class of evolution of a character named Azin, which has fighting skills and has special attacks that use the water element.
- The Pokémon Lugia was based on Ryūjin
- The name for RyuJIT, Microsoft's next-generation JIT compiler for .NET, is inspired by RyuJin.\*[1]

## 4 References

[1]

## 5 External links

Media related to **Ryūjin** at Wikimedia Commons

- [Ryūjin shinkō](#), Encyclopedia of Shinto
- [Netsuke: masterpieces from the Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), an exhibition catalog from The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fully available online as PDF), which contains many representations of Ryūjin

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