

# Editorial

This issue of *Japanese Journal of Archaeology* (JJA) is to be presented to colleagues from all over the world coming to WAC-8 Kyoto 2016. As the Chief Editor of the Journal, I feel honored to be able to introduce this official English language journal of the Japanese Archaeological Association to you all. This is a relatively new journal, inaugurated three years ago as an open access web journal, completely open and free for everybody. One of the important objectives of the Journal is the internationalisation of Japanese archaeology. However, it is also striving to become an arena for the sharing and exchanging of findings, thoughts and ideas that have relevance to the various archaeologies practiced in Japan, including works by our overseas colleagues on material excavated in Japan and that by our Japanese colleagues on sites and materials abroad. I wish to take this opportunity for your support for and contribution to the Journal.

Japan's unique historical trajectory, particularly that since its modernisation, has influenced some distinctive characteristics of Japanese archaeology: 1) interest in the origins of the human groups occupying the archipelago, not only the majority but also the Ainu people; 2) extremely detailed culture-historical reconstruction of local histories based upon equally detailed typo-chronological systems; 3) a unique Marxist archaeological tradition; and 4) a distinctive heritage management system undertaken by local governmental board of education personnel.

(1) derives from Japan's hastened process of transformation from a feudal state to a modern nation-state; the roots of the 'Japanese people' was linked to that of the Imperial genealogy, and the investigation of these 'roots' was mobilised for the promotion of a sense of unity amongst the newly created citizens of Japan. The sufferings that the imperial expansion of Japan caused to the peoples of many Asian countries and the eventual defeat of Imperial Japan in 1945 led to critical reflection on established research traditions. As a result, these traditions have undergone considerable methodological refinement and sophistication, but continue to the present day with (2), which has developed with significant implications for (1). (3) yielded some remarkable experiments in collaboration between specialist archaeologists and the general public in the decade after the defeat in the Second World War in 1945, stimulated in part by the critique of the manipulative mobilisation of archaeological knowledge for the legitimisation of the colonial-imperial regime. These were truly public archaeological practices in every sense

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of the term, and in an indirect but profound manner, have contributed to the foundation and development of (4).

As the Chief Editor of JJA I am pleased that this issue, to be presented to all the participants of WAC-8 Kyoto 2016, features original articles all of which well reflect those constitutive characteristics of Japanese archaeology. The article by Iwase *et al.* offers us a good example of lithic traceological studies conducted by deriving from the tradition of detailed artifact observation, nurtured through detailed culture-historical studies. Miyamoto's article traces the trajectory of the spread and localisation of East Asian language groups by fully utilising the methodological characteristics mentioned above, and shows an innovative way to make use of culture-historical approaches for the development of the 'archaeology and language' genre. The article by Habu *et al.* undertakes an interdisciplinary investigation into the nature of unique and unidentified Jomon eco-facts by fully utilising rich contextual data obtained with sophisticated excavation techniques, nurtured in the above mentioned research traditions. Aitchison's article analytically describes the characteristics of the unique system of Japanese rescue excavations in comparison with European equivalents.

Together with the *Archaeologia Japonica* section, summarising the trends of Japanese archaeology in the fiscal year 2014, this issue offers you a panoramic glimpse of current Japanese archaeology. I hope you enjoy the issue, feel the atmosphere of the discursive space of Japanese archaeology, and find topics for future dialogues and collaborations.

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Chief Editor