Chapter 7
Science or Narratives? Multiple Interpretations of the Sannai Maruyama Site, Japan

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This paper examines the dynamic interaction between scholars, local residents and the mass media at the Sannai Maruyama site, Japan. Sannai Maruyama is an Early and Middle Jomon period site in Aomori Prefecture in northern Japan, dating to approximately 5900 to 4400 cal. B.P. The site was originally excavated as a salvage project by the prefectural board of education prior to the construction of a baseball stadium. This excavation unexpectedly revealed an extraordinarily large Jomon settlement: by the summer of 1994, more than 500 pit-dwellings had been recovered along with numerous other types of features. Following these discoveries, local residents formed a dedicated and effective preservation movement. As a result, in August 1994, the prefectural governor halted the construction of the stadium, and declared that the site should be preserved. Since then, it has been a major tourist attraction in Aomori Prefecture (Habu & Fawcett 1999).

In this paper, we first outline our theoretical concerns and give a historical background of the sociopolitical context of archaeology in modern Japan. We then provide an overview of the Sannai Maruyama site excavation and preservation movement, and analyze research strategies adopted by local archaeologists as well as their outreach efforts. In particular, we emphasize the importance of the actions of local archaeologists and residents in encouraging multiple interpretations of the site. Our analysis also highlights the complex historical, political, and social contexts in which these multiple interpretations have been formed, presented, and evaluated. We conclude by analyzing the significance of this case study in relation to the current dialog about multivocality in contemporary Anglo-American archaeology.

Theoretical Framework: Multivocality and the Sociopolitics of Archaeology

The Sociopolitics of Archaeology

Underlying our research is the recognition that archaeological practice in each country is shaped by its social, political, and economic contexts both domestically and internationally. One of the first studies to analyze this point was Bruce

J. Habu, C. Fawcett, and J. M. Matsunaga (eds.), *Evaluating Multiple Narratives: Beyond Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist Archaeologies.*

Trigger's 1984 article, "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist." In this paper, Trigger argued that most archaeological traditions have had some nationalist elements. Consequently, archaeological research in many parts of the world has been used to create patriotic sentiments, often with substantial government patronage (Trigger 1984:358). Trigger stressed that nationalist archaeology "is probably strongest among people who feel politically threatened, insecure or deprived of their collective rights by more powerful nations or in countries where appeals for national unity are being made to counteract serious divisions along class lines" (Trigger 1984:360).

Trigger (1984) also outlined two other common types of archaeological research, colonialist and imperialist. Colonialist archaeology, he said, "developed either in countries whose native population was wholly replaced or overwhelmed by European settlers or in ones where Europeans remained politically and economically dominant for a considerable period of time" (Trigger 1984:360). He argued that imperialist archaeological traditions are produced by states with global political, economic, and cultural power, such as the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Soviet Union during the mid-twentieth century, and the United States since the 1960s. These examples elegantly demonstrated how archaeologists working within each of these imperialist traditions had assumed global applicability of their theoretical and methodological approaches. Furthermore, these archaeologists had the financial and political means to organize archaeological projects in various parts of the world, were the teachers of students from a variety of other countries, and were able to publish widely.

While Trigger's (1984) work emphasized three distinctive types of archaeological research tradition that do not seem to be disappearing, Hodder (1999) has argued that in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century postindustrial, postmodern age of globalization, broad frameworks and general models that archaeologists previously used to interpret the past have been *both* homogenized into messages of universal human heritage *and* fragmented by the creation of local identities in an increasingly multivocal and pluralistic world. He suggests that this process of fragmentation will both enable and create resistance to the homogenizing effects of globalization. In contrast to the world systems framework adopted by Trigger, Hodder sees the relationship between archaeology and its sociopolitical context as a fluid process that is constantly in transition. "[T]he global," he tells us, "does not in any simple way win out over the local. There is rather a negotiated process in which the past serves a variety of interests" (Hodder 1999:176–177; see also Hodder 1997).

To operationalize this theoretical perspective in an archaeological context, Hodder (1999) introduced the concept of multivocality as a key methodological tool for his field research at the site of Çatalhöyük in Turkey. Anja Wolle and Ruth Tringham (2000) also adopt this concept in their work at Çatalhöyük with an emphasis on the use of multimedia. It is to this concept of multivocality that we now turn.

Multivocality: Theory and Practice

Hodder's discussion of multivocality stresses that, by accepting multiple interpretations of the past, archaeologists can facilitate perspectives of various groups or individuals, including perspectives of the socially or politically underrepresented. Put another way, multivocality not only provides a wider variety of interpretative options, but it also allows archaeologists to be socially and politically engaged. The latter is an integral part of this approach, and our paper welcomes such social and political commitment. Nevertheless, we agree with Trigger (this volume) that these interpretative options must be tested against multiple lines of archaeological evidence before they are accepted as valid. Interpretations cannot be accepted simply on the basis of their perceived political and moral integrity, or because they represent the perspective of either majority or marginalized groups (see also Trigger 1989a,b, 1995, 1998, 2003; Wylie 1989, 1992, 1995, cf. Fotiadis 1994; Little 1994). For us, multivocality is a process whereby archaeologists work with various groups of people to generate a wide variety of questions and novel interpretations. In this way, marginalized people have a voice, and the integrity of the archaeological data and research process is maintained at the same time. Examples of this kind of practice can be found in Leone et al. (1995) and Blakey (this volume).

Despite the progressive intent of empowering marginalized groups, however, the celebration of diversity might actually further the agenda of transnational capitalism (Trigger, this volume). Hall (1997:179) argues this when he points out that little of the cultural diversity that we associate with globalization represents indigenous difference and resistance to Western cultural hegemony. This is because, rather than obliterating non-Western cultural forms, global capital maintains hegemony by working through them and making them part of the larger global culture, the center of which always remains under the control of the West. In other words, Western political and commercial interests govern which cultural forms are tolerated and which are rejected. Hall argues that this is the view of globalization accepted by and emanating from the (Western) center. Hall, however, outlines another view of globalization. He points out that when globalization is analyzed from the perspective of the local rather than from that of the center, cultural representations can be seen to come from the margins in the voices of previously decentered or subaltern subjects. Here, global mass culture and the power of global capitalism are challenged and alternative voices maintain their independence and integrity (Hall 1997:186–187).

In archaeological terms, one could argue that when multivocality refers to situations in which Anglo-American archaeologists or other mainstream cultural interpreters act as gatekeepers controlling a variety of interpretations, diversity is not being celebrated; rather it is being co-opted. In such cases, archaeological interpretive diversity is often a means of marketing a site (see Silberman, this volume) or of providing a semblance of community involvement when powerful members of an archaeological hierarchy actually make key interpretive decisions. This parallels

Hall's first example of globalization as seen from the center. In contrast, multivocality could refer to situations where alternative archaeological interpretations created on the margins in traditions not based in or controlled by archaeological elites, including the Anglo-American archaeological center, challenge dominant disciplinary and interpretative paradigms. In such cases, marginalized people ask questions about the archaeological past on their own terms and in their own voices, and multivocality can be seen as a challenge to the dominant interpretative paradigms.

Historical Context: Japanese Archaeology and Nationalism from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present

When examining the place of any particular archaeological tradition within the global power structure outlined above, we must consider not only the contemporary political and social context, but also the historical context of the region, nation, or community in which specific archaeological interpretations have been formed and presented (see e.g., Joyce, this volume). In the case of Japan, the development of emperor-centered ultra-nationalist ideology (hereafter imperial nationalism) before and during World War II (see e.g., Fujitani 1993) and the postwar rejection of imperial nationalism have significantly influenced Japanese archaeological practice and the theoretical positions of Japanese archaeologists (see e.g., Habu & Fawcett 2006).

Japanese archaeological research began during the early Meiji Period as part of Japan's national policy of adopting European and American institutions – including governmental, economic, educational, and military among others – as a means of forestalling any possibility of colonization by Western powers. Japan's efforts paid off. The nation resisted subjugation to colonial rule, and was accepted by Euro-American powers as an equal political and trading partner. Soon after, Japan also became a colonizing nation when the Japanese military, followed by civilians, moved into and annexed or supported governments in other parts of Asia. Defeat in the Second World War ended Japan's colonial domination of much of Asia. It also resulted in a short period of Allied military occupation during which Japan once again set about rebuilding its institutions to satisfy demands of a major Western power, this time, the United States (Halliday 1975; Hane 2001).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Japan felt threatened by the powerful nations of the West. Japanese imperial nationalism crystallized around the Emperor, who was presented to the people of Japan and to the world as the sacred descendant of the Sun-goddess. This strong form of nationalism merged text-based history, myth, and religion and pushed aside archaeology – the study of the past through an empirical examination of material remains – as a means of understanding the origins of Japan, the Japanese people, and the Japanese state (Edwards 1997; Fawcett & Habu 1990; Ikawa-Smith 1982). Before and during World War II, Japanese archaeologists reacted to imperial nationalism in two ways. Some archaeologists participated in colonialist archaeology in Korea and other areas of Japanese influence in Asia, while other archaeologists moved their research foci away from

discussions of the social meaning of the artifacts and sites they discovered and concentrated on studying and categorizing artifacts, particularly pottery, into detailed typologies (Habu 1989).

After Japan's defeat in 1945, scholars in various academic fields, including archaeology and history, worked to counter prewar imperial nationalism by insisting that the Japanese people needed to discover the reality of Japanese history through empirical research on material remains. This new intellectual movement was explicitly anti-elitist, anti-imperialist, and anti-nationalist. It was strongly influenced by the classical Marxist theoretical positions advocated by Wajima (1948, 1958) and others (for details, see Fawcett 1990; Habu 1989; Habu & Fawcett 2006). Archaeologists took up these ideas by rejecting interpretations of the past based on the analysis of texts and stories, and by focusing their attention on writing ancient Japanese history using scientifically derived and materially verifiable archaeological remains.

Outside archaeological studies, the rapid economic growth of Japan beginning in the late 1960s and 1970s resulted in the development of a broad-based culturalist or nationalist discourse focused on the uniqueness of the Japanese people, culture, and nation: *Nihonjin-ron* and *Nihon-bunka-ron. Nihonjin-ron* emphasizes the uniqueness, and often the superiority, of the Japanese people and nation, whereas *Nihon-bunka-ron* focuses specifically on the uniqueness of Japanese culture and the process of its development. Unlike prewar forms of Japanese nationalism, these discourses are not based on veneration of the emperor or the imperial house; neo-imperial nationalist movements that endorse emperor worship do exist in Japan, but they are relatively small in number and are rejected by most Japanese citizens. Rather, expositors of *Nihonjin-ron*, and the closely related *Nihon-bunka-ron*, typically see the Japanese people and culture as special and unique among world cultures and peoples. Several scholars have pointed out that the emphasis on Japanese uniqueness characteristic of *Nihonjin-ron* and *Nihon-bunka-ron* bolsters ideologies of Japanese homogeneity and mutes recognition of diversity in terms of class, gender, and ethnicity within the country (e.g., Befu 1993; for anthropological discussion of the differences between prewar and postwar discussions about the homogeneity of the Japanese people, see Oguma 2002). Supporters of *Nihonjin-ron* and *Nihon-bunka-ron* also typically assume that the categories of Japanese people, culture, and nation overlap, hence our use of the terms "nationalist" and "culturalist" to describe this phenomenon.

Parallel to the resurgence of this new form of nationalism was the de-politicization of archaeology during and after the 1970s. There were several reasons for this. First, archaeologists became de-politicized as the nature of their work changed. Beginning in the 1960s, a rapid increase in the number of rescue excavations in Japan resulted in the creation of the new rescue excavation system throughout the Japanese archipelago. Under this system, so-called cultural property centers (*Maizo Bunkazai Senta*) were created at all the prefectures and many municipal units, including cities, towns, and villages (Barnes 1993; Tanaka 1984; Tsude 1995). When cultural property centers were not instituted, boards of education of each prefectural or municipal unit took charge of rescue excavations. The apex of this system of "administrative

excavation" (*gyosei hakkutsu*) was the Nara National Cultural Properties Institute, which had the authority to give instructions about how rescue excavations should be conducted. The number of rescue excavations conducted by these centers and boards of educations increased exponentially through the 1970s and 1980s. Archaeologists in charge of these excavations were local or national government officials who could not easily adopt a particular political stance. Furthermore, since most rescue excavations were conducted prior to large-scale land developments funded by the national government or large companies with close ties to Japan's political elites, archaeologists could not maintain explicit commitments to antinationalistic agendas.

The second reason for the de-politicization of archaeologists was generational change. Many of the archaeologists trained during the late 1970s and 1980s were part of the post-1960s academic generation which had not directly experienced World War II, the early postwar period, or the student movements of the 1960s.

A third reason for the de-politicization of archaeology was that archaeologists' emphasis on salvage work and the detailed, scientific analysis of data resulted in gradual narrowing of their research focus. Ironically, the more archaeologists tried to dismiss prewar imperial nationalist views of Japanese history through empirical research, the more they focused on the study of the origins and "formation process" of the ancient Japanese state. Gradually, most Japanese archaeologists lost contact and stopped interacting with archaeologists from other countries. Japanese archaeologists were outward-looking and interested in incorporating ideas from other archaeological traditions from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries and immediately after World War II. By the 1960s and 1970s, however, they had become insular and disconnected from theoretical and methodological trends in other parts of the world. The increase in Cultural Resource Management excavations as described above also kept Japanese archaeologists from seeking active academic interaction with archaeologists from other countries (Habu 1989). Because of this insularity, the growing political concerns of archaeologists in many parts of the world, including Europe and North America, during the 1980s and 1990s, as well as the theoretical frameworks and methodologies they had developed, went largely unnoticed by Japanese archaeologists.

The de-politicization, insularity, and narrow focus on Japanese origins and early state formation all provided a context in which archaeologically derived knowledge about the Japanese past was gradually incorporated into the culturalist and nationalist discourses of *Nihon-bunka-ron* by authors writing for popular presses and the mass media. These authors, most of whom were not archaeologists, began to use archaeological data to sustain and develop a meta-narrative describing the origins of the Japanese people and culture. In contrast, many Japanese archaeologists continued to be antinationalist in orientation. Furthermore, archaeological practice, still underlain by a theoretical framework derived from classical Marxism (see Habu & Fawcett 2006), continued to foster a strong belief in archaeology as empirical science, an explicit focus on the reconstruction of commoners' lifeways, and an emphasis on outreach activities to educate the general public. In short, contemporary Japanese archaeology is situated between these two radically different

orientations. With this in mind, the following section analyzes a case study from the Sannai Maruyama site.

Case Study of Sannai Maruyama

Salvage Excavation and the Decision to Preserve the Site

Located in Aomori Prefecture in northern Japan (Fig. 7.1), the Sannai Maruyama site (*circa* 3,900–2,300 B.C.) is currently the largest known Jomon Period settlement (Habu 2004; Habu et al. 2001; Kidder 1998). From 1992 to 1994, the site was excavated as a salvage project by the prefectural board of education prior to the construction of a baseball stadium. Results of this three-year, large-scale excavation revealed that the entire area planned for the stadium had been a prehistoric settlement (Fig. 7.2): in fact, the settlement extended outside the limits of the proposed stadium area. Features identified within the stadium area included more than 500 pit-dwellings,

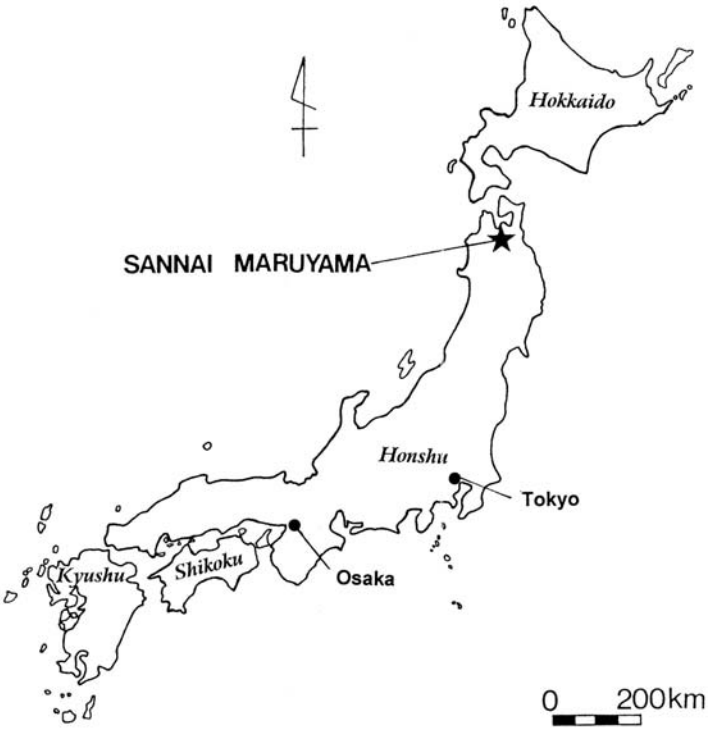

Fig. 7.1 Map of Japan showing the location of the Sannai Maruyama site

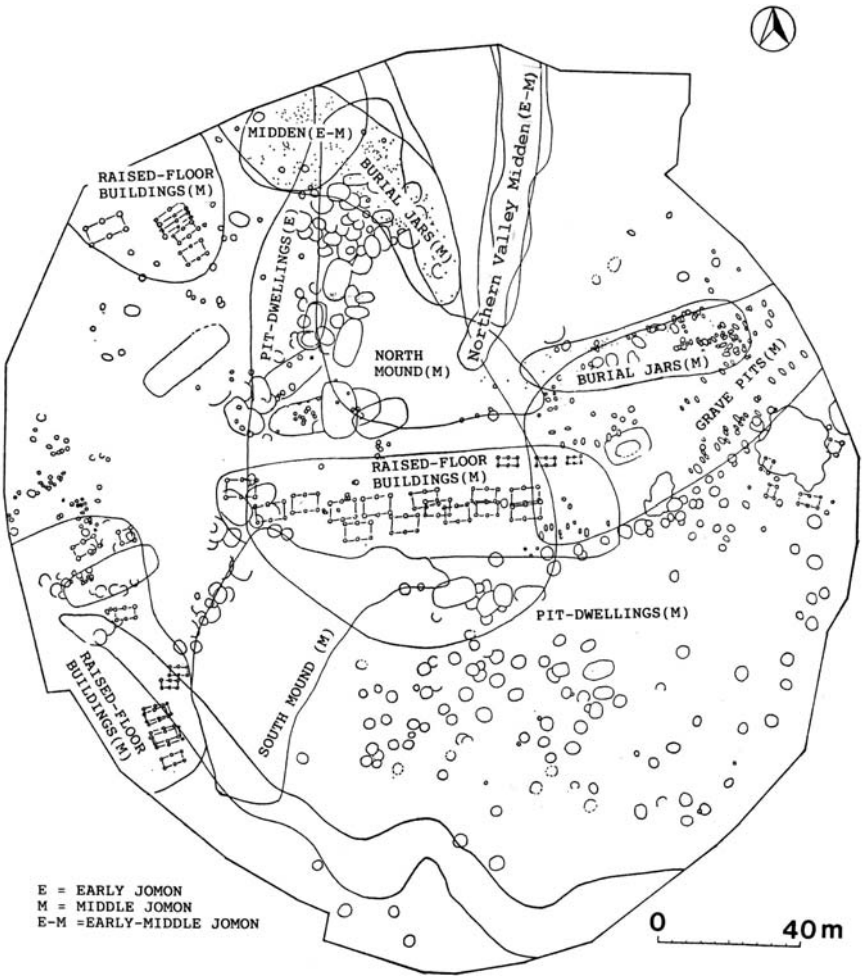

Fig. 7.2 Distribution of features at the Baseball Stadium Area of the Sannai Maruyama site (from Okada and Habu 1995)

long-houses, post-molds of raised-floor buildings, grave pits, burial jars, water-logged middens, and three mounds filled with potsherds and other refuse deposits. Among these was a feature associated with six extremely large posts.

Shortly after the discovery of this feature, in July 1994, the news of this excavation was reported on the front page of the local newspaper, *To'o Nippo*, as well as the front page of several other national newspapers. A site preservation movement supported by Aomori citizens quickly developed, resulting in the governor of Aomori Prefecture deciding to halt the construction of the baseball stadium and preserve the site. In 1997, the Japanese government designated Sannai Maruyama a national historic site (Fig. 7.3).

Fig. 7.3 The Sannai Maruyama National Historic Park

After the initial rush of visitors to the site, a phenomenon dubbed "Sannai Maruyama Fever" by the media, the number of people touring Sannai Maruyama continued to increase each year until Fiscal Year 1997 when approximately 560,000 people visited the site. Visitation rates declined in subsequent years. Nevertheless, in Fiscal Year 2004, over 156,000 people toured Sannai Maruyama, an unusually large number of visitors for a Japanese archaeological site (Preservation Office of the Sannai Maruyama Site 2006).

To facilitate further excavations, data analysis and outreach activities, *Sannai Maruyama Iseki Taisaku-shitsu* (the Preservation Office of the Sannai Maruyama Site; hereafter the Preservation Office) was established in January 1995 as a branch office of the Board of Education of Aomori Prefecture. The Preservation Office staff includes six full-time archaeologists (hereafter the site archaeologists), all of whom were prefectural government officials. All of them hold B.A. or M.A. degrees in either archaeology or related fields, such as history. From 1995 to the present, these archaeologists have conducted 30 test excavations and published over 20 volumes of excavation reports (Archaeological Center of Aomori Prefecture 1994a–b, 1995, Cultural Affairs Section of the Agency of Education of Aomori Prefecture 1996a–b, 1997a–b, 1998a–d, 1999, 2000a–d, 2001, 2002a–b, 2003a–b, 2004a–c, 2005a–c).

Site Archaeologists' Approaches

The theoretical and methodological approaches adopted by the site archaeologists were generally empirical, data-oriented, and inductive. Excavation reports published

by these archaeologists include drawings and photographs of all the representative artifacts with three-dimensional measurements and information about provenience. As we have discussed above, the root of this empiricism can be found in the broad postwar archaeology movement that stressed the importance of "scientific" approaches as a means of ensuring that imperial nationalist ideology would not affect archaeological interpretation.

Based on the Sannai Maruyama excavation results, Yasuhiro Okada (1995a,b), currently the chair of the Preservation Office, who also directed the salvage excavation team from 1992 to 1994 and was the head archaeologist of the Preservation Office from 1995 to 2002, suggested that the site was a fully sedentary settlement continuously occupied for over 1500 years. He also supported the idea that the site population must have reached over 500 people at its peak. Furthermore, analyses of changes in feature distribution led Okada to propose gradually developing and declining patterns of site size (Okada 1998). More recently, Okada used results of his Sannai Maruyama study to infer long-term changes in the Jomon culture in the Tohoku region (Okada 2003).

While Okada and other Sannai Maruyama site archaeologists have adopted strict empiricist and culture historical approaches to excavation and data presentation, their research strategies, as well as their outreach efforts to promote the importance of the site and maintain the public interest, have involved several nonconventional approaches. First, they have collaborated with the media, especially TV directors and newspaper reporters, to advertise the spectacular nature of the site. Second, they have welcomed the participation of specialists of various disciplines in interpreting the nature and function of the site. Third, these archaeologists have chosen to work with local residents to disseminate the results of their excavation to site visitors and the general public. Fourth, they have actively sought ties and collaborations with international scholars and institutions.

Working Together with the Media

The site archaeologists' collaboration with the media began prior to the government's decision to preserve the site during the summer of 1994. According to Okada, the archaeological team excavating the Sannai Maruyama site took public outreach seriously even before the prefectural governor announced that the site was to be preserved. At that time, neither Okada nor the other site archaeologists expected the site to be preserved. Accordingly, they felt that the least they could do was to let the local people know the spectacular nature of Sannai Maruyama through public outreach such as site tours to visitors (Okada & Habu 1995).

After the prefectural governor declared that the site was to be preserved, Okada and the other archaeologists used the media consciously and strategically to explain the importance of the site clearly, simply, and comprehensibly to the public. Throughout the summer and the autumn of 1994, the mass media continued to report archaeological discoveries at Sannai Maruyama. A number of TV specials were aired, and "Sannai Maruyama Fever" swept Japan. In most of these TV

specials, Okada played a prominent role, summarizing the excavation results and emphasizing the importance of the site for understanding Japanese prehistory (for a summary of Okada's interpretations, see e.g., Okada 2003).

Among the media, *To'o Nippo,* the Aomori-based newspaper, has played a particularly noteworthy role in maintaining public interest in Sannai Maruyama. As noted above, *To'o Nippo* was an important actor in developing the 1994 site preservation movement. Since then, the paper has continued to provide timely coverage of new excavation results and other everyday news related to the site, including outreach events and public symposia. It has also sponsored a number of archaeological exhibitions that featured archaeological remains unearthed from Sannai Maruyama.

Interdisciplinary Approaches

To interpret the function and nature of the Sannai Maruyama settlement, site archaeologists have actively collaborated with specialists from various disciplines. Archaeologists have formally collaborated with various specialists in the natural and physical sciences to conduct analyses of excavated artifacts and samples. Collaborative research has occurred with scholars in genetic biology (Ishikawa 2003, 2004; Kiyokawa 2001; Sato 1997a, b, 1998, 2000; Yamanaka et al. 1999), paleobotany (Suzuki 2004; Tsuji 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2005; Toyama 1995), zooarchaeology (Nishimoto 1995, 1998), parasitology (Kanehara 1995), entomology (Mori 1995, 1998a–c, 1999), and geochemistry (Akanuma 2003, 2004; Matsumoto 2003, 2004, 2005; Nishida et al. 2005; Warashina 1998, 2000, 2005). Collaboration with the natural and physical sciences is common in Japanese archaeology, but the extent of the interdisciplinary collaboration at Sannai Maruyama has been more extensive than in most other Japanese archaeological projects. The research projects of the collaborating scientists have contributed significantly to understanding the lifeways of the site residents, as well as site chronology and the environmental setting of the site.

In addition to these natural and physical scientists, two additional groups of scholars have also participated in the interpretation of Sannai Maruyama: (1) high-profile archaeologists, including professors teaching at well-known universities or researchers at national institutions, and (2) social scientists who specialized in related fields, such as cultural anthropology, ethnography, folklore, and architecture. The participation of these scholars sometimes occurred in the context of public symposia. In other contexts, the producers of TV and radio programs and writers of newspaper and magazine articles actively sought out the opinions of these scholars. Together with the natural and physical scientists discussed above, these two groups of specialists provided their own views about and interpretations of the Sannai Maruyama site through newspapers, television, magazines, popular books, and the Internet. As a result, the general public has had access to multiple interpretations of the site.

Among these scholars was Shuzo Koyama, a professor (currently an emeritus professor) of the National Museum of Ethnology. As a specialist of Jomon

subsistence studies and population estimates (Koyama 1978, 1984; see also Koyama & Thomas 1981), and as an ethnographer who worked on Australian Aborigines, Koyama (1995, 1997) suggested that the Sannai Maruyama residents should be seen as part of the "affluent" hunter–gatherer cultures of the North Pacific Rim. By emphasizing the contribution of the Sannai Maruyama data to the study of world archaeology and anthropology, Koyama extended the use of the site beyond the boundaries of Aomori Prefecture and Japan, and moved the discussion of its importance away from Japanese history to broader global issues. He also tried to move away from the dry, empirical study of artifacts toward the reconstruction of the life of the site's residents.

Another prominent actor in the public debate about the size and function of the Sannai Maruyama settlement was the late Makoto Sahara, a former vice-director of the National Museum of History. As a specialist in Japanese prehistoric archaeology, Sahara fully recognized the importance of the Sannai Maruyama data to Jomon archaeology. However, he was critical of the idea that the population of the Sannai Maruyama settlement was as large as 500 people (see e.g., his statements in Iizuka 1995). As a result, his interpretation regarding the size and function of the Sannai Maruyama settlement was quite different from that of Okada's (1995a).

Other scholars who have participated in the discussion of Sannai Maruyama include cultural anthropologist Tadao Umesao (Umesao et al. 1995), environmental archaeologist Yoshinori Yasuda (1995), and architectural historian Chojiro Miyamoto (1995). Umesao (Umesao et al. 1995) proposes that the feature associated with six large posts had a religious function, and discusses its importance in comparison to early civilizations in different parts of the world. His interpretation of Sannai Maruyama also emphasizes continuity from Jomon to later Japanese history. Yasuda (1995) identifies the Jomon culture of northeastern Japan, including Tohoku, as the mixture of the northern culture of the subfrigid, coniferous forest zone and the southern culture of the subtropical, evergreen forest zone, and interprets the prosperity of Sannai Maruyama and other Jomon sites in Eastern Japan as a result of their unique environmental conditions. Miyamoto (1995) suggested that the superstructure of the feature associated with the six large posts must have been a raised-floor building, thus questioning the interpretation of another architect Yuichiro Takashima, who proposed that the feature was a tower of over 15 m.

Collaboration with Local Residents

One unique feature of the Sannai Maruyama excavation project is the professional archaeologists' active collaboration with local residents. The history of this collaboration goes back to 1995. Throughout late 1994 and early 1995, as the mass media continued to report archaeological discoveries at Sannai Maruyama on almost a daily basis, the number of site visitors continued to increase dramatically. In this climate, *Sannai Maruyama Oentai* (the Sannai Maruyama Support Group; or the Support Group), a volunteer organization consisting primarily of local residents, was formed in May 1995. The primary goal of this group was "to help the prefecture

preserve and utilize the Sannai Maruyama site from a perspective of local residents" (Sannai Maruyama Support Group 1997). Members of the Support Group received special lectures and training by archaeologists from the Preservation Office before they assumed their duties. The formation of this group resulted in the establishment of a "division of labor" between the site archaeologists and the Support Group (Koyama, Okada, & Ichikawa 1996). The Support Group took charge of providing site tours for visitors. The archaeologists who had previously been extremely busy providing site outreach to the public were able to spend more time on their research. The first president of the Support Group was Kanemaru Ichikawa, a prefectural archaeologist and a former president of the Aomori Archeological Association. Through various activities of the Support Group, Ichikawa encouraged the members of the group to actively imagine the lifeways of the Jomon people.

The site archaeologists' attempts to work with enthusiastic local residents also led to the creation of yet another voice in the interpretation of Sannai Maruyama when, in 1995, the *Sannai Maruyama Jomon Hasshin no Kai* (Sannai Maruyama Jomon Information Association) was formed. This Aomori-based nonprofit organization is administered by a local publisher, *Purizumu*, and many of the members of this association are Aomori citizens. The annual membership fees of the Sannai Maruyama Jomon Information Association cover subscription to the Association's monthly newsletter, *The Sannai Maruyama Jomon File*, published in both Japanese and English. This periodical carries updates of test-excavations, records of symposia, and lectures, as well as short essays by archaeologists and other scholars working at the Preservation Office. Importantly, the editors, who are employees of *Purizumu*, also add their own messages which stress how the discovery of the Sannai Maruyama site in their home town has helped them and other Aomori residents restore a sense of local pride.

The emphasis of the *Sannai Maruyama Jomon File* editors on the importance of Sannai Maruyama for building local pride must be understood in the context of the power and economic structures of contemporary Japan. Aomori and other rural prefectures in the Tohoku region are economically and politically disadvantaged compared to the large, central metropolitan areas of Tokyo and Osaka. Furthermore, many people living in central Honshu consider these rural prefectures to be less culturally important than other parts of central Japan. The use of Sannai Maruyama to create local awareness of and confidence in the importance of the region's cultural assets is a significant step towards the development of regional pride in the Tohoku region.

International Collaborations

Okada and other site archaeologists have actively sought opportunities to work with institutions and scholars from other parts of the world. One example of these international connections is the fostering of collaboration with Chinese archaeologists, several of whom have been invited to participate in public symposia on Sannai Maruyama (e.g., Wang 1998). These academic exchanges have resulted

in several members of the Preservation Office taking part in the study of the Xinglonggou site in northeastern China (Sannai Maruyama Jomon Information Association 2001). Another example of active international exchange occurred during the autumn of 1998, when the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, hosted the Eighth International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies (CHAGS8) in Aomori (Habu, Savelle, Koyama, & Hongo 2003). Participants visited the Sannai Maruyama site, and a full-day public symposium was devoted to a discussion of the nature and function of the site from a comparative perspective. More recently, in autumn 2004, a museum exhibition of archaeological remains excavated from the Sannai Maruyama site was presented in Germany.

The site archaeologists' attempts to collaborate with non-Japanese institutions have also involved Habu, one of the authors of this chapter, and her students from the University of California at Berkeley. The idea of the collaboration between the Berkeley team and the Preservation Office was first raised in the summer of 1996, when Koyama, Okada, and Habu met at a workshop and discussed alternative interpretations of Sannai Maruyama (Koyama, Okada, & Habu 1996). Following this discussion, the Berkeley Sannai Maruyama project was initiated. From 1997 to 2006, the Berkeley team conducted 2–4 weeks of field/laboratory work every summer and collected data for several interrelated projects. These include studies of faunal and floral remains (Habu et al. 2001; Kim 2005), feature assemblages (Habu 2002, 2004), lithic tools and debitage (Habu 2006a), and regional settlement patterns. In addition, X-ray fluorescence analyses of pottery, clay figurines, and obsidian were conducted to examine artifact production and circulation (Habu 2005, 2006a; Habu, Hall, & Ogasawara 2003). A carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis was applied to a human skeletal sample excavated from an Early Jomon site near Sannai Maruyama (Chisholm & Habu 2003) and the result was used to examine dietary patterns in the Aomori area.

Based on the results of these projects, Habu (2002, 2004, 2006b) presented an alternative interpretation of the life history of the site, with an emphasis on changes over time in the size and function of the Sannai Maruyama settlement. In particular, these results indicate that the site may have been occupied only seasonally at least in one or more occupational phases. Despite the fact that this interpretation is markedly different from Okada's (1995a, b, 1998, 2003) interpretation, the Preservation Office and the site archaeologists welcomed the Berkeley team's research, and future collaborative plans are under way.

Positive and Negative Implications of the Local Archaeologists' Strategies

The above-described strategies adopted by the site archaeologists have helped break down the existing power structure and encourage multiple interpretations in several ways. First, by collaborating directly with scholars in other fields and institutions in Japan and overseas, the site archaeologists have been able to retain control over the analysis and interpretation of the Sannai Maruyama data. This is in sharp contrast with several other nationally known sites, where local archaeologists

have submitted research initiatives to national government officials because of an academic hierarchy that governs Japanese archaeology. Through these collaborations, and by working with the media, interpretations of the site provided by a wide variety of scholars were publicized.

Equally importantly, site archaeologists have worked closely with local residents. The root of this practice comes at least partly from the classical Marxist tradition of postwar Japanese archaeology, in which participation of local residents was strongly encouraged (see e.g., Kondo 1998). The relationship between the site archaeologists and members of the Sannai Maruyama Support Group is an example of archaeologist–citizen collaboration. Working together, these professional archaeologists and members of the Support Group developed outreach activities (Fig. 7.4), for instance, pottery-making classes held at the site.

Unfortunately, the site archaeologists' efforts to collaborate with other scholars, the media, and local residents have also resulted in several problems. One problem, which arose as a direct result of allowing multiple interpretations in the public sphere, was the resurrection of unwelcome ties between archaeology and *Nihon-bunka-ron*. Several individuals have proposed that data from Sannai Maruyama shows that the Jomon can be considered the foundation of "Japanese" culture. According to these interpretations, core characteristics of the Jomon culture had been incorporated into, and became emblematic of, later Japanese culture. This was largely a new phenomenon, because, even though most archaeological outreach programs treated the Jomon people as part of the ancestors of the modern Japanese (or "us"), their hunting–gathering lifeways were not generally regarded as part of the distinct "Japanese" cultural tradition (Habu & Fawcett 1999). However, Sannai Maruyama provided the supporters of *Nihonjin-ron* and *Nihon-bunka-ron* with an opportunity to integrate the Jomon as part of their meta-narratives.

Fig. 7.4 Outreach activity at the Sannai Maruyama site: making clay figurines

One of the vocal proponents of this perspective is Takeshi Umehara (1995), a philosopher and an influential Japanese intellectual. He suggested that the "spirit" or "essence" of the Jomon people was fundamentally different from that of the rice-cultivators who inhabited the Japanese islands during the Yayoi period (*circa* 400 BC–AD 300). Umehara argued, furthermore, that aspects of this unique Jomon "spirit" could be found among modern Japanese people, and that they had formed the foundation of contemporary Japanese culture. Rather than focusing on the Jomon culture itself, such an argument uses the Sannai Maruyama data to understand the origins of the uniqueness of the modern Japanese people and culture. These ideas have much in common with *Nihonjin-ron*, which can feed into the meta-narrative of Japanese origins, and the construction of a new nationalist story for Japan (for a criticism of Umehara's work, see also Hudson 2003). In this regard, promoting multiple interpretations of Sannai Maruyama, especially through the media, is clearly a double-edged sword for the site archaeologists.

Another problem is a tendency, in some of the alternative interpretations, to overemphasize the complex and "advanced" nature of the site. Despite the fact that many scholars and individuals participated in the interpretations of Sannai Maruyama, many of the general images of the site presented through the media bear a strong resemblance to each other, with an emphasis on large settlement size, long duration of site occupation, and an abundance of sophisticated artifacts. This led to the criticism that some of the information presented about Sannai Maruyama in the media was inaccurate or overly simplistic. For example, Masaki Nishida (1996), a professor of anthropological archaeology at Tsukuba University, criticized the site archaeologists' emphasis on the large size of the "settlement." He argued that the "site's" large size could have been the result of the long-term occupation of a much smaller settlement.

Over the past several years, the site archaeologists have adjusted some of their approaches. This reflects their efforts to resist commercialism while still maintaining the interest and participation of the local people. For example, right after the site preservation was first announced by the prefectural governor and the site became extremely popular, Okada (e.g., 1995a,b) and publications of the Board of Education of Aomori Prefecture tended to emphasize the spectacular nature of the Sannai Maruyama site and its artifacts. Interpretations that cast doubt on this picture were not necessarily welcomed by the site archaeologists or by the media. Recently, however, the site archaeologists have become more careful about simply promoting Sannai Maruyama as "advanced." This change seems partly to have been a response to criticism by their archaeological colleagues (see above). In addition, local people have also questioned the validity of the stereotypical picture of Sannai Maruyama. For example, Seiji Wakayama (2002), one of the local residents who volunteered to work as a site tour guide, questions whether interpretations provided by the site archaeologists were accurate and reliable, and wants to present other interpretations together with those of the site archaeologists. In other words, the approaches adopted by archaeologists are constantly monitored by local residents and others, and archaeologists are flexible enough to adjust their research

and interpretative strategies on the basis of this feedback. In this way, the site archaeologists encourage interpretative diversity at their site and practice a form of multivocal archaeology.

Discussion

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the archaeology of Sannai Maruyama has been operationalized within a complex political and social milieu. In particular, when looking at the archaeological practice at Sannai Maruyama, at least three levels of power imbalance can be detected. On the world archaeology scene, archaeology practiced by Japanese scholars, including those working at Sannai Maruyama, has been significantly underrepresented due to the differences in language, and because of the theoretical and methodological frameworks employed (see also Habu 1989). Thus, the site archaeologists realize that collaborations with international scholars and institutions will be key in effectively disseminating the results of research from Sannai Maruyama. As archaeologists from non-Japanese institutions, we feel that it is our responsibility to facilitate these interactions, but without claiming the privileged status of North American archaeology over Japanese archaeology (see also Habu 2004: Chapter 1).

At the domestic level, Aomori archaeologists who have been in charge of the site excavation and data analysis have a less powerful standing within the academic hierarchy than professors at major universities and scholars at national institutions. As discussed by several scholars (e.g., Barnes 1993:36–37; Tanaka 1984), contemporary Japanese archaeology is highly centralized. In the tightly structured CRM system that has developed in postwar Japan, national government officials and scholars from major national and private universities have power over local archaeologists. This academic and bureaucratic hierarchy is paralleled by social and economic inequities between large metropolitan areas, such as Tokyo and Osaka, and rural areas, including Aomori Prefecture, where the Sannai Maruyama site is located. The significance of Sannai Maruyama is that interpretations presented by the Japanese archaeological centers – the professional archaeologists and thinkers working in elite academic institutions and national government agencies – are resisted by less powerful Aomori Prefectural archaeologists and citizens of Aomori Prefecture.

Finally, from the perspective of academic authority, both groups of Japanese archaeologists exercise a certain level of authority over nonarchaeologists on the basis of their academic and professional training. However, the case study described above demonstrates the archaeologists' sincere attempts to break down this power structure by seeking collaboration with the local residents. Furthermore, the last level of power imbalance is counteracted, at least to some extent, by the fact that the majority of the funding for archaeological research in Japan comes from tax money from various levels of government. In other words, the relevance of archaeologists' interpretations to the local community is constantly monitored by the citizens.

It should be emphasized that the power structure outlined above is constantly being affected by a number of social, political, and economic factors at the local (i.e., within Aomori Prefecture), domestic (within Japan), and international levels. Thus, we can say that the practice of archaeology at Sannai Maruyama is framed in a complex political and social milieu in which the power balance between the center and periphery, as well as between professional archaeologists and nonarchaeologists, are constantly changing.

Sannai Maruyama is also noteworthy when analyzing the concept of multivocality because it illustrates how archaeologists support multiple interpretations within a specific historical and sociopolitical context. One thing that is crucial and positive about the dynamic interaction between archaeologists, the media, and the local residents is that the different groups of people presenting the various interpretations of the site worked together to ensure that the site was preserved, and to present as much information about the site as possible to the public. Archaeologists, furthermore, were willing to engage in or allow the development of new and varied narratives and accept interpretative pluralism. They did this because they knew the site would be preserved and research funding maintained only if Sannai Maruyama remained popular locally and nationally. In addition, the site archaeologists, such as Okada, and other Aomori archaeologists, such as Ichikawa, wanted to move away from the dry descriptions of archaeological materials and pottery chronologies that had dominated empirically based Jomon archaeological research (Koyama, Okada, & Ichikawa 1996). They felt that it was time archaeologists talked about Jomon society and people using vivid stories, which could bring reconstructions of the Jomon people's life-ways into existence. Finally, Sannai Maruyama demonstrates the key role of the media in site interpretation and presentation, since prefectural archaeologists collaborated with the media to make sure that Sannai Maruyama excited the public imagination.

Do multiple interpretations promoted by the site archaeologists at Sannai Maruyama differ from multivocality espoused by Anglo-American archaeologists? We suggest that multiple interpretations of Sannai Maruyama arose because of the specific social, political, and historical contexts described in this chapter. The idea of embracing multiple interpretations, however, was not borrowed from other archaeological traditions; it is an indigenous Japanese development. Japanese archaeology, with its tradition of inductive reasoning and amateur involvement in excavation and interpretation of sites, has allowed for the acceptance of multiple interpretations as possible hypotheses. Furthermore, archaeologists working in Japan during the postwar period have been conscious of the importance of educating the public about archaeology so that when an important site needs to be preserved or a salvage excavation must be done in a neighborhood, they can count on public support. This education has often involved story-telling at sites, in local festivals, through museums and in articles written for and by the mass media. Thus, Japanese archaeology has had the foundation to facilitate multivocal interpretations, although this multivocality has not been theorized.

Thinking about this case study in relation to the current dialog in North American and British archaeology, we suggest that the adoption of multiple interpretations of the Sannai Maruyama site is not an example of Japanese archaeology's incorporation into

a burgeoning Anglo-American archaeological tradition of multivocality. Rather, the site's interpretative diversity is an example of the nascent yet independent development of a multivocal interpretative framework. Without understanding the historical contexts of Japanese archaeology over the past half a century, in which antinationalism, collaboration with the local residents, large-scale rescue excavations, and wide press coverage all played key roles, it is impossible to evaluate the roots and implications of multiple interpretations of Sannai Maruyama.

To date, theoretical discussions of multivocality have been developed primarily in the context of Anglo-American archaeology. Presenting theoretical discussions of the relevance of multivocality solely from the perspective of Anglo-American archaeology could lead to the development of a form of imperialist archaeology as defined by Trigger (1984). Non-Anglo-American perspectives should not be underrepresented in the very field that aims to dismantle dominant structures of power. Certainly, at the international level, East Asian archaeology, including Japanese archaeology, has been underrepresented and sometimes even marginalized. Japanese archaeologists have studied Anglo-American archaeological methods and theory and have incorporated some of these interpretative frameworks and practices into their own work. Over the years, however, they have maintained a distinctive set of interpretative frameworks and practices and have resisted incorporation into a global archaeological system. They have done this by accepting and adapting only those Anglo-American contributions *they* considered relevant to archaeology within a Japanese social, political, and historical context. In this regard, the multivocal approach developed at Sannai Maruyama can be seen to be the result of resistance to global archaeological trends rather than as the outcome of incorporation into these trends.

As discussed above, elements of a nationalist (or at least Japan-oriented) perspective can be seen in some interpretations of the Sannai Maruyama site. However, the way these elements are embedded in each interpretation varies, and labeling individual interpretations as nationalist does not do justice to the multifaceted nature of these interpretations. This is partly due to the historically specific definition of "nationalism" understood by the Japanese people, including archaeologists. In this regard, we conclude that although the application of general theories, such as world systems theory, do provide a broad framework for understanding the relationship between archaeological traditions and their social and political milieux, we must also take into account the specific historical context of each local archaeological tradition. In the case of Sannai Maruyama, Japan's historical and present-day position as a state in a world political and economic system has influenced archaeological practice and interpretation by making both empirical research and questions of Japanese identity and origins core features of research and interpretation.

Conclusions

In this chapter, we argued that, by encouraging multiple interpretations of the site of Sannai Maruyama, and by working together with local residents, Aomori archaeologists have independently developed strategies that can question and break

down the intellectual power structures of their discipline. This is significant given the fact that their intellectual traditions and theoretical perspectives are based outside Western postmodern social theory. Our chapter also highlighted the complex historical, political, and social contexts in which these multiple interpretations have been formed, presented, and evaluated.

The case study presented here also demonstrates that local agency is important. The Sannai Maruyama case exemplifies the interplay between structural constraints imposed on interpretations by global economic and political systems and the ability of individual people and small groups at the local level to resist the homogenization of the global marketplace by using archaeology imaginatively to create local identities. The local movement at Sannai Maruyama is kept from slipping into commercialism or neo-nationalism by the deep-seated belief of Aomori archaeologists, such as Ichikawa (Koyama, Okada, & Ichikawa 1996), that the core of the local movement should be grass-roots and noncommercial. This is the main reason that, despite the possible resurgence of neo-nationalism and the creation of a neo-nationalist meta-narrative, we feel optimistic about the future of the archaeology of Sannai Maruyama. Whether archaeological practice at Sannai Maruyama will be able to keep itself away from neo-nationalism, and/or resist global economic forces to create a commercial heritage site, will be dependent on the extent to which archaeologists working on the site's material, including ourselves, can continue to mold the image and meaning of this site in politically strategic ways.

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