

Archaeological Practice and Social Movements

Ethnography of Jomon Archaeology and the Public

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Abstract

This article examines the relationship between archaeological practices and the public, focusing on the interaction of prehistoric Jomon archaeology and present-day social movements in Japan. Where previous studies have emphasized the social influences upon archaeological practices and interpretations, this article seeks to understand how archaeology shapes ideological discourses, stimulates cultural activities, and builds new landscapes in the present. Three case studies are presented that show how “the Jomon” has become a flexible symbol that supports left-wing ideologies and associated environmental and anti-nuclear activism, inspires discursive art-based social movements that look to the Jomon as a source of cultural “roots,” and helps accelerate existing social movements such as rural revitalization and environmental conservation movements. Broadening the attempts in this article to diverse research subjects contributes to establishing a model for anthropological approaches to the study of archaeology as cultural resources.

Keywords: Japanese Archaeology, Social Movements, Jomon Period, Ethnography of Archaeology, Environmentalism, Diversity

1. Introduction

One contribution of the reflexive turn in archaeology is furthering the understanding of society’s influences upon archaeological practices and interpretations. In this article, we examine the other side of this relationship; namely, how archaeology, in the form of sites, artifacts, written reports, and other interpretations, shapes present-day society in various ways. Specifically, we look at the archaeology of the Jomon period and the multiple ways it informs and inspires social movements in Japan. Divided into three case studies, this article investigates at how “the Jomon” is incorporated into left-wing political ideologies and activism, has engendered new social groups engaged in artistic and environmental movements, and been utilized in movements that attempt to reframe contemporary Japan as regionally diverse and culturally plural.

The first case study is a review the book *Jomon Pilgrimages (Jōmon seichi junrei)* by Sakamoto Ryuichi and Nakazawa Shin’ichi (2010), which follows their visits to several “sacred” Jomon sites

across Japan. It is written as an extended conversation on the possibility of learning from the Jomon to critique contemporary politics and guide the creation of a new “post-state” society aligned with the authors’ anti-nuclear and pro-environmental activism. The second introduces the group Jomonism, a non-profit organization that draws inspiration from the Jomon period artifacts for artistic exhibitions and social events. For Jomonism, the Jomon period provides a route to discover one’s “roots” while allowing for individual expression and self-discovery. The third case study introduces the Japanese government-driven archaeological heritage management system, providing examples of how the site-utilization has occurred in parallel with social movements directed toward building local diversity, community-based activism, and satoyama-inspired environmentalism.

This article contributes to the emerging field of ethnography of archaeology (Edgeworth 2006; Hamilakis and Anagnostopoulos 2009; Castañeda and Matthews 2008; Fujii and Ertl 2013), which from the mid-2000s have investigated the practices and politics involved in the production of archaeological knowledge, the controversies that surround artifacts and sites, and the broad impacts of archaeology on people’s lives. This field of study stems from an understanding of archaeology as a social practice conducted in the present that shapes the physical, social, and discursive landscapes that people live and interact within (Ertl 2015: 30–31). As such, this article does not attempt to interpret archaeological data or evaluate stakeholders’ multiple interpretations of artifacts and sites. Rather, it examines how the archaeology of the Jomon period manifests in Japan today through social activism that, while inspired by the archaeological past, effects change in the present. The sources of data for this article are from anthropological fieldwork at a variety of sites, archaeological museum displays, events and activities, conversations with scholars and other stakeholders, as well as literature and other media produced about the Jomon.¹

2. Trends in English Language Sociological Studies of Japanese Archaeology

Research on Japanese archaeology in Anglo-American academia regularly focuses upon the history and social settings that underlie archaeological practice. Approaches are varied, but much of this literature derives from Bruce Trigger’s (1984, 1989) research on comparative-world archaeology and Ian Hodder’s (1999) post-processual archaeology. While there are many studies based in excavation research, laboratory analysis, or surveys of site reports (Barnes 1988; Imamura 1996; Mizoguchi

¹ This article is indebted to dialogues with members of the collaborative research project at the National Museum of Ethnology “Ethnography of Archaeology,” guest speakers and participants of Seminar series “Archaeology and Contemporary Society” planned by authors and hosted by Center for Cultural Resource Studies, Kanazawa University, and informants of our fieldwork to archaeological site parks in Japan including Sannai Maruyama, Goshono, and Togariishi sites. In addition, our participation in Research Institute for Humanity and Nature research project “Small-Scale Economies Project: Approaches from Historical Ecology” (project leader, Junko Habu) stimulated of many the ideas in this article. This article is also based upon the results of John Ertl’s current projects “Ethnography of Archaeology” (2013) funded by “Strategic Young Researcher Overseas Visits Program for Accelerating Brain Circulation” of JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) and KAKENHI (project number 25770304) titled “Diversity in Archaeology and Cultural Resource Production in Japan” (2013–2016).

2003, 2013; Habu 2004), the scholarship reviewed here is that which provides historical and social explanations of how Japanese archaeology has been conducted and utilized.²

Three trends in the English-language discourse on Japanese archaeology inform, and provide a departure point for, this article. First, discussions of archaeological practices are often critical of activities that appear to assist in building a postwar Japanese cultural nationalism: notably its role in reproducing *Nihonjinron* narratives (Fawcett and Habu 1990; Habu and Fawcett 1999, 2008; Edwards 1991, 2005; Pearson 1992; Mizoguchi 2006; Okamura 2011; Ertl 2015). Long scorned by Western scholars, *Nihonjinron* is described as a discourse perpetuating a “myth of homogeneity” (Befu 2001) that espouses cultural-ethnic uniqueness and superiority as it builds exclusivist nationalistic sentiments (Ertl and Hansen 2015). This concern likely stems from the perception among Western scholars that Japanese archaeologists have been primarily interested in the history of the Japanese people and nation (Ikawa-Smith 1982: 296).³ More specifically, however, the preoccupation with archaeology’s connection to *Nihonjinron* appears to be a precaution against the possibility that such activities, whether intentional or not, might lead to totalitarianism or fascist imperial-nationalism similar to that during World War II (Oguma 1995; Habu and Fawcett 1999, 2008).⁴

The second trend in these studies is an emphasis on how sites and artifacts are understood and utilized by various stakeholders. Such approaches highlight the fact that archaeologists work alongside and, at times, in opposition to individuals and institutions that have different interests in archaeological heritage (Okamura and Matsuda 2011). Studies on Japan have examined: how archaeological discoveries are introduced in school textbooks or television and print media (Mizoguchi 2006; Fawcett and Habu 1990); debates over preservation versus development of sites involving municipal bureaucrats, developers, and landowners (Fawcett 1995); the many participants involved in site excavation (Edwards 1991); and the different understandings of a site by archaeologists, interdisciplinary scholars, local resident volunteers, and international collaborators (Habu and Fawcett 2008). Castañeda and Matthews (2008: 9–10) have pointed out that studies of archaeology’s stakeholders have often been focused more on demonstrating the merits of archaeology to the public rather than learning from it. This has meant that stakeholders’ perspectives are commonly “evaluated” (Habu and Fawcett 2008), based largely upon their alignment with archaeologists’ standards, rather than attempted to be understood in their own right.

Third, studies of Japanese archaeology examine the impacts of postwar social and political changes upon how archaeology is conducted and presented to the public. The analysis of Mizoguchi

² Many of these studies are compiled in coauthored volumes that contain archaeological case studies from across the globe (Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Habu, Fawcett, and Matsunaga 2008) or are volumes focused on Japan but only contain one or a few chapters on archaeology (Denoon et al. 1996; Robertson 2005). Thus, the focus on the history and settings of Japanese archaeology may be explained as attempts to “translate” its idiosyncrasies to non-specialist readers.

³ Even today, despite recognition of an increased diversity of research themes and methodologies, Ikawa-Smith still contends “the major theme of archaeology in Japan [continues to be] the construction of national identity with reference to the past” (Ikawa-Smith 2011: 675).

⁴ Habu Junko and Clare Fawcett have pointed out, Jomon also dealt with in this article has been linked with the discourses in *Nihonbunkaron* or *Nihonjinron* that have essentialism bases and emphasized phenomena that Jomon research outcome is frequently utilized for building Japanese culture’s homogeneity despite the diversity of Jomon culture(s). Especially in the end of 1990s, they could find such discourses easily in the middle of fever heat of discovery in the large-scale Jomon site Sannai Maruyama (Habu and Fawcett 1999, 2008).

Koji, who draws on social sciences theories from scholars such as Nicolas Luhman and Anthony Giddens (Mizoguchi 2006), is one the most structured examples of this point. He sharply describes the shift in Japanese archaeological discourses. While archaeological discourse during the Cold War equilibrium took a clear stance based upon a clear dichotomy such as capitalism versus communism, he explains that in the late- or post-modern environment, archaeological discourses are becoming discursive, fragmented, and more fluid than before. Many of the studies on postwar changes in Japanese archaeology emphasize the bureaucratization that occurred during the high-economic growth period from the 1960s through 1990s. The growth of this system and the high pace of salvage excavations are described as important social contexts to explain: the emphasis upon data collection and a lack of theoretical engagement (Ogasawara 2004; Okamura 2011); its incorporation into *Nihonjinron* (Fawcett 1995); and even the lack of oversight that led to the infamous “Early Paleolithic Hoax” (Hudson 2005).⁵

While these three tendencies in the English-language literature reveal particular truths about Japanese archaeology, they may also be understood as partial ones that reflect the interests of Western archaeologists. In this article, the authors share similar interests in archaeology’s involvement in nationalist projects, the divergent and conflicting ways it is utilized, and society’s influence upon archaeological practices. However, in each of the case studies presented here, we find people and activities that to some degree counter these previous representations. The cases studies below, for example, show archaeology of the Jomon period not only acts to promote nationalism, but also has been a catalyst for progressive politics and pluralistic re-imaginings of Japanese people and society. The reason that the Jomon has become such a powerful and flexible symbol for these social movements is due to several factors relating to the history of archaeology in Japan and the qualities of Jomon period sites and artifacts.

3. Diversity and Singularity of the Jomon

The Jomon is typically regarded a hunter-gatherer culture that existed approximately from 16,000 B.P. to 3,000/2,500 B.P. The Jomon period is divided into six stages (Incipient, Initial, Early, Middle, Late, and Final) that begins with the emergence of pottery and ends with the introduction of rice paddy agriculture. The word *Jōmon* is a Japanese translation of the English term “cord marked,” which was first used by Edward Morse (Morse 1879: 8) in reference to the embossed patterns found on pottery at the Omori shell midden site. Some of the characteristics of the Jomon period include large-scale settlements, organized subsistence strategies such as storage pits and shell middens, ornamental clay figurines (*dogū*) and ritual objects, long-distance trade, and construction of large

⁵ The Early Paleolithic Hoax refers to actions of amateur archaeologist Fujimura Shin’ichi, who planted stone tools gathered in other sites into earlier geological strata. These tools were then “discovered” and provided “evidence” for the existence of over 180 Early Paleolithic sites. The hoax was exposed in November 2000 when photographers from Mainichi Shimbun published images of Fujimura planting stone tools. It was later determined he was doing this from at least since 1976. During the hoax, the notion that the “Japanese” Early Paleolithic Period extended back to more than half million years was generally accepted by academia and the wider public (Hudson 2005).

ceremonial features (buildings and mound features) (Habu 2008). Yet because these characteristics are not uniform either temporally or geographically, Habu has suggested, “the Jomon should not be seen as a single entity characterized by a fixed set of cultural traits” (2008: 572).

From the beginning of archaeological studies in Japan, Tsuboi Shogoro, the founder of the anthropological laboratory at Tokyo Imperial University, hypothesized that the Stone Age (Jomon) people in Japan were the *Koropokkur* (mythical characters in Ainu folk stories) (Tsuboi 1887). In fact, the study of the Japanese “Stone Age” started by recognition of the Jomon as “foreign” to the contemporary Japanese population (Oguma 1995: 24–27). The idea that the Jomon are “complex” hunter-gatherers was derived from the comparative view suggested by Yamanouchi Sugao, who is recognized as the father of Jomon pottery typology. He thought the Jomon could be compared to contemporary Northwest Coast Native American tribes, and tentatively referred to the Jomon as “affluent hunters” (*koukyū-shuryōmin*) (Yamanouchi 1937). Consequently, his view was inherited in postwar Jomon studies, seen for example in Koyama Shuzo’s use of the term “affluent hunter-gatherers” (*saishūmin no seijuku*) (Koyama and Thomas 1979), Watanabe Hitoshi’s work on “Jomon stratified society” (1990) and Habu Junko’s descriptions of the Jomon as “complex hunter-gatherers” (2004). These varied terms refer to the cultural complexity and diversity of the Jomon period found in the variety of artifact assemblages, settlement systems, and resource production patterns discovered.

In the postwar era, Jomon studies were incorporated into the study of Japanese history. Following World War II, Japanese archaeology was reorganized as a historical science in response to its wartime contribution to Imperial myth-formation (Fawcett and Habu 1990). Stimulated by Marxist perspectives, the ancient Jomon was situated in lower stages of development. Such a view was entrenched due to several remarkable discoveries in the immediate postwar period. For example, the first major postwar excavation in the 1940s was at Toro site, which is a Yayoi period site associated with ancient rice paddy fields. The archaeological research at Toro has been frequently described as providing “hope” for Japan due to its ability to inform Japanese history free from Imperial ideology.⁶ Other remarkable discoveries include the Paleolithic Iwajuku site in Gunma Prefecture (1940s), Fujinoki Kofun in Nara Prefecture (1980s), and the large-scale Yayoi period village at Yoshinogari site in Saga Prefecture (1980s).

Despite the many Jomon discoveries occurring simultaneously, as well as the high evaluation of Jomon period artistic artifacts, a shabby image of pre-agricultural Jomon people was continually reproduced.⁷ It was only after the discoveries at Sannai Maruyama site (Aomori Prefecture) in the

⁶ Otsuka Hatsushige, emeritus professor of Meiji University, was one of the members of Toro site excavation team in the 1940s. He frequently mentioned Toro as providing “hope” after the war in his public lectures, commercial-based books, and in interviews. For example, he emphasized that, “Just after the war, we were confused, ‘what is the truth?’ because myth-centered history we believed during the war was denied. However, through the Toro excavation, we realized ‘we would be able to unveil Japanese history by ourselves.’ Therefore, it can be concluded that Toro was hope to postwar Japan.” http://www.asahi.com/culture/news_culture/TKY200811160071.html (accessed 11 March 2016).

⁷ One of typical shabby Jomon images is the half-naked Jomon Taro (*Jōmon Tarō*) statue standing at Torihama shell midden, Fukui Prefecture. Despite the organic materials and ornaments such as red urushi-lacquered combs that show an “affluent” life style at Torihama, the shabby Jomon image was embodied publicly. Sahoko Aki and Shuzo Koyama, who have been jointly producing colorful and vivid images of Jomon people and

1990s that this image of the Jomon period people and culture was revised. Many popular books related to the site were published and several non-archaeologist scholars began to mention the Jomon period. Among them, Umesao Tadao wrote about the Jomon culture as a “civilization” (Okada and Koyama 1996; see also Yasuda 1995) and the notion of “affluent Jomon” was revived based on these circumstances. This image of Jomon affluence is one of the key points for understanding the activities described in the three case studies introduced below.

The Jomon as Japan

The Jomon period culture is generally conceived as overlapping the current geopolitical territory of the Japanese nation state. While this view of Jomon as Japan is often critiqued (Otsuka 2000),⁸ the fact remains that archaeological results support it. For example, Miyamoto Kazuo, who is an expert on East Asian archaeology, has explained:

Though Jomon has diversity in each region and phase, we can treat the Japanese archipelago from Hokkaido to the Ryukyu Islands as Jomon culture in block. Jomon has a kind of chain-reaction network [that fits into the current Japanese territory] even though the distribution range of the network varied at different phases. (Miyamoto 2010: 127)

His statement is based upon a typological understanding of Jomon pottery, wherein a “chain-reaction network” has been observed among Jomon pottery style zones, and the network consequently overlaps with the current territory of the Japanese nation-state. Though many researchers are critical of this discourse that unifies the diverse Jomon period into one culture, they repeat such understandings both formally and informally.⁹

It is noteworthy that this overlapping of prehistory and the territory of contemporary Japan is limited to the Jomon period. Studies of the Paleolithic period in the Japanese archipelago tend to be contextualized in worldwide research.¹⁰ The Yayoi period has been described as having gradually spread up from Kyushu in the south toward the north edge of Japanese archipelago. In this period, the Japanese archipelago is understood as colored by different cultures: the Ryukyu Islands (Southern Islands) culture, the Main Islands (Yayoi) culture, and Hokkaido and Northern Tohoku (Epi-Jomon) culture. The following Kofun period is recognized similarly, with the distribution of *kofun* (tumuli)

clothing expressed their disappointment at Jomon Taro (statement at seminar “Archaeology and Contemporary Society Vol. 2” hosted Kanazawa University Center for Cultural Resource Studies on 25 January 2014).

⁸ Junko Habu raises this issue in *Ancient Jomon of Japan* (2004). Habu explains: “[T]hroughout the book I have tried as much as possible to avoid the words ‘Japan’ and ‘Japanese’ when describing the Jomon period. This is because the Jomon period was the time prior to the formation of the ancient Japanese state.... The word ‘Japan’ is retained in the title of this book ... only for the sake of simplicity” (5).

⁹ For example, Watanabe Makoto, emeritus professor of Nagoya University, discussed the chain-reaction network in the closing address of session “Kyushu, Okinawa, and Jomon Culture,” Okinawa Convention 1998, Japanese Archaeological Association. At the 255th Study Group for Oumi Shell Midden (31 January 2015), Yamada Yasuhiro criticized the tendency to unify Jomon cultures as a singular culture, while at the same time he mentioned “‘Jomon pottery has systematic seriality’ that does not exist anywhere except the main four islands of Japanese archipelago.”

¹⁰ This is especially the case since the Early Paleolithic hoax of 1999. After the hoax, the Japanese Paleolithic Research Association (JPRA) was established in 2003. In 2008, the Asia Paleolithic Association (APA) was established to communicate between Chinese, South Korean, Russian Paleolithic researchers, the JPRA is playing the counter part of Japan of APA, and emphasizes international collaborative research projects.

limited to only part of main islands (mainly from Kyushu to southern Tohoku). This recognition of diverse prehistoric cultures, for example, can be seen in Fujimoto Tusyoshi's description of the cultures in the northern and southern parts of the Japanese archipelago as "two other Japanese cultures" (*Mō futatsu no Nihonbunka*) (Fujimoto 1988). The practice of envisioning the Jomon as overlapping the current Japanese territory is another part of the reason why it has strong influence to various aspects of contemporary Japan, and why we deal with the Jomon in the context of social movements in contemporary Japan.

4. Jomon Inspired Left-wing Activism in Japan

This first case study examines how "the Jomon" supports political ideologies, especially paying attention to its influences in contemporary left-wing activism that is set against the right-wing revisionist policies of the current regime.¹¹ The following is primarily a review of the 2010 book *Jomon Pilgrimages (Jōmon seichi junrei)* by musician Sakamoto Ryuichi and ethnologist Nakazawa Shin'ichi, which was written as a discussion between the two as they traveled to various Jomon sites. Throughout the book, the authors are critical of contemporary politics and emphasize that an archaeological perspective, one that dives into the Jomon past, may provide inspiration for a new "post-state" (*kokka-ikō*) political order. The body of *Jomon Pilgrimages* was originally published as five articles in the monthly magazine *Sotokoto* between September 2006 and January 2008. *Sotokoto* is a self-proclaimed "environmental fashion magazine" that advocates environmental social movements, Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS), and slow food and slow living. Thus, the dialogue of Sakamoto and Nakazawa as well as their discussion of "Jomon sacred places" must be understood as contextualized in recent popular social movements.

¹¹ Japanese political ideological conflict has transformed since post-Cold War. Under the Cold War equilibrium, the rivalry was considered a conflict between a "conservative" right represented by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and a "progressive" left by other smaller parties. The LDP was "conserving" the contribution to Western regimes such as the Japan-US security treaty and the indirect contribution to the Vietnam War. The left side was positioned as a reaction to these, and demanded "changes." In the post-Cold War, the LDP started aspiring to make its own "changes," for instance, by depending on historical revisionism and by attempting to amend the Constitution because of the decline in US influence. Currently, the left is paradoxically pushing against rapid changes with less democratic procedures by the LDP, by "keeping" the reflective attitude to neighboring countries and the present Constitution, particularly "Article 9" which contains an anti-war clause. One of the latest conflict issues was also related to the risk of war as well as the Cold War era, particularly on Security Bills, which have been railroaded by the LDP, ignoring scholars' opinions and the public's reaction. In the summer of 2015, a massive demonstration occupied the parliament plaza. But, what they demanded was not change, but contemplation against rapid change.

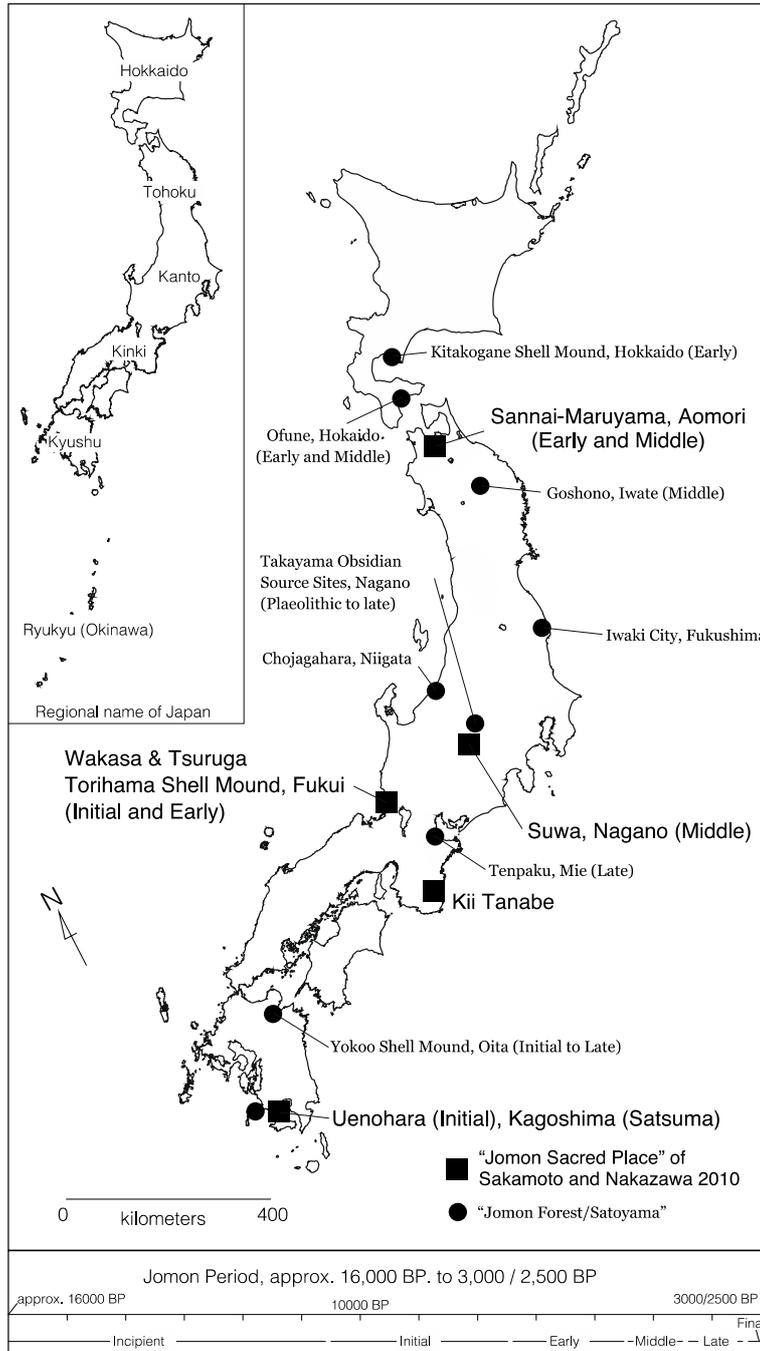


Figure 1 Distribution of Jomon sites mentioned in this article

Reading the Jomon Pilgrimages: Overview

Sakamoto Ryuichi is one of the most famous musicians in Japan. Working out of Tokyo and New York, his talents extend into the fields of music production, film soundtrack composition, acting, writing, and even comedy. He is equally known for his environmental activism, advocacy for post-3/11 (2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami) disaster reconstruction, and involvement in anti-nuclear organizations. In 2013 he received the University of California “Berkeley Japan Prize,” a lifetime achievement award for furthering understanding of Japan. The prize recognized both his music and activism and the celebration events included not only performances but also participation

in an eco-activism panel.¹² Nakazawa Shin'ichi is a scholar and popular author whose work is in the fields of philosophy, anthropology, religion, and environmentalism. He is the director of the Institut pour la Science Sauvage (*yasei no kagaku kenkyūjo*) at Meiji University, the name of which is derived from “la Pensée Sauvage” (The Savage Mind) by Claude Lévi-Strauss. In 2012, following the 3/11 disaster, he established and has been director of the organization Green Active (*gurīn akutibu*) that promotes a network of environmentally-conscious political and educational activities.

For the book, Sakamoto and Nakazawa visited places with famous Jomon sites located throughout Japan from the north to south. Their travels included the Suwa region of Nagano Prefecture, Wakasa and Tsuruga region in Fukui Prefecture (Torihama shell mound), Yamaguchi and Kagoshima Prefectures (Uenohara site), Aomori Prefecture (Sannai Maruyama site), as well as the Kii Mountains of Wakayama and Nara Prefectures (see Figure 1). At the same time, their pilgrimage route covered the history of Jomon archaeology. The Suwa region of Nagano Prefecture was the arena where the “Jomon plant cultivation hypothesis” came about (Fujimori 1970), Torihama shell mound in Fukui Prefecture was unveiled by salvage archaeological projects from the 1960s to 1980s. Uenohara Site in Kagoshima Prefectures and Sannai Maruyama Site in Aomori Prefecture were the achievements of salvage excavations and the reconstruction of sites as archaeological parks in the 1990s.

Reading the Jomon Pilgrimages: Jomon as Model for a Post-State Japan

Envisioning the Jomon as a “pre-state” society, Sakamoto and Nakazawa reflect upon their personal histories of social activism, the ills of society today, and discuss how the Jomon may inform a movement toward a “post-state” society.¹³ For them, “archaeological perspectives” are necessary for understanding and resolving the societal problems of today. They view political conservatives as perpetuating their beliefs and stimulating patriotism by avoiding critical reflection upon the past. They explain:

Sakamoto: [T]here are people out there who are completely comfortable with the Imperial system and state-sponsorship of Shinto.

Nakazawa: Those are people with no archaeological sense, uncritically accepting what appears on the surface.

Sakamoto: At the same time, there are also people who can't help but to drag the Jomon into things such as ancient Shinto. That is equally problematical. (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 25)

In this section, Sakamoto and Nakazawa were reflecting upon the politics of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in the mid-2000s. In particular, they were referencing controversial visits by LDP politicians to Yasukuni Shrine, which enshrines the war dead including class-A war criminals of

¹² http://ieas.berkeley.edu/cjs/berkeley_japan_prize_sakamoto.html (accessed 25 March 2016).

¹³ Nakazawa explains in the preface of this book, "To think about what the post-state may be, it is necessary to understand the mentality and sensibility of people from a time before the state existed. That is why we have gravitated towards the 'Jomon'" (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 9).

World War II.¹⁴ As a frame for their own political discussions and interests in learning from the Jomon, they relate their dissatisfaction with the historical revisionist tendencies of Abe Shinzo's administration during his first term (from September 2006 to September 2007).¹⁵ Sakamoto and Nakazawa discuss:

Nakazawa: Especially now, the prime minister who is from Yamaguchi Prefecture ... has been attempting to shape the mindset of Japanese into one that is closed and introspective [isolationist].

Sakamoto: That's a fantasy of homogeneous Japanese.

Nakazawa: In contrast, historians and folklorists in Kagoshima Prefecture have outward looking perspectives and are actively reorienting themselves in the context of Asia as a whole. (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 124)

In this exchange, Yamaguchi and Kagoshima refer to the feudal domains Choshu (Yamaguchi) and Satsuma (Kagoshima) that were traditionally hostile rivals. Moreover, Nakazawa frames Yamaguchi as reflective of the Yayoi culture and Kagoshima of the Jomon. They are commenting on how the conservative politics of the Abe administration have silenced progressive political perspectives, in much the same way as the Yayoi culture may be understood as having beat out and replaced the Jomon culture long ago. Together, the two short passages above are succinct summaries the leftist critiques of conservatives' uses of archaeology. Conservatives have been described as ignoring history completely, conflating ancient traditions with contemporary practices, rewriting history to suit political agendas, and building an untenable image of homogeneity and cultural continuity.

In their introduction, before visiting these Jomon sacred places, Nakazawa explains what "the Jomon" is for them:

Nakazawa: When the term "Jomon" is used to refer to the total life, concept of nature, and mindset of people before the nation-state, we see that it is becoming a word that has multiple meanings outside of its strict archaeological definition. (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 7)

As summarized above, the Jomon is a period of Japanese prehistory generally situated in a hunter-gatherer subsistence and pre-state social development phase. Such basic archaeological knowledge influences the foundation of their inspiration from the Jomon and supports the emergence of the conception of the Jomon as "ecological" and "a livelihood harmonized with nature," which

¹⁴ Visits to Yasukuni have taken place despite harsh criticism from many in East Asian nations, in particular China and South Korea. In Japanese domestic politics, visits to Yasukuni occupy an important place in the support circle of the LDP. The background of this issue can be seen in many kinds of media, especially in the English-language discourse, for instance, at: <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2014/01/24/abes-yasukuni-visit-the-view-from-japan/> (accessed 11 March 2016).

¹⁵ In his second term beginning in 2012, Prime Minister Abe openly questioned the "Kono statement" (*Kōno danwa*), which acknowledged Japanese military's involvement with enlisting comfort women against their will in Korean peninsula during World War II. From foreign perspectives, especially in the United States, it is frequently concluded that Abe Shinzo is a historical revisionist.

provides the base of their alternative philosophy for contemporary Japan. Based upon these ideas, Jomon sites served as inspirational “power spots.” Walking around these sites they reminisced about their pasts.

Nakazawa: We have been fixated upon a “post-state” since we were in our youth.

Sakamoto: Because we were Red [communist].

Nakazawa: Yes, because we were Red (laughing). (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 73)

Their concept of a “post-state” is not clearly defined, but it is a sought-after alternative to the current society based in capitalism and globalization. While no model for a “post-state” is proffered, they are clearly seeking a new social movement that provides something different from the stagnated radicalism of their youth.

Nakazawa: Going to Jomon sacred sites will not lead to any immediate change. What we are trying to do is develop a philosophy through artistic activity. To show that “change is possible.” (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 32)

Nakazawa: The study of the Jomon is not only about the past, but can shine light upon the future.

Sakamoto: It shows the present may be modified. (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 173)

Reading the Jomon Pilgrimages: Jomon Inspired Environmental Activism

Their inspiration from the Jomon stems from the diversity of the Jomon period and its ecological image. In their understanding, diversity includes regional and chronological variation. It also stems from the spirituality of the Jomon people. They describe the Jomon as having an animistic religion encompassing a belief in a multitude of divine spirits. They also find religious sacredness in the surrounding nature and in snake-shaped decorations on Jomon pottery and they link these to an imagined Jomon belief-system. In placing value in the animistic belief system of the Jomon, they set it in contrast to contemporary monotheistic religions and, in turn, use it to critique the politics of today.

Sakamoto: The god of a monotheistic religion does not allow one to love other gods. It only gives you the choice between yes and no. The Bush doctrine of “If you are not my friend, you are my enemy” is symbolic of this, but it can also be seen throughout contemporary politics and science. (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 69–70)

The “sacred places” they visited are located in rural areas richly endowed with nature. At the same time, they recognize these rural locales as some of the most politically and economically isolated regions of Japan today. Their visits to Jomon sites in Fukui and Aomori prefectures

correspond to the locations of nuclear power plants and processing facilities. These sites were likely chosen because of the contrast between their sacredness as Jomon sites and their present-day marginalized status in Japanese society. As might be expected, Sakamoto and Nakazawa's criticism of nuclear power plants is sharp.

Sakamoto: Nuclear energy is the king of today. As a matter of course, the king does not become a sacrificial victim. Instead, the king sacrifices other's lives. (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 64)

Sakamoto: "*Mottainai*" [reduce waste, reuse and recycle resources] is perhaps still a human-centered concept. Having received so much from nature, it is natural that we should give back to it. In building nuclear power plants, we have placed such an enormous burden on nature that we will have to do something great to bring things back into balance. How do we begin to pay back this debt? (Sakamoto and Nakazawa 2010: 69)

The Cold War Japanese ideological conflict between the right and left was described as one between conservative and progressive. However, nowadays both sides are aspiring to some kind of change for Japan. Reading through *Jomon Pilgrimages* provides an understanding that the Jomon, for Sakamoto and Nakazawa, provides a framework for an alternative Japan that resists the policy package of current "right." Particularly, in regard to their anti-nuclear stance, pinning an image of sustainable society underpinned by environmentalism onto the Jomon is suggestive for the other two cases below.

5. Jomon-Inspired Group Formation through the Medium of "Art"

In the first case, we described how the results of archaeological investigations and interpretations of the Jomon have been incorporated into left-wing ideologies and movements set against the contemporary politics of the right. In this second case, we examine how Jomon period artifacts have stimulated other forms of interpretative activity detached from the confines of historical-academic discourses. In this section, we look at the activities of the group Jomonism, which over the past several years has been engaging in art making and other events inspired by Jomon sites and artifacts. It begins with an introduction to Okamoto Taro, who is recognized for reframing and popularizing Jomon period artifacts as objects of art and who is the primary inspiration for many members of Jomonism. This section explains that the activities of Jomonism, as with Okamoto, involve an acrobatic transformation of the relationship between Jomon and the Japanese. Rather than positing contemporary Japanese culture as descending from the Jomon, the Jomon is viewed rather as a primordial, primitive, or "indigenous" culture from which one can rediscover an authentic "Japanese spirit."

Jomon Artifacts as Works of Art

Jomon period pottery, clay figurines (*dogū*), and other artifacts are commonly recognized as having desirable attributes that extend far beyond their value as data for archaeologists. Their value is magnified in the practice of designating individual artifacts as important cultural properties (*jūyō bunkazai*) or national treasures (*kokuhō*) independent of any distinction granted to the sites where they were discovered. It may also be seen in displays of archaeological artifacts in museums, which often emphasize the beauty of artifacts over their value in narrating the past. Archaeologists may also analyze Jomon artifacts as artwork, aiming not just to develop temporal and regional typologies, but also to understand the symbolic world of Jomon period people (Kobayashi 2004).

The artist Okamoto Taro is recognized for popularizing the Jomon in the postwar era by framing its artifacts as a quintessential Japanese art form. Several scholars have summarized his life history (Sawaragi 2003; Akasaka 2007; Rousmaniere 2009) and most point out the contrast between his time in Paris and in postwar Japan. In the 1930s, Okamoto settled in Paris where he engaged in abstract painting. He also studied humanities and social sciences in Université de Paris and frequented the Musée de l'Homme (Museum of Human) where he became familiar with the ethnological collection from the French colonies. After the Nazi attack on Paris, he returned to Japan and was dispatched in the Asia Pacific War. Following the war, in 1951 he encountered Jomon pottery at the National Museum of Tokyo, which was a turning point for Okamoto. After that, he started talking about the wonderfulness of the Jomon in various media including the art journal *Mizue* (1952), and he rushed to publish the book *Nihon no dentō* (The Tradition of Japan) (1956) where he situated the Jomon as a tradition of Japan. His engagement with Jomon pottery is frequently compared to the influence of African “primitive” arts upon surrealists in Europe. The difference is that Africa provides an exotic existence for European surrealists while the Jomon is from Okamoto’s motherland.¹⁶ Through Okamoto’s fieldwork on traditional Japan alongside his engagement with Jomon artifacts, the Jomon was allocated into the discourse of Japanese art (Akasaka 2007; Rousmaniere 2009). His legacy continues to fuel broad interest in Jomon artifacts as works of art and has inspired a current generation of Japanese artists.¹⁷

NPO Jomonism

According to the non-profit organization (NPO) database by the Cabinet Office (*naikakufu*), Jomonism was established in 2011, although their activities started as early as 2009. On the “about us” page of their social media website, the definition and aims of Jomonism are described as follows:

¹⁶ In concurrence with his evaluation of Jomon artifacts and culture, he was conducting his fieldwork in the marginal, peripheral areas of Japan on the eve of the rapid economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s. He traveled Tohoku, the northeastern parts of the mainland of Japan, and Okinawa, southwestern islands. Based on the fieldwork, he published several books with “Japan” in the title (Okamoto 1958, 1961, 1964).

¹⁷ As an example of the value attributed to Jomon period artifacts as artwork, the Sotheby’s “The Soul of Japanese Aesthetics” sale featured a “goggle eyed” clay figurine that sold for GBP 1,000,000 while initially estimated at GBP 70,000.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3082118/2-800-year-old-Japanese-figurine-valued-70-000-sells-1million-auction-despite-broken-half.html> (accessed 27 August 2015).

Jomonism is a project that focuses on the culture of the Jomon people of Japan, whose arts flourished while living in harmony with nature, to find the roots of contemporary lifestyles and to spread these values while allowing members to enjoy themselves.

What are your roots? The important catchphrase for Jomonism is “feel the roots, (blank)” In the blank, each member can complete the phrase based on his or her individual ideas. These roots are connected to us in the present, existing in people, in things, and in day-to-day life. We believe that the culture and sensibilities of the Jomon people, who over a period of ten thousand years created the foundational culture of the Japanese islands, are still alive in Japanese culture and spirituality today. Where did we come from and where are we going? By feeling our roots, it may be possible to discover a way into the future that is a bit happier than today.¹⁸

Members’ activities to “fill the blank” are frequently linked to the arts. Amongst other activities, they have been supporting the planning of music festival in Sannai Maruyama Jomon park site since 2009 and they hosted a designed T-shirt exhibition (JOMO-T) in Harajuku in 2010. The authors of this article had opportunities to see two art events held by them, “Art of Jomon – Ancient Japanese Shaman’s Culture Reincarnated as Altermodern Arts” at hpgrp Gallery in New York (15–23 March 2013) and “Feel the Roots 2014: Sannai Maruyama Site Jomon Art Festival” (7 September 2014). This section is based on interviews conducted with members of Jomonism at these events.

Arts of Jomon in New York

The hpgrp Gallery, the venue for “Arts of Jomon,” is managed by the Japanese apparel company H.P. FRANCE, and is in the Chelsea district of New York City where many art galleries are located. The authors visited the gallery on 21 March 2013 and interviewed two key individuals: the head of Jomonism at the time and the main curator of the exhibition.

The gallery consisted of three rooms laid out in white-cube spaces typical for contemporary art. The exhibit catalogue titled “Arts of Jomon” explained that fourteen Japanese artists, including a nationally-famous comedian and a son of well-known comic writer, contributed artworks for the exhibition. Some of the works appeared to be directly inspired by Jomon period archaeological materials, such as pottery mimicking the shape of flame pottery (*kaen-doki*) painted in primary colors. Others were too abstract to see the linkage with “Jomon” at first glance. Despite an apparent inconsistency between the artworks, the interviewees explained that the Jomon provided inspiration for all of them in some way. In the forward of the exhibition catalogue, the independent curator Kenji Kubota similarly explains:

¹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/ArtsOfJomon> (accessed 9 March 2016).

A number of artists of radical and diverse expressions participate [in] this exhibition. These artists may easily cross and deviate from the frame of the so-called ‘contemporary art,’ and it may not be easy to find common factors among them at first sight. However, just as the Jomon earthenware themselves, all artists share their senses within its excessive decoration, indigenous, magical beliefs, and also their strong impulsive expressions oozing out.... [W]e also hope this exhibition would suggest what ‘indigenous’ means in our current culture. (Kubota 2013)

Our interview began with the simple expression, “*Jōmon, yabaine*” (Jomon is too cool). Moroji Keishiro was head of Jomonism at that time and was employed at an ICT venture company in Tokyo. Outside of his work and leadership position in Jomonism, he also managed the environmental-based NPO “Green Bird” (*gurīn bādo*), whose primary activity was cleaning trash from the streets of urban cities. During our interview, he repeated that his interest in the Jomon stemmed from his conception that “the Jomon people were happy and free” (*Jōmonjin ha happī de furī*). In his understanding, people in the Jomon period had been “happy” and “without war” (*sensō ga nai*) for ten thousand years, thus he hoped for clues on how to make the world happy for ten thousand years to come. He also mentioned that “Jomon people have no conception of isolation.” Moroji was living in Tokyo, where the people tend to be isolated and fatigued under competitive conditions and thus imagined the Jomon as a kind of counter to contemporary society and its many difficulties.

Kim Riyuu was the main curator and is an artist who specializes in earthenware. He explained that he was born in Japan to a Japanese father and Korean mother, from whom he took his family name. Based on this, he seemed to situate himself as an artist who, at least partially, is an outsider to Japanese society. In contrast to his complex personal identity, he repeatedly emphasized that the Jomon are “Native Japanese” (*netibu Japanīzu*). He was fascinated by the materiality of Jomon artifacts similar to Okamoto Taro. Specializing in earthenware, he explained that he wished to create something that could remain for thousands of years after he died. From his perspective as an artist, he explained, “It is important for an artist to be free from existing art contexts, in this sense, I can learn a lot of thing from Jomon as a creator.” He sometimes referenced Jomon period people as his “Jomon elders” (*Jōmon senpai*) with a sense of respect. His concept in curating the exhibition was also based on the concept of “freeness” and he solicited work from artists who could explain their work as inspired in some way by the Jomon.

Both mentioned their interests in an “animistic” Jomon and its potential to lead to world peace – interests similar to those mentioned by Sakamoto and Nakazawa. For both, their knowledge of Jomon period archaeology was admittedly superficial, as Moroji explained, “While some members of Jomonism can talk endlessly about Jomon archaeology, I am not particularly interested in the history myself.” Although one might criticize their understandings of the Jomon as based in superficial images, their energy and enthusiasm resulted in getting sponsorships. In particular, the exhibition was sponsored in association with Aomori Prefecture and under the auspice of Association of People from Aomori Prefecture.

Jomon Art Festival at Sannai Maruyama Site, Aomori Prefecture

On 7 September 2014, “Feel the Roots 2014: Jomon Art Festival” was held in Sannai Maruyama site, Aomori Prefecture. On the eve of this festival, a moon viewing party was held titled “*Jōmon sōru no hadō*” (Wave Motion of Jomon Soul). The moon viewing party, celebrating its sixteenth anniversary, was managed by the NPO Sannai Maruyama Jomon Information Association (*Sannai Maruyama Jōmon hasshin no kai*). Koyama Shuzo, emeritus professor of National Museum of Ethnology and author of many books about the Jomon period and Sannai Maruyama site, also participated in the party. He proudly and half-jokingly explained, “Nobody but us has been convening such a stupid party like this for sixteen years!”

Habu and Fawcett (2008) have outlined the details of and problems stemming from the fever-heat of Sannai Maruyama site over the past two decades. Initially, Sannai Maruyama site was slated to become a baseball stadium, but the rescue archaeological excavation research revealed the existence of vast Early and Middle Jomon period remains. Consequently, the stadium plan was canceled and a cultural complex including an archaeological site park, a guidance museum for the site, and a prefectural art museum was constructed. The main symbols of the site park are its reconstructed architecture, most notably a monumental six-post tower and a large-scale longhouse that served as the venue for the moon viewing party.

The next morning was the Jomon Art Festival, and the landscape of the site was dramatically transformed. A central stage for music performances was set up in front of the six-post tower, and 72 booths were clustered in the surrounding open-air space. The complex was named “Jomon Factory” (*Jōmon kōbō*) and individual booths were selling agricultural products, antiques, and handmade goods such as candles, silver accessories, pottery, and organic jams. Others were providing workshop spaces for yoga, music instruments, and art. The host of the previous night, NPO Sannai Maruyama Jomon Information Association, became one of booth providers, hosting a “Jomon art workshop.” The organizers of the day were Aomori Prefecture and the Committee of Feel the Roots, and on some fliers and pamphlets NPO Jomonism was noted in brackets alongside the committee. On the face of these documents, Jomonism was hosting the Jomon Factory and the Committee of Feel the Roots was organizing music performances on both the main stage and a second stage erected inside the reconstructed longhouse.

We primarily talked with two members of Jomonism. One man, who was wearing psychedelic rainbow-colored clothes and carrying an eccentric stick, was walking around the space with children surrounding him. Another man wearing a Jomonism staff t-shirt introduced himself as the current head of Jomonism. During an idle conversation with Ishino Hodaka, the head of Jomonism, he explained his background in detail. He was born in Suwa, Nagano Prefecture and was now living in Tokyo. The psychedelic male introduced himself as a 3D modeling artist, and explained the concept behind their artistic activities, “Our role is to tell the ‘feelings’ related to Jomon that academia cannot deal with.” Overlapping what Moroji said at the hprgr Gallery, New York, he also emphasized the importance of the Jomon spirit of “freeness” as stimulus for their activities. They unveiled plans for an upcoming Jomon art exhibition at Denver airport in the United States. They also explained earlier exhibitions of “Jomon Arts” at the Japan Expo in Paris (4–7 July 2014). Within

Japan, they held “Art of Jomon in Aomori” (14–23 February 2014), and another in Omotesando gallery in Tokyo (4–18 January 2014). In addition, they managed a locally based activity called, “Tokyo Machida, Jomon Art Festival,” which focused on open-air pottery burning activities (28 February 2014).

It may be concluded that Jomonism is an urban-based ensemble of individuals who have no concrete common ground except for an attraction to “the Jomon.” The headquarters of Jomonism is in Tokyo and its key members mostly live in urban areas. While many of their activities are hosted at Jomon sites in rural areas, their activities are meant to promote the attractiveness they find in “the Jomon” throughout Japan and the world. One of their keywords, “Native Japanese” could be interpreted as problematical, as the seeds of narrow-minded nationalism that link the Jomon to *Nihonjinron* ideas of Japanese homogeneity and cultural continuity. However, their use of “Native Japanese” is derived from that of “Native American” as conceived within the LOHAS movement, which has placed high-value in the thought and philosophy attributed to Native American tribes. An article in the magazine *Sotokoto* introduced an on-screen talent who joined street-cleaning activities of the NPO Green Bird. He said, “I have been loving the Native American idea that ‘we are with nature’ since I was a teenager.”¹⁹ From this, we see that Jomonism members’ activities and discourses are stimulated by a discontent with the anomie caused by globalization and advanced capitalism, and representative of their desires for alternative ways of life.

6. Recreating the Jomon Landscape: Bureaucratic Environmentalism and the Satoyama Movement

This final case study examines how archaeology may be aligned with ongoing social movements in attempt to make its results meaningful to the public. Specifically, it introduces several examples of archaeological parks that have initiated environmental landscape restoration projects under the pretense of “Jomon satoyama” and “Jomon forest.” Utilizing data from archaeobotanical studies to guide the building of prehistoric habitats and ecosystems, Jomon satoyama projects have become a popular way to encourage community involvement and interest in archaeological parks. Satoyama is generally understood as an ecological revitalization and conservation movement that encourages activities aimed at building biologically diverse and sustainable landscapes. While the concept of satoyama has spread throughout Japan and the world unconnected to archaeological research, the images of “Jomon people” as ecological and harmonious with nature have provided additional stimulus to the movement.

The Government-centered Rescue Archaeology System in Japan

If archaeology, as explained above, was envisioned as providing “hope” for Japanese after the war to learn their nation’s history democratically and free from ideological influences (Fawcett and Habu 1990), it was a hope that went largely unfulfilled. The excavation of Tsukinowa Kofun (Okayama

¹⁹ http://www.hasebeken.net/sotokoto_html/0808.html (accessed 7 March 2016).

Prefecture) in 1953 is described as an “ideal of early postwar archaeology in Japan” (Hudson 2005: 3) due to it being initiated and funded by the local community association and including participation from around 10,000 people (Kondo 1960; Fawcett 1995). While frequently cited, this public-centered model for archaeology never became the norm and has rarely been repeated (cf. Muraki 2011). In its place, archaeology over the past fifty years developed into a government-centered administrative system that has professionalized the practice and increasingly excluded participation from non-specialists such as amateur archaeologists, students, and residents.²⁰

The present heritage management system in Japan includes a well-composed rescue archaeology and post-excavation research system. The government sector conducts salvage archaeological research based on a “polluter-pay system” outlined in the Cultural Properties Preservation Act (*bunkazai hogohō*) of 1950. Under the polluter-pay system, developers are required to cover the costs for salvage archaeological research. During the rapid economic growth period, many salvage excavations stemmed from public infrastructure projects, such as highways and bullet train systems, underpinned by the 1972 Plan for Remodeling the Japanese Archipelago (*Nihon rettō kaizōron*). These public works have been the primary stimulus for postwar Japanese archaeology itself, as many of the remarkable findings, such as Sannai Maruyama site, resulted from salvage excavations.

Today, this system is undergoing a crisis derived from two main factors. The first stems from the economic stagnation beginning in the early 1990s that led to a decrease in large-scale construction projects and associated salvage excavations.²¹ The second is the current political trend toward neoliberalism that has been advocating small government. These politics have pressured local governments to, at least partially, outsource the work required for archaeological projects. It may be concluded that the section in charge of salvage archaeological projects is undergoing a transitional phase.²² Under these circumstances, an emphasis on the post-excavation phase has risen in the guise of the utilization (*katsuyō*) of cultural properties, as outlined by the Agency for Cultural Affairs in 2007.²³

Environmentalism in Bureaucratic Settings: Jomon Parks and Satoyama Forest Revitalization

As site utilization is becoming increasingly important, many sites have enlisted the concept of satoyama alongside local-environmental revitalization movements to promote heritage tourism and regional identity construction. According to Tokoro (1980), the term satoyama was first used in the eighteenth century in the records of Teramachi Hyoemon (an assistant magistrate officer in Kiso,

²⁰ Akatsuka Jiro, who is a director of the NPO Kodai Niwa no Sato Bunka-isan Nettowāku (Kodai Niwa no Sato Cultural Heritage Network) that manages cultural heritage of the northwestern area of Aichi Prefecture, mentioned that non-specialists such as citizens’ volunteer groups used to be main force of excavation research before the current government-based research system. He also insisted that the third sector, such as NPOs and citizens’ groups, should claim back the initiative for excavation research and cultural heritage management (statements at seminar “Archaeology and Contemporary Society Vol. 5,” hosted by Center for Cultural Resource Studies, Kanazawa University on 24 January 2015).

²¹ This tendency can be seen in the rise and fall of national funding for salvage excavations published in “*Maizō bunkazai kankei tōkei shiryō, Heisei 27 nendo*” (Statistical Data of Buried Cultural Properties, 2015), http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/bunkazai/shokai/pdf/h28_03_maizotokei.pdf (accessed 28 February 2017).

²² In 2008, the Agency for Cultural Affairs published “*Kongo no maizō bunkazai hogo taisei no arikata ni tsuite*” (Concept of Buried Cultural Property Preservation System in the Near Future), http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/bunkazai/shokai/pdf/houkoku_08.pdf (accessed 28 January 2016). In this report, the committee mentioned current social changes including the requirement from the political agenda to adopt “small government,” and recommended involving commercial companies in salvage archaeology projects.

²³ http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/bunkazai/shokai/pdf/houkoku_07.pdf (accessed 14 February 2016).

present day Nagano Prefecture) in reference to the mountains located near his village. The conception of satoyama has since broadened to indicate ecology, biodiversity, and the landscape including villages, farmland, secondary forests, and forested mountains. Recently, satoyama has become a symbolic concept utilized in environmentalism and eco-tourism activities, and has been advocated by the Japanese Ministry of the Environment and the United Nations University through research and outreach activities in Japan and across the globe (Takeuchi 2010).²⁴

Several Jomon satoyama and forest themed projects were introduced in the Journal of the Japanese Society for Cultural Heritage (*isekigaku kenkyū*) in 2010. Published by the Japanese Society for Cultural Heritage (*Nihon isekigakkai*) this issue featured a section on “Sites and Culture of Jomon.” It consisted of 21 articles: a keynote article by Kobayashi Tatsuo (2010), one of the most influential Jomon archaeologists, who wrote about the future vision of Jomon archaeological sites; eight articles on the management or utilization of Jomon archaeological sites by academic scholars or government-employed cultural property specialists; and twelve case reports by managers of Jomon period archaeological site parks and museums from the north to south parts of Japan (Hokkaido to Kagoshima Prefecture). These case studies showed that one of the trends in Jomon site park development includes nature reconstruction projects that utilize concepts of “Jomon satoyama” and “Jomon forest” (*Jōmon no mori*).

Satoyama-themed activities typically involve local-resident volunteers who gather periodically at site parks to manage and maintain the natural landscape. These groups are usually overseen by government-employed cultural properties managers and their environment reconstruction activities utilize knowledge about Jomon period vegetation to determine what to plant and which trees to cut down. In Hokkaido, the Date City Institute of Funkawan Culture, which includes the Jomon period Kitakogane shell mound site park, supports the volunteer organization “Group for Thriving Jomon Forest Construction” (*Jōmon sukusuku morizukuri no kai*) to plant trees around the site park (Oshima 2010). The construction plan of Ofune site park (Hakodate City, Hokkaido) also includes a “Jomon forest” (*Jōmon no mori*) area (Abe 2010). In Honshu, the main island of Japan, Goshono site park (Ichinohe Town, Iwate Prefecture) includes a forested area and ongoing nature restoration activities named “Jomon satoyama” (Takada 2010). Chojagahara site (Itoigawa City, Niigata Prefecture) is embedded in the grand plan of “Itoigawa geo-park” (Kijima 2010). Takayama obsidian resource sites (Nagawa Town, Nagano Prefecture), which consist of Paleolithic and Jomon period remains, has a plan for “hometown” (*furusato*) construction centering on the sites that include Jomon forest areas (Otake 2010). Tenpaku site park (Matsusaka City, Mie Prefecture) includes a construction plan with a Jomon forest and satoyama revitalization activities near the site (Wake 2010). On the Kyushu islands, the construction plan of Yokoo shell mound park (Oita City, Oita Prefecture) includes “Jomon satoyama” areas (Shioji 2010) and Uenohara site park (Kokubu City, Kagoshima Prefecture) has already constructed a “Jomon forest” area (Tomita 2010). In total, three-quarters of site parks featured in this journal contained some sort of Jomon forest and satoyama plan. As mentioned above,

²⁴ This government project, titled “Satoyama Initiative,” has been exploring new environmental management systems inspired by the satoyama concept aimed at supporting community development in Japan and third world countries. <http://satoyama-initiative.org/ja/> (accessed, 11 March 2016).

Jomon satoyama creation projects can be found from north to the south of Japan, and the chronological range of those sites extends from the Incipient to the Late Jomon periods.

The practice of naming reconstructed forests attached to sites “satoyama” is a phenomenon distinctive to Jomon period parks. To our knowledge, for example, there are no similar prehistoric (Paleolithic, Yayoi, or Kofun period) satoyama forest-building projects.²⁵ The reconstructions of Jomon forests are underpinned by the research results of environmental archaeology, including pollen analysis, zoo-archaeology, and archaeobotany. On the other hand, Jomon satoyama also refers to the sustainable natural resource utilization by ancient Jomon people, an idea which is derived from archaeological interpretations. A leading environmental archaeologist, Tsuji Sei’ichiro contributed an article to the above-mentioned journal where he suggested the concepts of “*satoyama*,” “*satokawa*,” (*kawa* means river), and “*satoumi*” (*umi* means sea) based on the study of environmental archaeology at Sannai Maruyama (Tsuji 2010). Looking at the same data, however, the environmental archaeologist Yamasaki Takeshi critiqued the application of the satoyama concept to Jomon period landscapes. He pointed out how satoyama has changed from its initial meaning and how it is currently utilized. He warned that generalizing the distinctiveness of Sannai Maruyama with the term “Jomon satoyama” would devalue the diverse relationship between nature and ancient humans throughout the Jomon period as well as hide several inconvenient truths, such as the over-hunting of deer and wild boar that has been revealed through zooarchaeological research (Yamasaki 2010).

Jomon Satoyama and Japanese Diversity

The building of Jomon satoyama landscapes at archaeological parks throughout Japan is a phenomenon connected to rural revitalization efforts and involve identity-building activities emphasizing the distinctiveness, individuality, and diversity of Japanese municipalities. These activities have utilized the keyword “age of localities” (*chihō no jidai*) since the 1970s in various efforts to assist in development of rural economies through tourism marketing and creation of specialty goods (*meibutsu*).²⁶ The age of localities manifested into public policy in the Proposal for Furusato Japan (*Nippon rettō furusatoron*) initiated by Prime Minister Takeshita from 1984 – a transformation of the above-mentioned Plan for Remodeling the Japanese Archipelago (*Nippon rettō kaizōron*) (Robertson 1991: 26). One of most publicized projects was the “100 million yen hometown revitalization program” (*furusato sōsei ichiokuen jigyō*) of 1988–1989 that offered a one-time grant to each of the 3,268 municipalities to initiate independent (from national government mandates) revitalization projects. Several of these projects utilized archaeological heritage, as for example, the

²⁵ For this article, we are limiting our discussion of satoyama to activities that are locally-initiated forest-reconstruction projects. There are many Yayoi and some Kofun period “forests” at sites throughout Japan, but none we have seen have associated satoyama-building activities. Also, at many Yayoi period sites there are satoyama activities related to rice agriculture, as doing wet-rice planting and harvesting activities with schoolchildren is a popular way of involving residents in archaeological heritage sites. An example of this is at Furutsu-Hachimanyama Site in Niigata Prefecture. https://www.city.niigata.lg.jp/kanko/rekishi/maibun/kuni_furutsuhachiman/katsudo/hachimanyama-inasaku.html (accessed 24 February 2017).

²⁶ One of the earliest and best-known related projects is the “One Village One Product” movement (*isson ippin undō*) that started in Oita Prefecture in 1979 and has since spread throughout Japan and internationally in Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

giant replica of the “goggle-eyed” (*shakōki-dogū*) clay figurine (a designated national treasure) that was built over the entryway into Kizukiri Station, Kizukiri Town (Aomori Prefecture).

A rising curve in the total expenditure on rescue excavations from the 1970s to the 1990s reflects the history of Japanese archaeology in parallel with the Plan for Remodeling the Japanese Archipelago. Building new transportation networks, however, quickly resulted in a population flow from rural areas to cities. It led to problems such as depopulation and a widening gap between developed cities and undeveloped localities. While several of these public works planned many years ago are still being implemented, the peak of them has passed. Hereon, revitalizing these local regions exhausted by depopulation is becoming one of the most important issues for Japan, and “the Jomon” is occasionally referred as one of the ways to rediscover and revitalize local regions.

For example, John Knight (2000) introduced the revitalization of Kumano region, Wakayama Prefecture (one of places Sakamoto and Nakazawa visited in their pilgrimage). Involving the famous “Jomonist” Umehara Takeshi, the movement emphasized the distinctiveness of its forest area and culture as remnants of the Jomon period. Knight situated the movement as “self-indigenization,” a term that is complicated, paradoxical and ironical. The local, peripheral, marginal traits of Kumano region, which has many problems such as depopulation and aging, are not attractive in the modern society. However, the Kumano region intends to convert this deficit into an attractive point by linking its mountainous nature to the positive images of the Jomon period. In this context, Jomon satoyama attached to archaeological site parks in local areas is situated as mixture movement place of environmentalism, age of locality, and self-indigenization in reaction to the social, political, and economic problems of local areas.

7. Conclusion

This article shows how archaeological investigation may contribute to contemporary movements for social change. The three case studies focus on the influences of Jomon period archaeology upon various social movements that draw from by diverse aspects of Jomon culture, artifacts, and life styles. It explained that the Jomon period is distinctive in the study of Japanese prehistory due to its vast timespan, its perceived congruity with the present-day territory of the nation-state, and in the reevaluation of Jomon period affluence and complexity in the postwar era. In contrast to previous studies that have warned of the dangers in the misappropriation of archaeology to support nationalist narratives of ethnic homogeneity and cultural superiority (Habu and Fawcett 1999, 2008; Fawcett 1996; Kaner 1996), this article has shown how the Jomon is tied to countercultural movements that stem from dissatisfaction with present-day politics and the anomie of hyper-capitalism and globalization. Specifically, the case studies show how the Jomon has become a flexible symbol utilized in support of liberal ideologies and anti-nuclear activism, individual self-discovery and artistic expression, as well as rural-based revitalization and environmental movements.

This article is a contribution to the field of “ethnography of archaeology,” which seeks to understand the interrelation between archaeological knowledge making practices and the wider

society that both influences and is influenced by them. The application of anthropological research methods shifts the focus of the study of archaeology from analyses of data or interpretations of the archaeological record, toward the active and ongoing human activities involved in its production and consumption. It also entails an understanding of prehistory – in this case the Jomon period – as not only the remains of a long-forgotten culture for archaeologists to unravel, but also as a constituent part of contemporary culture that the wider public engages with and helps shape. From this basic stance, this article has attempted to provide a model for an ethnographically informed archaeology that seeks not to engage the public in archaeological heritage, but reflexively attempts to understand how people and culture are inspired, influenced, and transformed by archaeological knowledge and practices.

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