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*An Archaeological History of Japan: 30,000 B.C. to A.D. 700.* KOJI MIZOGUCHI. 2002. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia. xiv + 274 pp. ISBN 0-8122-3651-3.

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This book attempts to "de-construct" the frame of mind that assumes the presence of the unique "Japaneseness" during the prehistoric and protohistoric periods of the Japanese archipelago. To achieve this goal, Mizoguchi starts his book by asking the question of how those who inhabited the Japanese archipelago between 30,000 B.C. and A.D. 700 identified themselves. Using phenomenological approaches, which were originally introduced into archaeology in the 1990s by "post-processual" scholars, Mizoguchi outlines changing relationships between the self and the "Other" for four prehistoric and protohistoric periods of the Japanese archipelago: the Paleolithic, Jomon, Yayoi and Kofun periods. The book represents the first attempt to systematically apply a theoretical framework of "post-processual" archaeology to Japanese data, and thus it is an original contribution to the field of Japanese archaeology. The book is not intended to provide a comprehensive overview of Japanese archaeology, and those who are looking for introductory books need to read other books together with this.

Given the wide range of topics covered by the book, it can be read in many different ways. Students who are interested in phenomenological approaches may find the theory chapter (What Does It Mean to Be What We Are?) most interesting. Those who are specializing in the archaeology of the Yayoi period will find this book invaluable, since Chapter 5 (The Topography of Division: Paddies, the Other and the Yayoi Self) presents the results of the author's original research that incorporates a large body of archaeological evidence.

One way to appreciate this book is to focus on Mizoguchi's interpretation of the development of social stratification in relation to changing identities of both commoners and elites. Mizoguchi (pp. 234-237) suggests that, during the Jomon period, "the authority of the leader figure, who would have been the mediator between the cultural and the natural, was dependent on the actual success of his or her, probably shamanistic, mediation." On the other hand, "[t]he authority of the

communal leaders of the Yayoi was initially based upon their ability to mediate the community's relations with other communities and successfully to procure the resources vital for the maintenance of everyday life." As the contact with new types of the Other, such as the Han Empire in China, began, "the authority of leaders became based upon the shared *abstract belief* that keeping good contacts with such an Other would bring something good to the community." However, from the end of the Yayoi period and the beginning of the Kofun period, commoners became increasingly excluded from this communal ritual, and the existence of the elite began to converge with the divine. More specifically, during the early stage of the Kofun period, "the dead chief and the ancestral chiefs appear to have become recognized as divine," but later on, "the chief came to recognize him—or herself as divine." Mizoguchi further goes on to state that the adoption of Buddhism by the elites in the late 6th century A.D. occurred in the historic context in which "the elites had lost the *communal referential point*." Overall, the picture provided by Mizoguchi posits the emergence of social stratification on the Japanese islands at a fairly late stage when compared to conventional interpretations presented by some other Japanese archaeologists. His emphasis on the importance of network, rather than corporate, strategies in the emergence of social stratification also makes us think of alternative ways to explain the development of social complexity in early societies.

Having acknowledged the valuable contributions of the book, a couple of additional comments could be made. First, despite Mizoguchi's emphasis on contingency and fluidity in self-identification in the theory chapter (see e.g., p. 20), the pictures of "physical and subjective topographies" that he provides for the four periods are quite general, and the uniqueness of individuals or local groups are seldom represented. This problem is particularly evident in Chapter 3 (The Topography of Traveling and Encounters: The Paleolithic and Incipient Jomon Periods) and Chapter 4 (The Topography of Scheduling: The Spatio-Temporal Organization of Social Life and the Jomon Self). From the perspective of hunter-gatherer archaeology, the picture of Paleolithic and Jomon lifeways that Mizoguchi presents seems extremely static and stereotypical: Mizoguchi assumes that the "physical topography" of

identities in the Late Palaeolithic and Incipient Jomon was shaped by "the underdevelopment of fixity in the spatio-temporal movement of groups" (p. 228), and that the "fixity" gradually increased through the Jomon towards the Yayoi Period. This reflects the conventional assumption that the lifeways of mobile hunter-gatherers are less "stable" than sedentary agriculturalists, which has proven to be misleading in recent hunter-gatherer studies (e.g., Koyama, S. and D. H. Thomas ed., *Affluent Foragers*. National Museum of Ethnology, 1981). Given wide regional and temporal variability in each of the four cultures discussed in the book, I believe the phenomenological approach that Mizoguchi took would have been more effective had he chosen to focus on a smaller number of case studies from particular regions.

Second, despite the fact that the book starts with the discussion of the concept of "Japanese-ness," the coverage of this topic in relation to previous studies is rather weak. Over the past several decades, many scholars, as well as non-academic writers, have debated whether the idea of the "unique Japanese-ness" could be applied to the past to any extent. Through these debates, it has become clear that the theoretical and ideological background of the idea of so-called "unique Japanese-ness" is, in fact, quite diverse. Given this diversity, Mizoguchi's treatment of this topic can be misleading. In Chapter 1, for instance, he targets for criticism Sahara's (1987) casual statement that a Paleolithic assemblage of ca. 30,000 B.P. shows uniquely Japanese characteristics. By singling out this remark, Mizoguchi leaves the reader largely uninformed about the complex nature of this issue. The omission of key archaeological and anthropological references on this topic, such as Mark Hudson's *Ruins of Identity: Ethnogenesis in the Japanese Islands* (University of Hawaii Press, 1999), and Ohnuki-Tierney's *Rice as Self: Japanese Identities through Time* (Princeton University Press, 1993) also makes the evaluation of Mizoguchi's book difficult in the context of Japanese archaeology and Japanese studies in the English language.

Overall, this book makes the reader think of a number of issues that can be approached using archaeological data. His arguments are provocative and sometimes experimental. I see the ideas in the book as an opening to new approaches in Japanese archaeology.