

time-depth and enhances their archaeological nature. The parallel organisation of these chapters ensures a high degree of comparability, which is cemented by recurrent cross-references; an additional result is that these chapters and indeed the book as a whole cohere very well, despite the often very detailed discussions of objects and contexts. Given these rich accounts and the emphasis on materiality, it is a shame that the book offers few and poorly drawn maps and that the material culture has not been illustrated more abundantly, especially as the photographs and drawings of objects, places and contexts that are included do much to enliven the descriptions.

Overall, however, this is an outstanding book that not only offers a rich, diachronic account of a region that is not well studied at all, but that most of all makes an original contribution to debates of resistance and state formation; it also vividly underscores the rich potential of archaeological material culture studies.

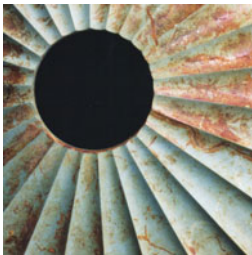
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KOJI MIZOGUCHI. *The archaeology of Japan: from the earliest rice farming villages to the rise of the state*. xix+371 pages, 94 b&cw illustrations, 21 tables. 2014. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-0-521-88490-7 hardback £75 & \$120.

This book deals with the archaeology of the Yayoi and Kofun periods, which saw the beginning of full-scale farming and the state in the Japanese islands. Despite its broad title and publication in the 'Cambridge World Archaeology' series, this is not a textbook, but rather a stimulating



and sometimes idiosyncratic study in social archaeology.

Mizoguchi begins by continuing and expanding the discussion of what has been a major theme in his previous work: the relationships between archaeology and the modern nation-state. The preface and first two chapters of this volume would be useful reading for anyone interested in this problem. As before, the shadow of Niklas Luhmann follows Mizoguchi closely, although Luhmann is only mentioned once in the index and the present volume lacks the dense theoretical debates that characterise Mizoguchi's previous books. The theme of archaeology and the nation-state, however, takes second place here to other issues and problems.

The book presents 12 chapters covering the period from roughly 900 BC to AD 700. The main discussion of the archaeological material from this time period is found in Chapters 5–11 respectively: beginnings, growth, hierarchisation, networks, monuments, bureaucracy and governance. This sequence reflects a broad evolutionary progression in which contradictions within different fields of social life "required the constant invention of new media for communication" (p. 326), media that included Yayoi bronze bells and the keyhole-shaped tomb mounds of the Kofun period. Mizoguchi distances himself from older Marxist approaches in Japanese archaeology, and his emphasis on communication goes beyond the old materialist/idealist division in archaeological theory. In at least one respect, however, Mizoguchi continues to engage closely with the ghost of the Marxist tradition in Japanese archaeology. This engagement explains what might otherwise be seen as a somewhat puzzling contradiction in the present volume. On the one hand, Mizoguchi's book focuses on networks of social power and has little to say about social units such as states or chiefdoms, the latter two terms not even appearing in the index. This approach shares similarities with sociologist Michael Mann's *The sources of social power* (1986), yet Mizoguchi is far more dismissive of social units than Mann. At the same time, however, *The archaeology of Japan* makes extensive yet rather uncritical use of certain ethnological social units such as clans, moieties and sodalities, a usage that would seem to derive from Seiichi Wajima and other scholars in the early post-war Marxist tradition.

The overall approach adopted in this book could be described as 'structuralist', and readers who are new to Japanese archaeology will find it difficult to

grasp the historical narratives behind the material and ideological structures analysed by the author. A distinctive feature of the volume is the attempt to generate 'thick description' of the structures of daily activities associated with certain elements of the archaeological record, especially villages and burials (see p. 39). The extensive account of the Etsuji site (pp. 55–65), forming the first substantive case study of the volume, is an example of this approach. Although this case study will be of interest to Yayoi specialists, novice readers will suddenly find themselves immersed in a very deep lake without a clear idea of the extent or source of that water. To make an analogy with European archaeology, the thick description of Etsuji here would be akin to an account of life at Skara Brae without any explanation of the preceding expansion of Neolithic people and culture across Europe. In fact, this analogy is quite precise as Mizoguchi's book lacks any discussion of the biological or linguistic evidence for the spread of farming peoples into the Japanese islands: to read this book, you could even be excused from thinking there were no such migrations involved.

Structures of social organisation, including social networks, are favoured over differential access to material resources as an explanation for social change. I found this approach to be more convincing when applied to early Kofun period hierarchies (Chapter 8) than to the Jōmon–Yayoi transition (Chapter 5). Social continuities between Jōmon and Yayoi are based on the proposed presence of 'sodalities' whose "reciprocal exchanges [...] would have spread [Yayoi culture] like ripples without the involvement of substantial migrations" (p. 79). Mizoguchi, however, does not define his usage of 'sodality', a term apparently used here in a rather different way from its traditional meaning in sociocultural anthropology. This is unfortunate because the term appears frequently throughout this book. Furthermore, the unconvincing suggestion that Jōmon ceramic style zones were much fewer than usually believed and that "at times, we can say that almost the entire archipelago was covered by [one] enormously large style zone" (p. 78) contradicts normal comparative assumptions about hunter-gatherer regional organisation. At the very least, this point needs to be argued with much greater detail and precision than is attempted here.

The focus on inter-regional groupings and networks in this book is developed without any reference to the concept of ethnicity and with scarce discussion of social-ecological difference. Mizoguchi admits

his geographical scope encompasses what he terms 'Middle Japan', meaning the islands of Kyushu, Shikoku and Honshu. Completely missing from the story are Hokkaido and the Ryukyu Islands, as are the many other social groups that persisted in foraging or developed new subsistence adaptations not centred on rice in coastal or upland areas. The work of historian Yoshihiko Amino is mentioned briefly in a footnote (p. 4), but Amino's classic 1980s critiques of the rice-centred view of Japanese history find little resonance here. In my view, this is also a problem for the social network analysis of Kofun power as it appears to assume *a priori* that Hokkaido and the Ryukyus are outside the relevant network. (In reality, the socio-economic systems of 'Middle Japan' completely transformed first Hokkaido and then the Ryukyus.)

In the short space allotted to me here, it is impossible to do justice to all the arguments of this long and dense book. As I have already used perhaps too much space with criticisms, let me finish with some more general comments. Koji Mizoguchi's work on identity and archaeology and on social networks has been widely read within the general archaeological community. The present book is a more specialist work that will be of most use to non-Japanese scholars researching the Yayoi and Kofun periods. The latter will find a veritable treasure house of data and a striking range of inventive interpretations. This will be an essential text for these specialists. Other readers will include students of Japanese history wanting to know more about ancient Japan and world archaeologists wanting to compare the beginnings of agriculture and the state in the Japanese islands with their own regions of interest. These readers may find *The archaeology of Japan* more like the sweat lodge of an enigmatic sodality than a treasure house, but this work is certainly worth the effort of entering and looking carefully around.

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