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# PREHISTORIC BACKGROUND OF JAPANESE RELIGION*

## INTRODUCTION

Much has been speculated but very little is actually known about the origins of Japan and the Japanese people. Geologists tell us that the Japanese islands constitute a part of the circum-Pacific organic zone. Sometime between the latter part of the Paleozoic and the early Mesozoic periods, a series of crustal movements resulted in the appearance of large sections of what later became the Japanese islands above

* This article issues from studies undertaken by the author in the course of preparing his forthcoming book on religion in Japanese history. The following abbreviations are used in the notes:

*JGZ—Jinrui-gaku Zasshi* ("Journal of Anthropology"), first published in February, 1886, by the Anthropological Institute, Faculty of Science, Tokyo Imperial University.

*NMT—Nihon Minzokugaku Taikei* ("Encyclopedia of Japanese Ethnology") (13 vols.; Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1958——).

*NMZ—Nihon Minzokugaku Zenshu* ("Collected Works on Japanese Folklore") (Tokyo: Akane Shobo, 1961——).

*SKT—Sekai Kōkogaku Taikei* ("Encyclopedia of World Archeology") (16 vols.; Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1959——).

*TASJ—Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan.*

*ZNBT—Zusetsu Nihon Bunkashi Taikei* ("Illustrated Encyclopedia of Japanese Cultural History") (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1956——).

*ZNR—Zusetsu Nihon Rekishi* ("Illustrated History of Japan") (Tokyo: Chūōkōron-sha, 1960——).

*ZSBT—Zusetsu Sekai Bunkashi Taikei* ("Illustrated Encyclopedia of World Culture") (20 vols.; Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1959——).

the surface of the sea. During the Cenozoic or Tertiary period crustal movements, partial submergence of land areas, and volcanic eruptions took place. The present arrangement of the Japanese archipelago, with four main islands—Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku, and Hokkaido—and about one thousand smaller islands, was formed during the Pleistocene period or the Great Ice Age.[1]

Needless to say, one of the important factors in the development of Japan was her geographical position. Japan is surrounded by the Sea of Okhotsk in the north, the Sea of Japan in the northwest, the Pacific Ocean in the east and south, and the East China Sea in the southwest. This island setting does not mean, however, that she has been totally isolated from events on the Eurasian mainland. A glance at the map will show that the northwestern tip of Hokkaido is only about 150 miles from the Siberian coast, and also that it is not difficult to reach Japan from Siberia by way of Sakhalin. The islands of Iki and Tsushima provide natural steppingstones between Kyushu and the southern coast of the Korean peninsula. Furthermore, a warm current from the south seas passes close to the southeastern coast of Japan, and an offshoot of it runs into the Sea of Japan in skirting around Kyushu Island. From the north, cold currents of the Sea of Okhotsk and the Bering Sea descend southward. On account of the natural pull of these oceanic currents, Japan was destined to receive peoples and cultural influences from various surrounding areas.

Scholars have not agreed as to the origins of human culture on the islands of Japan. The much publicized discovery of a fragmentary human bone, now referred to as *Nipponanthropus akashiensis*, has led a few scholars in recent years to propose the hypothesis that an extremely early member of the human race had lived in Japan before the Japanese islands were separated physically from the continent.[2] But this view has not received wide acceptance so far because of the fragmentary character of the bone in question and the lack of other evidence to support such a theory.

More important was a chance discovery of stone implements at

[1] Cf. Takai Fuyuji, "Nihon-retto no Seiritsu," *ZNBT*, Vol. I: *Jōmon Yayoi Kofun Jidai* ("The Jōmon, Yayoi, and Kofun Periods"), pp. 64–77.

[2] In 1948, a noted anthropologist, Hasebe Kotondo, published an article regarding a fragmentary human bone found some years earlier in the Hyōgo Prefecture by Naora Nobuo, asserting that the bone can be traced to hominids as old as *Pithecanthropus erectus* of Java and *Sinanthropus pekinensis* of China. Cf. Naoro Nobuo, "Harima no Kuni Nishiyagi Kaigan Kosekisō-chū Hakken no Jinrui Ibutsu," Parts I & II, *JGZ*, Vol. XLVI, Nos. 5 and 6 (1931); Hasebe Kotondo, "Akashi-shi-fukin Nishiyagi Saishinsei-zenki Suisekishutsudō Jinrui Yōkotsu (Sekkōgata) no Genshisei ni tsuite," *JGZ*, Vol. LX, No. 1 (1948). See also *ZNR*, Vol. I: *Nihon Bunka no Akebono* ("The Dawn of Japanese Civilization") by Wakamori Taro, pp. 5–6.

Iwajuku, Gumma Prefecture, in 1949. Up to that time many scholars were inclined to feel that paleolithic sites, if they had ever existed, must have sunk into the ocean.[3] At Iwajuku, however, stone implements were unearthed not only from the yellowish clay of the so-called Kanto loam that lies beneath the humus but also from the blackish clay layer that lies below the bottom layer of the Kanto loam. These implements were subsequently identified as tools belonging to a "prepottery" period.[4] Since then an increasing number of archeologists has begun to take seriously the possibility of the existence of a paleolithic period in Japan, and their cause has been enhanced by further discoveries of hand axes and other stone tools in nearly one hundred spots scattered from Hokkaido to Kyushu. In this connection, Maringer has expressed the view that the stone implements unearthed at Gongenyama, Gumma Prefecture, have affinities with those of the Lower Paleolithic Patjitanian culture of Java.[5] Others have pointed out the typological affinities between the stone tools of the prepottery period in Japan and those discovered in Siberia or in Indo-China.[6] If the Kanto loam belongs to the Middle Pleistocene epoch, when Japan was integral with the Asian continent, as some geologists now contend, it is not impossible that these stone implements discovered in the Kanto plain could have come to Japan from the continent of Asia without the benefit of sea transport.

As far as we are concerned, we can accept the possibility that stone tools of the prepottery period in Japan might have been linked to their counterparts in northern East Asia, but we have to bear in mind that the prepottery "culture" in Japan was, as Beardsley maintains, more recent than microlith-bearing culture on the continent.[7] We are also

[3] Cf. Gerald J. Groot, *The Prehistory of Japan*, ed. Bertram S. Kraus (New York, 1951), p. 5. In Groot's opinion, the deer bone discovered by Tokunaga and Naora in 1936 in a cave on the island of Iyejima, west of Okinawa, belonged to the "third type of palaeolithic culture"—a category suggested by O. Menglin in his *Weltgeschichte der Steinzeit* (Vienna, 1931), pp. 119–29.

[4] Sugihara Shōsuke, "Iwajuku no Kyūsekki," *Kagaku Asahi*, Vol. X, No. 7 (July, 1960); J. Edward Kidder, "Reconsideration of the 'Pre-Pottery' Culture of Japan," *Artibus Asiae*, XVII (1954), 135–43, his *The Jōmon Pottery of Japan* (Ascona, 1957), and his *Japan before Buddhism* (London, 1959), pp. 27–33; Yawata Ichiro, *Nihon-shi no Reimei* ("The Dawn of Japanese History") (Tokyo, 1953), pp. 13–24.

[5] J. Maringer, "A Core and Flake Industry of Palaeolithic Type from Central Japan," *Artibus Asiae*, XIX, No. 2 (1956), 111–25, and "Einige faustkeilartige Geräte von Gongenyama [Japan] und die Frage des japanischen Paläolithikums," *Anthropos*, Vol. LI (1956).

[6] See Groot's view in his *op. cit.*, pp. 25–35. See also Oka Masao's view on this question in Oka Masao *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen* ("The Origin of the Japanese People") (Tokyo, 1958), pp. 293–94.

[7] Richard K. Beardsley, "Japan before History: A Survey of the Archaeological Record," *Far Eastern Quarterly*, XIX, No. 3 (May, 1955), 322.

told that "as Japanese sites are shallow and earth movements have been frequent, one can hardly place full confidence in these implied relationships."[8] Nevertheless, the discovery at Iwajuku started a chain of feverish archeological research activities which we hope will throw some light before long on the question of the Paleolithic period in Japan.

### FROM PREHISTORY TO EARLY HISTORY

The appearance of pottery marks, for all intents and purposes, the beginning of the prehistory of Japan. Usually, the prehistoric period is divided into (1) the Jōmon period (literally, "code pattern," used for pottery decoration), (2) the Yayoi period (so named because of pottery of this period that was unearthed in the Yayoi district of Tokyo), and (3) the Kofun ("Tomb") period. The Jōmon period corresponds very roughly to the New Stone Age in Eurasia, and the latter half of the Kofun period overlaps the early part of the historic period in Japan. The use of these "culture names" as designations for archeological periods is not altogether satisfactory, and Beardsley's suggestion of employing a scheme such as "Middle Prehistoric Period" for the Jōmon period, "Late Prehistoric and Protohistoric Periods" for the Yayoi period, and the "Semihistoric and Early Historic Periods" for the Kofun period may eventually prove to be less confusing.[9] We will, however, follow the current use of "Jōmon, Yayoi, and Kofun" as designations for the three epochs of the prehistoric period in Japan, periods largely determined on the basis of archeological research.

1. *The Jōmon period.*—There are a number of unresolvable problems in connection with the Jōmon period. One is the ambiguity of its chronology. The crucial question as to when the Jōmon period began cannot be settled until and unless we know a little more about the pre-Jōmon—that is, the prepottery—period. In general, it is assumed that the Pacific Ocean reached far inland during the early Jōmon period and that it receded in the later Jōmon period, such that many scholars reconstruct a relative chronology for this period by studying

[8] Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, p. 31. According to Yawata Ichiro, it is difficult to reach a definitive conclusion about human habitation or culture in the prepottery period, since no skeleton of this period has been unearthed thus far. Some fossils of elephants have been discovered, however, and many scholars believe that the *Elephas nomadicus* was living in Japan at the end of the Diluvial epoch. Cf. Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, *Japan: Its Land, People and Culture* (referred to as "UNESCO, *Japan*" hereinafter) (Tokyo, 1958), p. 117.

[9] Beardsley, *op. cit.*, p. 320. On the other hand, the use of "culture names" is defended in *ZNR*, Vol. I: *Nihon Bunka no Akebono*, *op. cit.*, by Wakamori, pp. 11–12.

the shell mounds that lie along the Pacific coast of Japan.[10] Kidder follows a widely accepted span of dates for the Jōmon period of from *circa* 4500–3700 B.C. to *circa* 1000–250 B.C., while Beardsley allows a much shorter span of time to the "Middle Prehistoric Period" (which corresponds to the Jōmon period), namely, *circa* 2500 B.C. to 250 B.C. Some Japanese archeologists assert that the beginning of the Jōmon period can be traced as far back as 6000, 7000, or even 8000 B.C. On this question, Groot seems to be on safe ground when he states that the earliest date of the Jōmon period cannot possibly be dated much before 3000 B.C. on the ground that "the Proto-Jōmon cultures reached Japan as a result of pressure exerted upon the mesolithic peoples of Asia by the eastward-migrating neolithic peoples of Europe."[11] Many scholars divide the Jōmon period into five subperiods, but we will follow the looser usage of three subdivisions, that is, the early, middle, and later Jōmon periods.

In our study of the Jōmon period the importance of shell mounds as the repository of archaic remains cannot be exaggerated. "Not only did the kitchen refuse accumulate," says Kidder, "but broken and unusable objects were discarded there, burials were frequently cut right into them, and pits of dwellings located below them," so that in effect the shell mounds furnish us "the ingredients of stratigraphy."[12] The implements of the early Jōmon period are mostly fishing and hunting tools such as bone harpoons, fishhooks, stone axes and clubs, wooden and stone swords, as well as primitive pottery. Evidently, dogs were domesticated for hunting purposes, and the people engaged in fishing in sea and river as much as in shellfish gathering. Judging from their pit houses people must have lived in small family groups, preferring to reside in the foothills where wild game was easily accessible, or along the seashore. Rings and bracelets made of small shells and the tusks of the wild boar were used for ornaments.

There is much truth in Beardsley's characterization of the cultural level of the Jōmon period as "sub-Neolithic."[13] A useful device in studying the cultural development of the prehistoric period in Japan

[10] A list of Jōmon period sites is given in Groot, *op. cit.*, Appendix E, and *SKT*, Vol. I: *Nihon*, Part I (Tokyo, 1959), Appendix. See also Sakazume Nakao," Hennenjō yori mita Kaizuka (Gaisetsu)," in Nihon Jinruigaku-kai (ed.), *Nihon Minzoku* ("Japanese Race"), 1952 and 1961, pp. 58–82.

[11] Groot, *op. cit.*, Appendix A. He also thinks that the "Final-Jōmon period" in most of Japan came to an end before the present era.

[12] Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, p. 40.

[13] Beardsley, *op. cit.*, p. 322. We might add that, while many Japanese scholars loosely use the term *Jōmon Bunka* (culture), we agree with Groot's statement: "this term, conveying as it does a sense of homogeneity of culture in the former translation and a sense of generic relationship in the latter is misleading" (*op. cit.*, p. 3).

is to analyze the shapes and designs of the pottery. Scholars unfortunately have not agreed on how to classify Jōmon pottery, typologically, because of the wide variety of local styles.[14] Yawata is inclined to feel that there were at least two distinct pottery cultures in the very early stage of the Jōmon period.[15]

The transition from the early to the middle stages of the Jōmon period was marked by the appearance of spirals in ceramic patterns, stone axes of the pestle shape or with pointed head, spherical grinding stones, and the ornamental use of nephrites, especially those of green color. Some of the stone implements appear to have been used as hoes or mattocks, while others might have been used for woodcutting. Undoubtedly hunting and fishing continued, but there is also a strong intimation that taro and some vegetables began to be cultivated at this time.[16] Many human bones, belonging to the middle Jōmon period, have also been unearthed.[17] The dwelling places of this period show some improvement over those of the previous age, in that they are equipped with fireplaces. Many of the middle Jōmon dwelling units are found in groups of ten or more, and in one instance over seventy of them are grouped together.[18] As yet, there is no definitive theory as to why marked changes took place between the early and the middle stages of the Jōmon period.[19]

Local variation seems to have become much more accentuated in the later Jōmon period so that some scholars believe that there were several "cultural centers," such as Kamegaoka on the northern tip of Honshu, Shōnohata in the present Nagano Prefecture, and Angyo in the eastern part of the Kanto plain. Besides, there were at least two late Jōmon cultural centers in Kyushu alone. To make the picture more complex, Kyushu entered the Yayoi culture ahead of other parts of Japan. In some parts of Hokkaido, as well as in the Kuriles and

[14] E.g., among the very early Jōmon pottery there are at least three types: the *Yori-ito* (pottery with a simple cord design) unearthed in the southern part of the Kanto plain, *Oshigata* (pottery with a printed design), scattered in Kanto as well as western parts of Japan; and *Tado-shiki* (pottery with a design resembling that of the Kam Kermakik of Siberia), found in a wide area extending between Kanto and Hokkaido (cf. UNESCO, *Japan*, pp. 10–11).

[15] Yawata, *Nihon-shi no Reimei*, pp. 44–45.

[16] Oka's view on this problem is quoted by Yawata, *ibid.*, p. 68. Many other scholars feel, however, that any kind of food production did not begin until the Yayoi period.

[17] *SKT*, Vol. I: *Nihon*, Part I, pp. 96–97.

[18] *ZSBT*, *Nihon*, Part I (Tokyo, 1960), p. 65.

[19] According to Yawata, archeological research has been so far preoccupied with the eastern parts of Japan at the expense of the western parts, so that the degree of impact exerted by the western side over the eastern side has not been ascertained with any amount of accuracy. See his view in Oka *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 160–61.

Sakhalin, a special type of pottery has been unearthed, and some archeologists speculate about the existence of an Okhotsk culture on these islands.[20] The existence of such a variety of local cultures makes it exceedingly difficult to give general statements about the late Jōmon period. In the main it is safe to state that many of the late Jōmon communities seem to be located in the plain and that their dwelling places are much more substantial than those of earlier periods. Stone implements, as well as ornaments and tools made of bone and horn, are more refined, and the pottery, too, is of better quality. Evidently it was the use of intense heat that enabled the people of this period to make their aesthetically pleasing ceramics. Many bowls with lids, as well as figurines, especially those portraying females, and a variety of utensils, bows, swords, and wooden ornaments have been unearthed. Several types of jars, used as coffins, have also been discovered.[21]

Toward the end of the Jōmon period, a general decline of the Jōmon type of culture seemed to have set in, as evidenced by the deterioration of artistic qualities in pottery-making. Instead, a more practical pottery began to make its appearance, anticipating the coming of the Yayoi culture.[22] Nevertheless, it is a matter of considerable interest that the Jōmon culture, based on such a low economic level, lasted as long as it did, considering the fact that great civilizations already had been well established for centuries in other parts of Asia.

2. *The Yayoi period.*—By the very nature of the case, there is no convenient date for dividing the end of the Jōmon period from the beginning of the Yayoi period. Here, we accept the view that the Yayoi period covers roughly the five hundred years between 250 B.C. and A.D. 250. For our purposes, it is not too important to subdivide it into three stages—early, middle, and later Yayoi periods—except in a general way, since these subperiods were characterized by different degrees of cultural development between the eastern and the western parts of Japan.[23]

[20] Cf. K. Komai, "The Okhotsk Culture and the Scythian Culture," in Japanese National Commission for UNESCO (ed.), *International Symposium on History of Eastern and Western Cultural Contacts* (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 77–79. On the Jōmon culture in Hokkaido, see *ZNR*, Vol. I: *Nihon Bunka no Akebono*, by Wakamori, pp. 78–80.

[21] *SKT*, Vol. I: *Nihon*, Part I, pp. 98–124.

[22] Yawata, *Nihon-shi no Reimei*, pp. 96–97.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 178. As mentioned earlier, the first Yayoi pottery, which is of a neckless kind, was discovered at Yayoi-cho, at the Mukōgaoka shell mound in Tokyo. The first discovery of the pottery of this period in Kyushu was made along the Onga or Enga River, and thus it is called the Ongagawa type. The middle Yayoi culture is often referred to as the Sugu type, named after the cemetery site of this designation. The late Yayoi is called the Takamitsuma type, also for a similar reason (cf. Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, p. 123). We are avoiding the use of these confusing names, however.

The heated controversy regarding continuity versus discontinuity between the cultures of the Jōmon and Yayoi periods has been going on for some time, and it is not likely to be solved easily. Some scholars feel that Yayoi pottery was nothing but the natural development of Jōmon pottery, and that both were made by a people who belonged to the same ethnic group. Others feel that the change between the two was so marked and rapid that the only way to explain it is by postulating the migration of an ethnic group to Japan from outside toward the end of the Jōmon period.[24]

There is no question that Yayoi culture is characterized by many new features that had been unknown in the Jōmon period. Yayoi pottery is different from that of the previous period in its shapes, patterns, and techniques of manufacture. It has far less surface decoration and seems to be much more utilitarian than the Jōmon ware. In comparison with Jōmon ware, used primarily to preserve water and raw food items, Yayoi jugs, jars, and pots were used for cooking as much as preserving food.[25] Evidently hunting and fishing continued to be practiced, but what characterized the Yayoi way of life was paddy-field rice cultivation, employing a considerable number of hydraulic facilities. This fact explains the establishment of communities of this period in places of low altitude.[26] Many of the farmhouses have storehouses built close by. Farmers used various kinds of spades, rakes, hoes, and crescent-shaped stone knives. That spinning and weaving were practiced is evident from the discovery of cloth in the burial jars of this period. These hunting people used bows and arrows, while arrowheads were made of bone, stone, and sometimes bronze. To what

[24] Holders of the latter view acknowledge the fact that there is a greater difference between the Yayoi pottery and Korean pottery of the same period than between the Yayoi and Jōmon potteries. They resort to the theory that the bearers of the new culture came from some part of the Asiatic continent to Japan through Korea, but that their new culture was greatly influenced by that of the earlier residents in Japan. On this question, Beardsley seems to take a safe middle course by holding that the Jōmon culture continued to last and was overlapped for several centuries by the establishment of the Yayoi culture that begin in the western region. Furthermore, he says that "it seems hardly risky to postulate survival of Jōmon ways of life even after Yayoi culture had in turn been overrun farther south by iron-using people" (*op. cit.*, p. 329).

[25] Morimoto Rokuji, "Yayoishiki Doki ni okeru Nisha," *Kōkogaku*, Vol. V, No. 1 (1934); Kobayashi Yukio, "Doki no Yoshiki Kozo," *Kōkogaku Hyōron*, Vol. I, No. 2 (1935).

[26] See Yawata's view on this subject in Oka *et al.*, pp. 169–72. As far as we can gather, farming was practiced at first on Kyushu early in the Yayoi period, if not before; it reached as far east as the Ise district in less than a century. In a middle or late Yayoi community, discovered in 1943 at Toro, south of Shizuoka City, thirty-three paddies had been plotted. "Nine of these Toro fields were 1,580 square yards, the average size, but one was as large as 2,765, another as small as 790" (Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, p. 98).

extent the people practiced fishing is not clear, but some dugout canoes and other fishing tools have been unearthed.[27]

There is no question that iron was introduced during the Yayoi period. According to some scholars, iron was introduced from the continent prior to, or at least simultaneously with, bronze and copper.[28] Discovery of many bronze weapons as well as mirrors from the Han dynasty, China, indicates that continental immigrants were coming in, sporadically at any rate, toward the end of the first century B.C.[29] One of the unsolvable mysteries is the discrepancy between the western zone (Kyushu, western parts of Honshu, and parts of Shikoku) in which most bronze swords, spears, and other weapons have been unearthed and the central zone (Tōkaido, Kinki, and the eastern Inland Sea area) in which most bronze bells (*dō-taku*) have been found.[30] Leaving aside this question, it is still evident that Chinese civilization infiltrated Japan during the Middle and later Yayoi periods. In so doing, it provided new impetus to cultural development.

It has often been said that the so-called Yayoi culture was really a "culture complex," consisting of the residue of the Jōmon tradition together with northeast Asian, Korean, Chinese, and other cultural streams. Also the existence of grooved adzes, dolmens, stone cists, and funeral urns during this period betrays some kind of influence from southeast Asia. And yet, after all is said and done, Yayoi culture has distinctly Japanese cultural traits. Indeed, as Beardsley astutely observes: "What is most striking about the way of life in the late Prehistoric Period is that it was so much like the way of life in Japanese villages fifteen centuries later."[31]

[27] Opinions vary as to the technique of navigation known by the people during the Yayoi period. On the question of the boat, see Matsumoto Nobuhiro, "Kodai Nihonjin to Fune," Nihon Jinruigaku-kai, *Nihon Minzoku*, pp. 48–57.

[28] *ZSBT*, *Nihon*, Part I, pp. 130–31; a broken piece of what might be a carpenter's tool, made of iron, was discovered in a shell mound at Saitō-yama, Kumamoto Prefecture. This is said to be the oldest piece of iron found in Japan.

[29] Takahashi Kenji, *Dō-hoko Dō-ken no Kenkyu* ("Studies on Bronze Spears and Swords") (Tokyo, 1925). According to Kidder, bronze weapons entered Kyushu, preceding the bulk of Han dynasty mirrors by a century and a half. It is significant to note that the flow of weapons ceased around A.D. 50, but mirrors increased. He thinks that by the end of the first century B.C. weapons were cast in Japan either by immigrants or by native artisans (cf. Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, p. 113; see also *SKT*, Vol. II: *Nihon*, Part II, 78–91.

[30] *ZNBT*, Vol. I: *Jōmon Yayoi Kofun Jidai* ("The Jōmon, Yayoi, and Kofun Periods") (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 203–11. *SKT*, Vol. II, *Nihon*, Part II, 92–104. On the possible political implications of these two zones see Enoki Kazuo, *Yamataiko-ku* ("The Yamatai Nation") (Tokyo, 1960), pp. 147–52; see also Tōma Seita, *Nihon Minzoku no Keisei* ("Formation of Japanese Race") (Tokyo, 1951 and 1961), pp. 51–63. Tōma also cites the view of Gotō Morikazu who holds that, contrary to the opinion of many scholars, the bronze bells that made their appearance during the early Yayoi period continued to be manufactured until the Kofun period (*ibid.*, pp. 69–70, n. 1).

[31] Beardsley, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

3. *The Kofun period.*—What is called the Kofun period in archeology, roughly covering the period A.D. 250 or 300 to A.D. 600, corresponds to the early period of Japanese history. Pottery-making continued, of course, and a number of wares known as "*Haji*" and "*Suye*" have been unearthed from the Kofun period sites.[32] Evidently, there was not a marked change between the pottery of the Yayoi and that of the Kofun periods; rather, the dramatic appearance of huge mounds is such that this period has come to be known as the Kofun or Tumulus period, no particular distinctive pottery being at hand to name it. Here let us briefly examine the archeological evidence, leaving the discussion of the complex historical problems of this period until later.

During this period, Sino-Korean civilization exerted tremendous influence on Japan, while its political influence reached to the southern tip of Korea. It is understandable, therefore, that many new features were added to the cultural and social life of the Japanese. A stratification of society that had been going on gradually for centuries became accentuated, as evidenced by elaborate cemeteries constructed for aristocrats. To be sure, already during the Yayoi period tombs for influential people were built in the dolmen form, but they were located in the midst of cemeteries for common people. In the Kofun period, however, gigantic mausoleums were constructed either on the hilltops or in the plain, away from the cemetery sites of common folk. Scholars classify these Kofun according to their shape, location, inner structure, and accompanying objects.[33] In the main, in the early stage of the Kofun period, dome-shaped and semispherical mausoleums were frequently built, while later a circular mound with rectangular projections appeared on the scene. In the later stage of the Kofun period, quadrate mausoleums became the dominant pattern. By far the most elaborate is the mausoleum, supposed to be the grave of the Emperor Nintoku, that occupied 80 acres, having a total length of 2,695 feet from the outer edges of its three moats.[34] Many of these elaborate mausoleums are found in the present Nara and Osaka prefectures, which coincide roughly with the "bronze-bell zone" of the Yayoi period. In short, these great tombs are the archeological remains of what historians call the Yamato kingdom.

[32] *Haji* is red pottery, frequently round bottomed. Much of the pottery of this type belongs to the fifth century. *Sue* is ceremonial ware, often regarded as the funeral pottery originally introduced from Korea. Its use was widespread in the sixth century (cf. Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, pp. 188–90).

[33] Cf. Umehara Suyeji, "Jōdai no Koshiki-fun ni tsuite," Nihon Jinruigaku-kai, *Nihon Minzoku*, pp. 100–112; Kobayashi Yukio, "Kofun-jidai Bunka no Seiin ni tsuite," *ibid.*, pp. 113–29; *ZNBT*, Vol. I: *Jōmon Yayoi Kofun Jidai*, p. 238; *SKT*, Vol. III, pp. 11–50.

[34] Kidder, *Japan before Buddhism*, p. 151.

It goes without saying that only those of the ruling class were buried in such a grand style. The construction of great tombs must have required a considerable labor force, which implies the existence of serfs or peasants. Also, judging from the items discovered in burial chambers, there must have been professional artisans who produced them. Thus, while the Kofun was meant to be a monument for the ruling class it also provides us with insights into the social and cultural conditions of people in the lower strata of Japanese society in the early historic period.[35] Among the items found in burial chambers are caps, tailored clothes, shoes, jewelry made of silver or gold, glass beads, spears, swords with ring-pommels, recurved bows, arrowheads, slat armor, horseback riding equipment, eating utensils, and agricultural tools.[36] Another important discovery in and around the mausoleums is a series of *haniwa* (literally "clay cylinders"). While earlier *haniwa* were mostly cylindrical, later ones are earthen images of humans, animals, and birds. Many human figures are of warriors with swords and shields, while others portray musicians, dancers, female diviners, or ordinary housewives. Among animal figures are dogs, chickens, monkeys, deer, and horses.[37] The sudden popularity of horseback riding in the second half of the fifth century has aroused many speculations concerning the possible migration of an ethnic group which brought this custom from the continent. But a definite answer to this problem must await other supporting evidence. At any rate, the practice of constructing elaborate mausoleums began to decline in the seventh century, probably due to a change in burial customs under the influence of Buddhism.

### PEOPLE IN PREHISTORIC JAPAN

It has often been said that a people can be identified on the basis of the combination of ethnic affiliation, language, culture, and religion. Such a neat scheme, however, is not applicable to the situation in prehistoric Japan. Even a brief survey of archeological evidence as at-

[35] Kobayashi Yukio, *Kofun-jidai no Kenkyu* ("A Study of the Kofun Period") (Tokyo, 1961), pp. 137–59.

[36] UNESCO, *Japan*, p. 564: "Also found in the graves were curved jewels (*magatama*), tubular jewels (*kudatama*), hexahedral gems (*kiritama*), round gems (*marutama*) and small jewels (*kotama*) made of such material as jasper, agate, quartz and glass." It is to be noted that curved jewels (*magatama*) were later used as one of the three symbols of the imperial authority.

[37] According to legend, the Emperor Suinin, upon the death of one of his daughters, asked his ministers to revise the custom of burying a deceased person's servants alive. One of the ministers proposed that clay figures be substituted for the living sacrifice. The emperor accepted this suggestion and thus *haniwa* were created. This legend, however, is not to be taken seriously (cf. Noma Seiroku, "Introduction," *Haniwa: A Catalogue of the Haniwa Exhibition in Four American Museums, 1960* (New York: Asia Society, 1960).

tempted in the previous section makes it clear that any one of the cultural influences could have penetrated Japan from any part of the Asiatic continent without necessarily enforcing its own language or religion. The movement of peoples in the prehistoric period was not bound by the national boundaries of the present world, and there are good reasons to believe that migrations of people to Japan were only insignificant parts of larger movements of archaic peoples covering a wide territory including the continents of Eurasia and North America.

This does not mean, however, that we should not take seriously the evidence presented by archeologists. Indeed, archeological discoveries of human bones, for example, throw much light on the subject, even though bones do not tell us where they came from and to which ethnic group they belonged. For example, a skeleton of the early Jōmon period was discovered not long ago in shell mounds at Hirasaka, within the city boundary of Yokosuka. This human skeleton belonged to the "Hirasaka Shell Mound Man," who is estimated to have been about 163 centimeters tall—slightly taller than the average of the present-day Japanese or Ainu. This man's head was small, but his mastication muscles were well developed. His dental formation would seem to indicate that he ate raw flesh and/or tanned hide with his teeth. His bone formation indicates that he must have squatted down habitually and that he had suffered from malnutrition over a period of years. He also seems to show signs of premature old age.[38] Useful though this information is, we cannot reconstruct the identity of the early Jōmon man on it alone.

Equally uncertain is the identity of the people who lived in the Yayoi period. Some scholars, who have investigated the three human bones which are considered to belong to the middle Yayoi period, feel that the three men concerned were slightly taller than the Jōmon people or the present-day people of North Kyushu. They further suggest that there is not much marked difference between these three men and the people of the Kofun period, and that there is some affinity between them and the southern Koreans of present time.[39] In spite of the lack of conclusive evidence, or perhaps because of it, various theories have been advanced by scholars about the identity of prehistoric man in Japan.

[38] Suzuki Hisashi, "Sagami Hirasaka Kaizuka (Sōki-Jōmon-shiki Iseki) no Jinkotsu ni tsuite," *JGZ*, Vol. LXI, No. 3 (1950); see also Yawata, *Nihon-shi no Reimei*, pp. 39–42.

[39] Cf. *ZNR*, Vol. I: *Nihon Bunka no Akebono* by Wakamori, pp. 88–89. See also Matsumura Takeo, "On the Cephalic Index and Stature of Japanese and Their Local Differences," *Journal of the Faculty of Science* (Tokyo Imperial University), Vol. I, Part I, Section V (Anthropology).

1. *The Ainu controversy.*—One of the most persistent controversies in recent decades regarding the origin of the Japanese people has been that centering around the Ainu. Japanese chronicles are full of accounts of the Ainu who have lived so close geographically to the Japanese people and yet have never been assimilated to the prevailing cultural life of Japan. But no Japanese scholar ever thought of the Ainu as the "original people" of that area. This idea was first suggested by Philip Franz von Siebold (d. 1866) and was later articulated by his son, Heinrich von Siebold.[40] According to the two Siebolds, the Ainus who were the original inhabitants of the Japanese islands were driven north toward Hokkaido and Sakhalin by the Mongoloid (Japanese) race which invaded Japan from the Asiatic continent. This theory influenced many European and American scholars, including J. Milne, Romyn Hitchcock, John Batchelor, and Basil Hall Chamberlain.[41]

Meanwhile, Edward S. Morse advocated a theory to the effect that even before the coming of the Ainus and the Japanese there was a still earlier people, residing in Japan, who were probably cannibalistic.[42] In 1886, Watanabe Shōzaburo suggested that the earliest inhabitants of Japan, whom Morse talked about, were what Ainu legends refer to as *Koropok-guru* (literally, "men who can walk under the leaves of a butter-burr plant") or "Little People." Watanabe's theory was enthusiastically supported by Tsuboi Shōgoro but was rejected by Koganei Yoshikiyo, an anatomist, who held that the ancestors of the present-day Ainus were the original inhabitants of Japan.[43] The Tsuboi-Koganei controversy lasted until 1900 when Tsuboi's disciple, Torii Ryūzo, was sent to the Kurile islands and the Kamchatka

[40] Philip Franz von Siebold lived in Nagasaki from 1823 to 1829 where he taught medicine to Japanese physicians. His son, Heinrich, later lived in Japan as a diplomat and continued to develop his father's theory with some clarification and documentation. His article, "Notes on Japanese Archaeology with Special Reference to the Stone Age" (Yokohama, 1879), has not been available to this author.

[41] Cf. J. Milne, "The Stone Age in Japan," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, X, 389–423; Romyn Hitchcock, "The Ainos of Yezo, Japan," in *Report of the U.S. National Museum, 1889–1890* (Washington, D.C., 1891), pp. 429–502. Among many works by John Batchelor, the most representative is *The Ainu and Their Folk-Lore* (London, 1901). B. H. Chamberlain's chief contribution on the Ainu study is "The Language, Mythology and Geographical Nomenclature of Japan Viewed in the Light of Aino Studies," *Memoirs of the Literature College*, No. 1 (Tokyo Imperial University, 1887).

[42] "Shell Mounds of Ōmori," *Memoirs of the Science Department* (Tokyo Imperial University), Vol. I, Part I (1879), and "Traces of an Early Race in Japan," *Popular Science Monthly*, XIX (1879), 257–66.

[43] Koganei compared the Jōmon period human bone with the bones of the Ainus and concluded that there is a great similarity between the physical features of the prehistoric man and those of the present-day Ainus. For a detailed description of Koganei's theory see N. C. Munro, *Prehistoric Japan* (Yokohama, 1908).

peninsula. Upon his return, Torii rejected his teacher's theory and identified the Ainus as the oldest inhabitants of the Japanese islands.[44]

Although Torii pronounced the death sentence on the *Koropok-guru* theory, the Ainu controversy continued. Matsumoto Hikoshichiro, the advocate of the "Pan-Ainu theory," suggested that the Jōmon people may not have been the ancestors of the present-day Ainus but that they were not unrelated because the Caucasoids, Austroids, and Ainus came out of one great human stock which originally lived in Central Asia.[45] Kiyono Kenji, while acknowledging possible interbreeding among various ethnic groups, including the Ainus, nevertheless held that interbreeding did not substantially change the physical type of the original inhibitants of Japan. According to him, the people who lived during the Jōmon period are the direct ancestors of the present-day Japanese.[46] Hasebe Kotondo goes still further than Kiyono and speculates on the possibility that the ancestors of the present Japanese migrated to Japan before the Japanese islands were separated from the continent. He believes that the Ainu lived in Hokkaido as early as the Jōmon period, but that there has never been any significant amount of interbreeding between the Ainus and the Japanese.[47] The clear distinction between the Ainu and the Japanese, as suggested by Hasebe, has been subsequently rejected by Y. Koya's research on racial biology.[48]

[44] Torii Ryūzo, "Études archeologiques de la Mandchourie meridionale," *Journal of the College of Science* (Tokyo Imperial University), Vol. XXXVI (1915), and "Études archeologiques et ethnologiques des Ainu des Îles Kouriles," *ibid.*, Vol. XLII (1919). See also his "Chishima ni sonzai seru Sekki-jidai Ibutsu-iseki wa somosomo Nani-shuzoku no nokoseshi-monoka," *JGZ*, Vol. XVIII (1901), and *Yūshi Izen no Nihon* ("Japan before History") (Tokyo, 1918).

[45] Matsumoto Hikoshichiro, "Nihon Senshi Jinrui-ron," *Rekishi to Chiri* ("History and Geography"), Vol. III, No. 5 (1919), and "Notes on the Stone Age People of Japan," *American Anthropologist*, XXIII, No. 1 (1921), 50–76.

[46] Kiyono Kenji, "Nihon Sekki-jidai Jinrui," *Seibutsugaku Kōza* ("Studies in Biology") (Tokyo, 1930), *Nihon Minzoku Seisei-ron* ("Development of the Japanese Race") (Tokyo, 1937), and *Kodai Jinkotsu no Kenkyu ni motozuku Nihon Jinshuron* ("A Theory about the Japanese Race Based on the Study of Archaic Human Bones") (Tokyo, 1949).

[47] Hasebe tells us that the correct spelling is *Aino*, not *Ainu*. The latter was invented by John Batchelor. Cf. Hasebe Kotondo, "Ezo," in *Nihon Jinruigakukai, Nihon Minzoku*, p. 140. He also suggests that the "Ezo" of Northern Honshu, mentioned in the Japanese chronicles, were really Japanese, whereas the "Ezo" in Hokkaido were the Ainus (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 130–45). Kindaichi Kyōsuke, on the other hand, holds that the "Ezo" of Northern Honshu were the descendants of the Ainus. See his "Ainu Bunka to Nihon Bunka tono Kosho," *Nihonbunka-Kenkyūjo-Kiyō* (Kokugakuin University, Tokyo), No. 2 (March, 1958), pp. 16–39.

[48] According to Koya, the Japanese people living in remote mountain areas of Honshu today share a considerable amount of affinity in physical type with the Ainu living in Hokkaido. His analysis also indicates that the Jōmon people had no strong physical links with the Tungusic tribes, such as the Gilyaks, Buryats, Kalmyks, and Manchurians (cf. "Comparisons of the Ainu of Hokkaido with Other Groups in Nine Physical Traits," by Koya *et al.*, *Rassenkunde der Aino*, cited in Groot, *op. cit.*, p. 78).

Who, then, were the ancestors of the Ainu, and where did they come from and when? Opinions still vary on each of these questions. Also debate still continues on possible Ainu influence on Japanese culture and religion, and vice versa.[49] The problem of the Ainu, their religion and culture, however, requires a special study.[50] We can only say at this point that the great mystery of the Ainu remains in our investigation of the people in prehistoric Japan.

2. *Identity of the Jōmon and Yayoi peoples.*—Today, most scholars agree that during the early Jōmon period, if not slightly before, a number of ethnic groups began infiltrating into Japan from the Asiatic continent, bringing with them various cultural elements, and this migration of peoples continued until the early phase of the historic period. It is, therefore, quite plausible that the study of cultural traits might throw some light on the question of identity of peoples, and indeed such efforts have been made by scholars of different disciplines.

No one has yet answered the question as to whether the early Jōmon "culture" developed out of the legacy of the prepottery period or came from outside. But assuming that it came from outside, the cultural features of the early Jōmon period betray strong Siberian influences. In the words of Groot: "The rich bone industry, the fishhooks, the domesticated dogs and the cylindrical axe—all point to north Siberia. The flat-bottomed, cord-impressed pottery seems to suggest the south Siberian Angara culture as the point of origin."[51] While there is wide acceptance of this view, there is no agreement as to who or which ethnic group or groups might have brought the Siberian culture to Japan, for many of the Paleo-Asian tribes were equally possible as bearers of such a culture at that time. Regarding the middle Jōmon period, some scholars hold that there was only an indirect cultural influence from outside, while others are inclined to postulate the migration of a new ethnic group. On this question, Groot suggests that the new cultural impetus again came from the south Siberian Angara culture.[52] Many Japanese scholars today, however, tend to look to-

[49] John Batchelor, "On the Ainu Term 'Kamui,' " *Transactions of Asiatic Society of Japan*, XVI (1888), 17–32; Basil Hall Chamberlain, "Reply to Mr. Batchelor on the Words 'Kamui' and 'Aino,' " *ibid.*, XVI (1888), 33–38; Origuchi Shinobu, "Tokoyo oyobi Marebito," *Minzoku*, IV, No. 2, 1–62; Alexander Slawik, "Zur Etymologie des japanischen Terminus marebito 'Sakraler Besucher,' " *Wiener Völkerundliche Mitterlungen*, 2d Yearbook, No. 1 (Vienna, 1954), pp. 44–58.

[50] Cf. J. M. Kitagawa, "Ainu Bear Festival (Iyomante)," *History of Religions*, I, No. 1 (Summer, 1961), 95–151.

[51] Groot, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[52] According to Groot, the spiral designs of middle Jōmon pottery resemble more the Angara spiral design than those of Chinese, Austronesian, or Bessarabian types. He realizes that pottery of the middle Jōmon type is also found in Mindanao and Melanesia but speculates that it was brought southward from Japan and not the other way around (cf. *ibid.*, p. 56).

ward the southern Pacific area as the place of origin of the cultural influence that penetrated Japan during the middle Jōmon period.[53] Involved in this debate is the problem of the four-cornered ax (*Vierkantbeil*) that made its appearance in Japan during the middle Jōmon period. Some scholars claim a northern origin, but many people trace it to the Austroasian culture.[54] In either case, no one is as yet certain as to which culture was instrumental in bringing new cultural influences to Japan during the middle Jōmon period.

We have already noted marked cultural changes that took place in the early Yayoi period, such as the introduction of paddy-field rice cultivation and the use of copper, bronze, and iron. As far as paddy-field cultivation is concerned, it can be easily traced to Southeast Asia and Indonesia, but whether it was brought by any one of the Southeast Asian peoples directly to Japan or whether it came via South Korea, where one of the northern tribes might have learned this farming method, remains to be clarified. Yawata proposes a plausible theory that a group of people who lived in the outer edge of Han Chinese culture, possibly in south China or Indo-China, "came up northward with the sea current or seasonal wind or along the coast-line into the East China Sea and finally reached South Korea and Western Japan."[55] The beauty of this broad theory is that it manages to explain the introduction of rice, beans, melons, wheat, mulberry, hemp, domestic animals, as well as dolmen-type stone graves and metallic tools that had been unknown in Japan before the Yayoi period. On close examination, however, it is not easy to establish direct relationships between the bronze spears, swords, and bells of this period and those discovered in Korea and China.[56] Besides, the number and geographical distribution of Chinese and Koreans who migrated to Japan during the Yayoi period cannot be easily ascertained.[57] A number of other knotty problems remain unsolved as well. Nevertheless, those who lived in Japan during this period seem to have attained a degree of self-consciousness as one people sharing a common culture in formation. "In important respects," says Beardsley rightly, "these people

[53] Yawata, *Nihon-shi no Reimei*, p. 70.

[54] R. Heine-Geldern, "Urheimat und früheste Wanderungen der Austronesier," *Anthropos*, XXVII (1932), 561–66.

[55] Yawata's view is found in UNESCO, *Japan*, p. 120.

[56] Kobayashi Yukio, *Nihon Kōkogaku Gaisetsu* ("An Outline of Japanese Archeology") (Tokyo, 1951 and 1961), pp. 158–61.

[57] Some scholars have attempted to relate the eastward movement of the legendary Emperor Jimmu, from Kyushu to the Yamato district, to the migration of the ethnic group which brought Yayoi culture from Korea to Kyushu and then to Yamato. This theory cannot be supported by other evidence, however.

were Japanese, whereas the people of the Jōmon culture merely happened to live in Japan."[58]

3. *A culture-complex hypothesis.*—Notwithstanding all these ambiguities and uncertainties, various theories have been advanced regarding the components, as well as the process of fusion, of the Japanese people. In recent years many scholars have attempted to analyze the archaic elements of Japanese mythology, religion, social organization, and language with the hope of delineating which cultural elements were transmitted by which ethnic group—and at what stage of the prehistoric period and early historic period. Among many such attempts, probably the most elaborate is the culture-complex hypothesis proposed by Oka Masao.[59] Briefly stated, his hypothesis is based on the following five major typological components that constituted the prehistoric and early historic ethnic culture of Japan.[60]

A. First is an ethnic unit, either of Melanesian origin or of a group that had been greatly influenced by Melanesian culture, which brought to Japan hunting as well as cultivation of taro and yam. This group had a matrilineal tradition and "secret society" system. They believed in what might be characterized as a "horizontal cosmology," that is, in a land of the dead beyond the sea. In Oka's opinion, this type of culture was transplanted to Japan during the middle Jōmon period from some parts of the South Pacific.

B. Second is either an Austroasian ethnic group or at least an Austroasian-speaking group from some region south of the Yangtze River in China. This group was engaged in hunting but also in upland rice cultivation, and maintained a matrilineal social system. Shortly after this group arrived in Japan, probably at the end of the Jōmon or early part of the Yayoi period, it became assimilated to the first group (A). Each village of this group had shamans, and most probably female shamans acted as tribal chiefs. Some important figures in Japanese myths, such as *Amaterasu* (usually translated as the Sun Goddess) and the motif of brother-sister deities, marrying to beget other deities, are traced to this group.

[58] *Op. cit.*, p. 334.

[59] Oka's magnum opus, "Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan" (doctoral dissertation, University of Vienna, 1933), unfortunately has not been published. However, he has written a number of articles on subjects also treated in his works, such as "Nihon Minzoku Bunka no Keisei," *ZSBT, Jōmon Yayoi Kofun Jidai*, pp. 106–16; "Nihon Bunka no Kiso Kōzō," *NMT*, Vol. 2: *Nihon Minzokugaku no Rekishi to Kadai* (Tokyo, 1958), pp. 5–21; and "Ethno-Historical Formation of the Japanese People," UNESCO, *Japan*, pp. 110–16. See also his view expressed in Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*.

[60] Oka carefully avoids the question of the "origin" of the Japanese people and culture in a chronological sense. He thinks that it is quite conceivable to postulate sporadic migrations of north Eurasian subarctic hunters as well as of southeast Asian food-gatherers in the prepottery period. He does not even try to establish the origin of Jōmon culture except to say that it had affinities both with cultures of northern and southern Asia. In his opinion, "people responsible for the development of the ceramic culture . . . were gatherers and hunters of a fairly high cultural level." Also, the circum–North Pacific fishery culture must have penetrated northeastern Japan during the Jōmon period (cf. UNESCO, *Japan*, p. 111).

C. Third is a northeast Asian group, possibly of Tungusic origin, that brought in the early Yayoi period the Ural-Altaic language and a "vertical cosmology," that is, the belief in Deities (*kami*) who descend from heaven to mountaintops, trees, or pillars, as well as shamanism of a Siberian type. This group originally was engaged in hunting and millet cultivation, but later shifted to rice cultivation in southern Korea on its way from Siberia or Manchuria to Japan. The social unit of this group was an exogamous patrilineal clan called the *hala-kala* ("*hara-kara*" in Japanese). Oka traces the crescent-shaped knife and the combed pattern, or Yayoi, pottery to this group.

D. Fourth is a southeast Asian group—probably of Austronesian (Micronesian) origin—that brought both fishing and paddy-rice-field cultivation to Japan during the early Yayoi period from the coastal area of south China. In Oka's opinion, this group provided the greatest impetus to Yayoi culture. The village organization of this group, which was patrilineal in character, was based on "age-class" or "age-grade" groups with elaborate systems of initiation rites. Crescent-shaped stone knives for cutting crops, rituals for harvest, and many important myths are attributed to them.

E. Fifth is an Altaic-speaking, pastoral tribe that subjugated other tribes in southern Manchuria and Korea around the beginning of the Christian era and arrived at the western part of Japan in the third or fourth century. The social unit of this group was a patriarchal clan called the *uji*, and the most powerful *uji* of this group developed into the "Tennō" (imperial) *uji* in the historic period. In many respects, this group shared the same religious and cultural traits as the third group (C), such as shamanism of a Siberian type and a "vertical cosmology." The chief deity of the fifth group, however, was not Amaterasu but Takamimusubi, and it was the order of Takamimusubi that resulted in the "descent" of Amaterasu's grandson, Ninigi, upon the mountaintop of Hiuga, according to Oka's interpretation of Japanese myth. Oka also traces the myth of the founding of the Yamato kingdom (the name of early Japan) by the legendary first Emperor Jimmu to this group's cultural tradition.

To recapitulate: according to Oka's hypothesis, there was probably a sporadic infiltration of northern and southern Asiatic peoples into Japan during the early stage of the Jōmon period, if not before. But the main structure of Japanese culture, society, and people developed out of the above five components.[61] To put it simply, various groups which migrated to Japan from south China and southeast Asia with Melanesian, Austroasian, and Austronesian cultural traditions provided the foundation for the agricultural society and civilization of the Yayoi period. Meanwhile, a Tungusic group originally from Siberia or Manchuria also made its contribution to the already pluralistic culture. It must be noted, however, that the process of assimilation of all these groups was a slow one, and that different kinds and de-

[61] In all fairness to Oka Masao, it must be noted that the above summary translation of his hypothesis, based on his articles mentioned earlier, was the work of the present author, who alone is responsible for any error or misunderstanding of Oka's position.

grees of racial and cultural fusion resulted in the development of a number of distinct small local cultures in various parts of Japan toward the later Yayoi period. The unification of all these local groups and cultures was attempted by the Altaic group which migrated to Japan in the third or fourth century A.D. This group had a superb military organization which enabled it to subjugate the agricultural population of Japan. In this situation the Altaic group established itself as the ruling class over earlier settlers, although it was quickly converted to the culture of the conquered peoples. This, in short, is how Oka analyzes the nature of the culture complex, as well as the development of the prehistoric and early historic Japanese society and people. Although such an all-embracing hypothesis is bound to receive many criticisms, as indeed it has, Oka's contribution will be appreciated by many future scholars who will concern themselves with the subject of the culture complex in Japan.[62]

In recent years Egami Namio has proposed a very imaginative hypothesis regarding the Altaic group, which corresponds to the fifth component (E) in Oka's scheme mentioned above. Egami seems to share Oka's analysis of the social and cultural traits of this group but differs slightly in the chronology of its coming to Japan. According to Egami, the Altaic group, which he prefers to call the "Kiba-zoku" or "the tribe of mounted warriors," pushed down to Korea around the turn of the fourth century A.D. and established its hegemony in the southern tip of the Korean peninsula. Early in the fourth century this "Kiba-zoku" under the leadership of its chief, presumably the Emperor Sujin, invaded Japan, first going to Kyushu but later to the central area, where it established itself as the ruling clan of the Yamato kingdom toward the end of the fourth or early in the fifth century, corresponding to the middle Kofun (Tumulus) period. Being no mean archeologist as well as a specialist in Inner Asian history, Egami can cite various data to support his hypothesis.[63] However, his theory, based on the swift movement of Altaic mounted warriors subjugating many other tribes both in Korea and Japan within a matter of one century—a hypothesis which is not impossible considering the

[62] Oka modestly states that his hypothesis will have to be corrected and articulated by specialists in the various disciplines involved (cf. Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, p. 328). In fact, Oka himself has added two or three minor cultural components to the above five, although they do not change the above view substantially (cf. Inouye Mitsusada, *Nihon Kokka no Kigen* ["Origin of the Japanese Nation"] [Tokyo, 1960], pp. 195–96).

[63] For Egami's hypothesis see "Nihon Minzoku: Bunka no Genryū to Nihon Kokka no Keisei," *Minzokugaku Kenkyu*, Vol. XIII, No. 3 (1949); "Nihon Kodai Kokka no Keisei," *Tōyō Bunka*, No. 6 (September, 1951); and his statements and footnotes in Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, esp. pp. 104–38, 146–48, and nn. 47, 51, 52–65, 67, 68, 70–72.

speedy movement of Genghis Khan in the later period—has been questioned by many specialists in philology, history, and archeology.[64] Nevertheless, most scholars recognize that the Altaic cultural influence, if not an offshoot of the Altaic tribe, penetrated Japan either toward the end of the prehistoric or early historic period. The exact identity of the culture-bearing group, however, has yet to be settled.

### LANGUAGE, MYTHS, AND RELIGION

Despite numerous difficulties involved, study of the prehistoric and early historic period of Japan has come a long way. This has been especially true since the end of World War II inasmuch as overt and covert governmental restrictions against research concerning the beginnings of the Japanese nation and people have been removed.[65] Of the almost feverish research activities by Japanese archeologists in the postwar period, we have made note earlier. Archeological theories, be it noted, even with erroneous conclusions, are based on the tangible evidence unearthed. This is not the case with students of such cultural aspects as dance, drama, and music.

Dance, for instance, has been an important facet of Japanese culture since time immemorial. Even in the mythologies, it is reported that when Amaterasu hid herself in a cave to escape the violent acts of her brother, the *kami* (deities) in heaven made merry in order to lure her

[64] Critical comments on Egami's hypothesis concerning "Kiba-zoku" are found, e.g., in Yanagita Kunio and Origuchi Shinobu, "Nihonjin no Kami to Reikon no Kannen sono hoka," *Minzokugaku Kenkyu*, Vol. XIV, No. 2 (September, 1949); Higo Kazuo, "Nihon Kodai-shi e no Kanken," *ibid.*, Vol. XIV, No. 2 (December, 1949); Kindaichi Kyōsuke *et al.*, "Nihongo no Keitō ni tsuite," *Kokugogaku*, No. 5 (February, 1951); Mikami Tsugio, "Nihon Kokka Bunka no Kigen ni kansuru Futatsu no Tachiba—Tennozoku wa Kiba-zoku ka," *Rekishi Hyōron*, Vol. IV, No. 6 (June, 1950); Kobayashi Yukio, "Jodai Nihon ni okeru Jōba no Fūshū," *Shirin*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 3 (July, 1951); and Inouye, *Nihon Kokka no Kigen*, *op. cit.*, pp. 183–221.

[65] Two famous cases in recent decades are those of Minobe Tatsukichi and Tsuda Sōkichi. In 1935, Minobe, then a member of the House of Peers, was indicted for his legal theory that while the "office" of the emperor of Japan has the legal basis of administrator of, and spokesman for, the nation and people, it has no divinely sanctioned authority as implied by Japanese mythologies. Although Minobe was given a suspended sentence in 1937, he had to resign from all public offices. In 1940, Tsuda was indicted for nineteen "errors" scattered in his four books: *Jindai-shi no Kenkyu* ("A Study of the Age of *Kami* or Gods") (Tokyo, 1924); *Kojiki oyobi Nihonshoki no Kenkyu* ("A Study of *The Ancient Matters* and *The Chronicle of Japan*") (Tokyo, 1924); *Nihon Jōdai-shi Kenkyu* ("A Study of the Early History of Japan") (Tokyo, 1930); and *Jōdai Nihon no Shakai oyobi Shisō* ("Society and Thought of Early Japan") (Tokyo, 1933). In the end, Tsuda was found guilty on only one "error," namely, his theory that the so-called imperial lineage prior to the tenth legendary Emperor Sujin has no historical evidence to support it. On the problem of academic freedom, or the lack of it, before World War II, see Mikasa no Miya Takahito (H.I.H., Prince Takahito Mikasa) (ed.), *Nihon no Akebono* ("The Dawn of Japan") (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 263–89.

out of her cave. On that occasion, a female *kami* called Ame-no-Uzume is said to have danced in a somewhat suggestive manner and was cheered wildly by other *kami*.[66] Dance has been believed to have a magical power in pacifying the *kami*. In the middle of the fifth century, the Emperor Inkyo is said to have played a musical instrument while his empress danced to celebrate the completion of their new palace. But what kind of dance was performed in the early days is not clear. The term *kagura* (or *kami no kura*, meaning the "seat of *kami*") indicates that this type of religious dance, performed by female shamanic-diviners, has always been an important element in religious rituals from early days onward.[67] There is another form of old dance known as *dengaku*, a pastoral dance originally known as *ta-asobi* ("Play in the Paddy Field") performed at the time of rice-transplanting as a form of appeasement of the *kami*. On this occasion, *sa-otome* ("maidens who plant") plant the rice seedlings to the accompaniment of music.[68] Unfortunately, it is an almost impossible task to reconstruct various forms of dance performed in the early historic or prehistoric period.

Music, too, has been known in Japan from very early days—long before the fifth century when Korean music is said to have been introduced from Silla, Paikche, and Kogryu. We know something of the ancient musical instruments as well as some forms of music, such as *rōyei* ("chanted poems") and *kume-uta* ("war songs"). Music and singing were also used for the purpose of fortune-telling, and often shamans played music (*koto-uranai*) or sang songs (*uta-uranai*) in order to become possessed by the spirits of the *kami*.[69] But as far as the scale structure of ancient Japanese music is concerned, we know amazingly little. Of the two traditional types of scale structure, the so-called Sino-Japanese type, that is, the . . . C D E G A C′. . . series with each note serving as a starting point, thus forming a different five-note mode, such as D E G A C′ D′, seems to have affinities with the scale structure of Mongolia, China, and Indonesia. The second type, represented by . . . B C E F A B′. . . also allows each note as a starting point, thus again creating a different five-note mode. The most frequently used among them are the three modes, for example, those on A, B, and E. We are told that the second type of scale struc-

[66] Cf. Ōbayashi Taryo, "Die Amaterasu-Mythe in alten Japan und die Sonnenfinsternismythe in Südostasien," *Ethnos*, XXV (1960), 20–43.

[67] Later, however, male priests of Shinto shrines performed the *kagura*. Cf. Yanagita Kunio (ed.), *Minzokugaku Jiten* ("A Dictionary of Folklore Studies"), 1951, pp. 96–98.

[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 334–35. Cf. also Haga Hideo, *Ta no Kami* ("The Rituals of Rice Production in Japan") (Tokyo, 1959).

[69] Yanagita, *Minzokugaku Jiten*, p. 526.

ture is also known in Indonesia and parts of India.[70] But because of the very nature of music which is so sensitive to external influences and also to the changing mood of culture, we are not at all certain about what part of these two types of scale structure can be traced to the early historic or prehistoric period.[71]

1. *Language.*—Scholars are more sanguine about tracing the development of the Japanese language, at least more so than in the cases of drama and music.[72] Here again a number of problems are involved, since a particular language is not the monopoly of a certain group of people; moreover, there are accidental similarities among languages of different traditions in sounds, system of accent, use of vowels, grammatical structure, and vocabulary. Some of the similarities between any two languages may be the result of accidental resemblances or borrowing of certain words or forms by one language from the other; or perhaps both languages may have been influenced by a third language.

Undaunted by these problems, an amazing array of theories and hypotheses has been advanced regarding the kinship, plausible or far fetched, between Japanese and other languages. As early as the last century, Chamberlain was engaged in the comparative study of Japanese with the Ainu and Ryukyu languages, while Aston compared Japanese with Korean.[73] In our century, Ramstedt compared Japanese with the Altaic languages.[74] Labberton and Whymant traced Japanese to the Oceanic language family.[75] And Parker held that

[70] Cf. "Japanese Music," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XII (1962 ed.), p. 962.

[71] On the influence of Buddhist music on Japanese music see Iba Takashi, "Bukkyo Ongaku," in Tsuji Soichi *et al.*, *Shūkyō Ongaku* ("Religious Music") (Tokyo, 1933), pp. 169–211.

[72] There are a number of good introductory works on Japanese language. Among them are Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Kokugo-shi Keito-hen* ("Historical Lineage of the Japanese Language") (Tokyo, 1938); Ono Susumu, *Nihongo no Kigen* ("Origin of the Japanese Language") (Tokyo, 1957 and 1960); Kinkaichi Haruhiko, *Nihongo* ("The Japanese Language") (Tokyo, 1957 and 1961); and Doi Chūsei *et al.*, *Nihongo no Rekishi* ("A History of the Japanese Language") (Tokyo, 1957 and 1961). Probably the most important recent work on the subject is Hattori Shiro, *Nihongo no Keito* ("Lineage of the Japanese Language") (Tokyo, 1959).

[73] B. H. Chamberlain, "The Language, Mythology and Geographical Nomenclature of Japan in the Light of Aino Studies," *op. cit.*, and "Essay in Aid of a Grammar and Dictionary of the Luchuan Language," *TASJ* (Supplement), Vol. XXIII (1895); W. G. Aston, "A Comparative Study of the Japanese and Korean Languages," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. III, Part XI (1897).

[74] C. J. Ramstedt, "A Comparison of the Altaic Languages with Japanese," *TASJ*, Vol. I, 2d Ser. (1924).

[75] D. van Hinloopen Labberton, "The Oceanic Languages and the Nipponese as Branches of the Nippon-Malay-Polynesian Family of Speech," *TASJ*, Vol. II, 2d Ser. (1925); A. Neville J. Whymant, "The Oceanic Theory of the Japanese Language and People," *TASJ*, Vol. III, 2d Ser. (1926).

Japanese and the Tibeto-Burmese language belonged to the same linguistic structure.[76] Among Japanese scholars, Kanazawa advocated the common origin of the Japanese and Korean languages,[77] while Matsumoto and others discovered many Japanese words which had been borrowed from the Austroasian languages.[78] Oka is intrigued by a characteristic of the Japanese language, namely, that every syllable ends with a vowel, which seems to be akin to the characteristics of the languages spoken in the northern part of Halmahera Island in Indonesia as well as to the Papuan language of New Guinea. He also points out that many Japanese words denoting parts of the body might have come from Austroasian or Austronesian origin.[79]

More recently, two eminent scholars have undertaken to study the early development of the Japanese language. Johannes Rahder views Japanese as a complex fusion of many linguistic strands. For example, much of the Japanese vocabulary has South Asian, Austronesian, and Altaic origins. In his opinion, however, one structure of the Japanese language was modeled upon an Altaic prototype and is not related to the Chinese or Austric languages. While Rahder's theories are a little too technical for non-specialists, as far as we can figure out he seems to be optimistic about the possibility of establishing kinship between the Japanese and Korean languages. If it were possible for him to reconstruct the original language from which both Korean and Japanese developed, only then would he be willing to proceed to reconstruct a still earlier language from which the Korean, Japanese, and Tungusic languages derived.[80] Charles Haguenauer, whose work deals with the geographical environment, the problems of the origin of Japanese culture, and ethnological and other aspects, devotes nearly three-fourths of his book to linguistic considerations.[81] He has given up all hope of relating Japanese to the language of the Taiwan aborigines, the Philippine natives, the Indonesians, and Polynesians. Rather, he concentrates his effort on the relation of Japanese to Korean, East

[76] C. K. Parker, *A Dictionary of Japanese Compound Verbs* (Tokyo, 1937).

[77] Kanazawa Shōzaburo, *The Common Origin of the Japanese and Korean Languages* (Tokyo, 1910).

[78] Matsumoto Nobuhiro, *Le Japonais et les langues austroasiatiques* (Paris, 1928).

[79] Cf. UNESCO, *Japan*, pp. 111–12.

[80] For Rahder's views see the series of articles entitled "The Comparative Treatment of the Japanese Language," in *Monumenta Nipponica*, VII (1951), 198–208; *ibid.*, VIII (1952), 239–88; *ibid.*, IX (1953), 199–257, and *ibid.*, X (1954), 127–68. See also his *Etymological Vocabulary of Japanese, Korean and Ainu* ("Monumenta Nipponica Monographs," No. 16) (Tokyo, 1956), and "A Linguistic Study of the Root 'kon,'" in *Buddhism and Culture: Dedicated to Dr. D. T. Suzuki in Commemoration of His Ninetieth Birthday* (Kyoto, 1960), pp. 226–46.

[81] Charles M. Haguenauer, *Origines de la civilisation japonaise: Introduction à l'étude de la préhistoire du Japon*, Part I (Paris, 1956).

Altaic languages, such as Mongolian, Tungusic, and Korean, and to Ainu. His conclusion is extremely sober and modest. That is, while he acknowledges much truth in the view that Japanese is closer to the Altaic languages than to any other neighboring language groups, he finds it impossible to establish a definite relationship between Japanese and the Altaic languages at the present time.[82]

Hattori shares the cautious conclusion of Haguenauer and states that in the strict linguistic sense the only language which has kinship with Japanese is the Ryūkū language, although he also recognizes the possibility that Japanese had some relation to the Korean and Altaic languages. He rejects Ōno's hypothesis that during the Jōmon period the people in Japan spoke a south Asian language which was akin to the Polynesian languages in structure; he asserts rather that during the Yayoi period a south Korean language, which had an Altaic grammar and vowel system, penetrated north Kyushu and gradually spread through other parts of Japan. But in Ōno's view, the early Japanese language thus developed nearly 2,300 years ago had retained a quantity of vocabulary of southern origin.[83] On the other hand, Hattori is inclined to trace the origin of the Japanese language to *ur*-Japanese (*Nihon-sogo*) which was most likely spoken in northern Kyushu about 2,000 years ago, in the Yayoi period. However, he does not think that *ur*-Japanese was transplanted by a non-Japanese ethnic group to Kyushu in the Yayoi period as many scholars think. That much he is certain of, but beyond that point he feels that he has to resort to speculation, based however on Glottochronology or Lexicostatistics. Hattori postulates that the *ur*-Japanese and Korean languages separated about 5,000 or 6,000 years ago, whereupon one was spoken in Korea and the other spoken in Kyushu. The latter was destined to absorb vocabulary and certain features of other languages, although it retained the core of its original linguistic structure.[84] He further speculates that a series of migrations of the north Kyushu people who spoke *ur*-Japanese to the Yamato district took place during the second and third centuries. Also, about this time or shortly after, another series of migrations of the same group took place to the Ryūkyū islands.[85] Whether these hypotheses by philologists can be verified or

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 636.

[83] Cf. Ōno, *Nihongo no Kigen*, *op. cit.*, pp. 198–200. See Hattori, *op. cit.*, pp. 233–39, for his criticism of Ōno's hypothesis.

[84] *Ibid.*, pp. 229–32.

[85] *Ibid.*, pp. 83–86. It is interesting to note that Hattori in his recent article, "Nihongo no Keitō," *ZSBT*, Vol. I: *Jōmon Yayoi Kofun Jidai*, pp. 127–30, suggests that even if Japanese had had some kinship with the Manchurian and Ainu languages, their separation is estimated to have taken place, again based on Glottochronology, about 9,000 and 7,000–10,000 years ago, respectively.

not, we are at least learning today more than ever before something about the characteristics and features of the language of the Yayoi period and its development in the early historic period.[86]

2. *Mythology.*—Anyone interested in the religion and culture of the prehistoric and early historic periods of Japan can ill afford to neglect the study of Japanese myths. The two main sources of Japanese myths are the *Kojiki* ("Records of Ancient Matters") and the *Nihonshoki* or *Nihongi* ("Chronicles of Japan").[87] Both were compiled in the eighth century, written in Chinese characters, and both betray some Chinese influences although they retain substantially the structure of the early Japanese myths. Other valuable sources—also products of the same cultural milieu—are the *Kogoshūi* ("Gleanings from Ancient Stories"), the *Fūdoki* ("Records of Local Surveys"), the *Shoku-Nihongi* ("Chonicles of Japan, Continued"), the *Manyōshu* ("Anthology of Myriad Leaves"), and the *Norito* ("Ritual Prayers").[88]

There are a number of hermeneutical problems involved in the study of Japanese myths as, for example, who compiled them and for what purpose, how to classify them, and how to correlate the analysis of the myths with archeological, linguistic, ethnological, historical, and other types of evidence.[89] Various attempts at reconstructing a coher-

[86] Cf. Izui Hisanosuke, "Jōdai Nihongo ni okeru Boin-soshiki to Boin-kōtai" ("The Vocal System and Vocal Interchanges of Eighth Century Japanese"), *Miscellanea Kiotiensia* (Kyoto University, 1956), pp. 989–1020.

[87] For translations of these documents see Basil Hall Chamberlain (trans.), *Ko-ji-ki;* "Records of Ancient Matters," *TASJ* (Supplement), Vol. X (1882); W. G. Aston (trans.), *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (2 vols.; London, 1896 and 1956); Karl Florenz, *Japanische Mythologie, Nihongi, Zeitalter der Götter* (Tokyo, 1901). Cf. also Anesaki Masaharu, *Japanese Mythology,* in *The Mythology of All Races,* Vol. VIII, ed. by C. J. A. MacCulloch (Boston, 1928); Tsunoda Ryusaku *et al.* (comp.), *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York, 1958), pp. 26–35; and E. Dale Saunders, "Japanese Mythology," in *Mythologies of the Ancient World,* ed. Samuel Noah Kramer (Garden City, New York, 1961), pp. 409–42.

[88] Kato Genchi and Hoshino Hikoshiro (trans.), Kogoshūi: *Gleanings from Ancient Stories* (2d ed.; Tokyo, 1925); Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (ed.), *Introduction to Classic Japanese Literature* (Tokyo, 1948), pp. 8–13; J. S. Snellen (trans.), "Shoku-Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan, Continued, from 697–791 A.D.," *TASJ,* XI, 2d Ser. (1934), 151–239; and *ibid.,* XIV (1937), 209–79; Japanese Classics Translation Committee, *The Manyōshu: One Thousand Poems* (Tokyo, 1940; Chicago, 1941); Donald L. Philippi (trans.), *Norito* ("A New Translation of the Ancient Japanese Ritual Prayers") (Tokyo, 1959).

[89] Many Japanese scholars of mythology, history, Shinto, Japanese literature, and ethnology have published a number of books and articles on the subject. Among them are Matsumura Takeo, *Nihon Shinwa no Kenkyu* ("A Study of Japanese Mythology") (4 vols.; Tokyo, 1955–58); Higo Kazuo, *Nihon Shinwa no Rekishi-teki Keisei* ("Historical Development of Japanese Myths") (Tokyo, 1958); Tsuda Sōkichi, *Jōdai Nihon no Shakai oyobi Shisō, op. cit.,* esp. pp. 1–238; Kanda Hideo, *Kojiki no Kōsō* ("Structure of the *Kojiki*") (Tokyo, 1959); Takeda Yūkichi, *Kojiki Setsuwa-gun no Kenkyu* ("A Study of Classification of the Kojiki Myths") (Tokyo, 1954); Nihon Minzokugaku Zenshu I, *Shinwa Densetsu-hen* ("Myths and

ent story of the origin of the cosmos in the early historic period of Japan out of various myths have not been successful.[90] Usually, Japanese myths are classified in several categories.[91]

A. Cosmogonic myths appear in three versions with three different *kami* as central figures. According to the first version, Umashiashikabihikoji ("the *kami* of the *ashi* or reed") grew out of a reed at the time when chaos existed, before cosmos came into being; then two other *kami* came into existence, followed by many others. According to the second version, Kuninotokotachi ("the *kami* who founded the nation") is the first *kami* who came into existence, although the motif of this account is similar to the first version. According to the third version, a trio of *kami*—Amenominakanushi, Takamimusubi, and Kamimusubi—appeared in Takamanohara or the "domain of heaven" at the beginning of the cosmos. Since Takamimusubi and Kamimusubi are in effect male and female functions of the first member of the trio, Amenominakanushi ("the central *kami* of heaven") is the creator-ruler of the heavenly domain. The first two versions probably had a southeast Asian origin, while the third was transmitted to Japan from central Asia by the Tennō (imperial) clan.[92]

B. The second component of the Japanese myths is an account of Izanagi ("He-who-invites") and Izanami's ("She-who-is-invited") begetting the islands of Japan and various *kami*. The birth of the *kami* of fire causes the death of Izanami, who then descends to Yomi-no-kuni or the nether world. Izanagi chases her there but runs away when he finds the transformed figure of his spouse. As he returns to heaven, Amaterasu is born from his left eye, Tsukiyomi ("the Moon deity") from his right eye, and Susanoo ("the Storm deity")

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Legends") by Fujisawa Morihiko (Tokyo, 1961); Matsumoto Nobuhiro, *Essai sur la mythologie japonaise, Austro-Asiatica*, Vol. II (Paris, 1928); Matsumoto, *Nihon Shinwa no Kenkyu* ("A Study of Japanese Mythology") (Tokyo, 1931 and 1946); Matsumoto, *Nihon no Shinwa* ("Myths of Japan") (Tokyo, 1956); Matsumoto, "Shinwa no Seikaku" ("The Nature of Japanese Myths"), *ZSBT*, Vol. I: *Jōmon Yayoi Kofun Jidai, op. cit.*, pp. 304–10; Numazawa Kiichi (Franz K. Numazawa), "Die Weltanfang in der japanischen Mythologie," *Internationale Schriftenreihe für soziale und politische Wissenschaften* (Ethnologische Reihe, Vol. II [Paris-Lucerne, 1946]), and "Tenchi wakaruru Shinwa no Bunkashi-teki haikei" ("Cultural Background of the Myth concerning the Separation of Heaven and Earth") *Academia*, I (1952), 4–20; Mishina Shōei, *Kenkoku Shinwa Ronko* ("Essays on the Myth of the Founding of the Nation") (Tokyo, 1937); Matsumaye Takeshi, *Nihon Shinwa no Shinkenkyu* ("A New Study of Japanese Mythology") (Tokyo, 1960); and Ōbayashi Taryo, *Nihon Shinwa no Kigen* ("Origins of Japanese Myths") (Tokyo, 1961). The present author is greatly indebted to the writings of Matsumoto Nobuhiro, Tsuda Sōkichi, Oka Masao, and Ōbayashi Taryo.

[90] See, e.g., the attempt of Post Wheeler, *The Sacred Scriptures of the Japanese* (New York, 1952).

[91] For a traditional classification of Japanese mythology see Robert Karl Reischauer, *Early Japanese History* (*ca.* 40 B.C.–A.D. 1167), Part A (Princeton, 1937), pp. 4–8. The present writer follows the general outline of Ōbayashi Taryo.

[92] According to Mizuno Tasuku, Amenominakanushi is the central figure in the *Kojiki*, which reflected the prestige of the imperial authority under the Emperor Temmu in the seventh century, whereas Kuninotokotachi is preferred in the *Nihonshoki*, which reflected the concerns of the Fujiwara and other bureaucratic-aristocratic clans that wanted to justify their understanding of the nature of Japanese political structure. This view is cited in Ōbayashi, *Nihon Shinwa no Kigen*, pp. 51–52. Also, according to *Ise no Fūdoki*, Amenominakanushi was connected to Ise which later became the dwelling place of Amaterasu.

from his nose. There follows the struggle between Amaterasu and her brother Susanoo, and she hides herself in a cave to escape her brother's wild acts. Some of these motifs are akin to those of southeast Asian, central Asian, and south Chinese myths, but there is no definitive theory as to how the fusion of these elements took place.

C. The so-called "Izumo Myths" start with the account of Susanoo, the impetuous brother of Amaterasu, going to the Izumo area where he rescues a maiden from the eight-headed snake and marries her. From the tail of the snake appears a sword. The mention of a sword betrays the influence of iron culture, but the motif of a hero rescuing a maiden from a sacrifice-demanding monster is found in many other cultures.[93] The real central figure of the Izumo myths, however, is Ōkuninushi ("The Master of the Great Land"), presumably the sixth descendant of Susanoo. It was he who ruled the land of Izumo with the help of Sukunahikona, a *kami* of midget size from *Tokoyo* ("the Land of Eternity"). Sukunahikona has been variously interpreted as an alter ego of Ōkuninushi or the prototype of the *marebito*, the *kami* who visits human society at harvest season.[94] In the end, the ruler of Izumo offers his jurisdiction of the land to the *kami* in the heavenly domain. This implies, in Matsumoto's opinion, that the so-called Izumo myths were put together for the political intention of the Yamato group, which was a community based on the worship of the sun, to subjugate the Izumo group, which worshiped the *kami* of water and storm.[95]

D. With the offering of earthly jurisdiction by the rule of Izumo, the compilers of Japanese myths take us back to the heavenly domain. To make a long story short, Amaterasu, by the order of Takamimusubi, sends her grandson, Ninigi, to rule Japan. In this connection, Oka points out that there must have been two sets of myths regarding the Takamanohara ("the Heavenly Domain")—one with Takamimusubi as the central figure and the other with Amaterasu as the central figure. Although the myth compilers skilfully connected these two *kami* by marrying off Takamimusubi's daughter to Amaterasu's son, thus begetting Ninigi, these two sets of myths were originally unrelated. The motif of the descent of *kami* to rule the country belongs to the Takamimusubi side of the myth, which is Altaic in origin, while the myth of Amaterasu, who was a goddess in charge of farming and food, was Austroasian in origin. Oka further believes that the original *kami* of the imperial clan was not Amaterasu but Takamimusubi (or Takakimusubi, meaning the "Kami who descends upon a tall tree").[96]

E. The so-called "Hiuga myth" begins with the descent of Ninigi, accompanied by five *kami*, to the mountaintop of Hiuga, which may or may not be the place with the same name located in Kyushu, for the term "Kiuga" simply

[93] For such examples see Ōbayashi, *Nihon shinwa no Kigen*, pp. 172–90.

[94] Oka holds that this notion of *marebito* is Melanesian in origin, brought by the first group in his scheme (A). Cf. *NMT*, Vol. II: *Nihon Minzokugaku no Rekishi to Kadai*, pp. 7–9. Matsumoto also thinks that the idea of the *kami* coming from the land lying beyond the sea, as exemplified by the story of Sukunahikona, is older than the belief in the *kami* descending from heaven (cf. his *Nihon no Shinwa*, pp. 90–96).

[95] *Ibid.*, pp. 171–77.

[96] Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, pp. 45–48 and 330; also UNESCO, *Japan*, pp. 112, 114.

means "turning toward the sun." At any rate, Ninigi marries Konosakuya ("Princess Blossoming-brilliantly-like-the-flower-of-the-tree") and begets two sons. We are told that the frailty of Ninigi's descendants, that is, the human race, is due to the fact that he refused to marry the homely sister of Konosakuya. Be that as it may, Ninigi's great-grandson is said to have led the chosen people from Kyushu to Yamato where he became the first legendary emperor, Jimmu.

Casual readers who are not familiar with the strange names of the Japanese *kami* can hardly be blamed for bewilderment in examining Japanese myths. But myths in early Japan, like their counterparts in archaic societies in other parts of the world, are not childish imagination or superstition.[97] In spite of the compilers' intention to fit myths into the political ideology of the seventh and eighth century Japanese regime, these myths preserve the early Japanese understanding of the meaning of the world and of life, and more especially the mode of existence of *kami*. To them, all the events mentioned in myths—the marriage between two *kami* or their method of planting seeds and weaving—took place in mythical time. As Mircea Eliade reminds us: "Everything had taken place and had been revealed at that moment, *in illo tempore:* the creation of the world, and that of man, and man's establishment in the situation provided for him in the cosmos, down to the least details of that situation."[98] As such, myths provided a heavenly model for earthly life, and in this sense "religion" embraced all aspects of existence of the people in Japan during the prehistoric and early historic period.

3. *Religion.*—Any attempt to reconstruct an archaic or primitive people's religion involves many difficulties. This is particularly true in Japan where several different ethnic and cultural streams had already merged in the prehistoric period, leaving very few clues as to their distinct patterns of kinship and marriage, their social organizations, and the modes of their religious beliefs and practices. The only exception is the Ainu, who, because of their historic isolation from the rest of the populace, managed to preserve certain features of their archaic religious and cultural tradition. Unfortunately, the Ainu legacy throws little light on the religion of non-Ainu people in prehistoric Japan.

Regarding the religious outlook of the Jōmon people, we can only speculate that they must have shared the general features of the way of life of hunting and fishing peoples of Eurasia during the neolithic

[97] Saunders, *op. cit.*, p. 413: "Japanese myths present a somewhat disorganized pattern, episodic rather than epic in nature. They form a miscellaneous body of superstition rather than a co-ordinated system of legends."

[98] *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. W. R. Trask (New York, 1954), p. 105.

period. There is not enough evidence to warrant the theory that cannibalism was a widespread custom, a theory postulated at one time by some scholars. Fortunately, from the shell mounds we learn something about the burial customs of the Jōmon people. For instance, skeletons found in burials near dwellings frequently have folded limbs. Such a custom may have been based on the belief that a dead person with folded limbs would not haunt the living, or it may have been motivated by an entirely different belief to the effect that those buried in embryonic posture would be assured of rebirth. Skeletal remains of the Jōmon period also indicate that tooth extractions were performed. This operation probably had something to do with the initiation of youths.[99] As many of the latter Jōmon figurines portray women, some scholars think that there was a belief in female deities, and the discovery of large finished stone pieces has led others to conclude that there must have been belief in phallicism.[100] The concentrically radiating circles of flat stones unearthed on northern Honshu and Hokkaido resemble those found in Europe in those places identified as burial sites of the neolithic period.[101] In the main, communities were small in size and mobile, although in the middle and later Jōmon period semipermanent settlements began to be formed. But beyond that we know practically nothing about the social organization or religious practices of the people during this period.

The transition from the fishing-hunting culture of the Jōmon period to the agricultural culture of the Yayoi period must have resulted in changes in religious beliefs and practices, but here again much of our theorizing on the Yayoi culture is conjecture, based, to be sure, on archeological discoveries. It is safe to imagine however, that an agricultural society requires stable settlements, a certain amount of division of labor, a use of a variety of tools, and some kind of community organization. Common cemeteries for villages have been unearthed, and the use of jars—some are of the twin type while others are of the single type with lids—is evident. The customs of tooth extraction and tatooing seem to have been widely observed. Various kinds of ornaments and tools are found in coffins too. In some instances, a set of pottery is placed in front of the coffin as though food and drink were offered to the spirits of the deceased. At Bishamon in Kanagawa Prefecture deer bones that were burnt, presumably for the purpose of

[99] Cf. Miyamoto Hiroto, "Tsugumo Kaizuka-jin no Basshi Fūshū ni tsuite," *JGZ*, Vol. XL, No. 5 (1925).

[100] Torii Ryūzo, "Nihon Sekki Jidai Minshū no Joshin Shinko," *JGZ*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 11 (1922), and "Gojin Sosen Yūshi-izen no Dankon Sonhai," *ibid.*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 (1923).

[101] *ZSBT, Nihon*, Part I, 88–90.

fortune-telling, were discovered, whereas on a small island called Tanegashima, south of Kyushu, many ornaments made of shells, believed to be the special marks of female shamans and mediums have been unearthed.[102] Although there is no conclusive evidence that special religious functionaries existed, some scholars think that the use of bronze bells (*dōshaku*) and sacred jewels (*magatama*) was connected with shamanism. Also the swords and spears made of bronze during this period were not meant for practical purposes, in comparison with their Korean counterparts which had sharper blades, and thus are believed to have been sacred objects of some sort.[103]

In this connection, we are inclined to agree substantially with Oka's previously mentioned hypothesis and view the Yayoi culture as a culture complex, blending (*A*) the Melanesian elements of a secret society system, matrilineal tradition, horizontal cosmology, and veneration of spirits, especially those of ancestors, (*B*) the Austroasian elements of village shamans, female tribal chiefs, and the myth of a sun-goddess in charge of agriculture, (*C*) the Tungusic elements of exogamous patrilineal clans, a Siberian form of shamanism, and vertical cosmology, and (*D*) the Austronesian elements of age-class and age-group social organization, paddy-rice cultivation, and the custom of initiation rites. We are, however, not certain how these elements came to be blended and at what stages of the prehistoric period. At any rate, the existence of a clearly graded village system in the Ihama section of Mihama village, Shizuoka Prefecture, a house for a society of young men in Sukumo, Kochi Prefecture, a *taya* or a house for women during the period of menstruation at Taguchi, Aichi Prefecture, and the practice of healing and mediumship by shamanic diviners in a state of spirit possession in various parts of Japan even in our own time, can hardly be explained simply in terms of accidental similarities with magico-religious traditions of Japan's neighboring countries.[104]

We also recognize Altaic elements—the fifth component (*E*) in Oka's scheme—such as a social system based on a patriarchal clan (*uji*); social stratification of occupational groups; the deification of heroes; the worship of celestial deities who are believed to descend upon mountaintops, tall trees, or pillars; and the custom of horseback riding. But we feel that the migration of the Altaic group began around the third century A.D., if not earlier, and continued sporadically, in-

[102] *Ibid.*, pp. 156–61.

[103] Cf. Kobayashi, *Nihon Kōkogaku Gaisetsu*, pp. 118, 146, and 158.

[104] For these examples see Oka, "Nihon Minzoku Bunka no Keisei," pp. 107–12.

stead of manifesting itself as one great military invasion in the fourth century, as Egami postulates. Admittedly there were some marked changes in the middle Kofun (Tumulus) period, notably a sudden popularity of the horse, and it may be that there was even a dynastic change in Japan about this time as some scholars suggest. But we certainly cannot attribute all changes during the Kofun period to Altaic influence alone.

Fortunately for us, this period left many tangible remains besides great tombs—remains such as stone *magatama* (imitations of sacred jewels), stone knives, and mirrors, which are believed to be offerings.[105] Stone boats unearthed in several tombs indicate that people of this period may have believed that the souls of the dead were transported to another land. At the sacred compound of the Munakata shrine outside of Fukuoka, Kyushu, many stone horses and boats were discovered.[106] Probably, *kami* were believed to come by horse or by boat.[107] One of the curious items of this period is the *komochi-magatama*, made of stone, that is, a *magatama* (sacred jewel) with several smaller *magatama* tied around it. Since the term *tama* means both soul and round figure, *komochi-magatama* must have had some religious meaning that unfortunately is not clear to us today.[108] Incidentally, the discovery of *magatama*, swords, and mirrors, all made of stone or pottery, as items to be buried with the deceased, anticipates the use of these articles as the three symbols of imperial authority. Also, the female figurine among the *haniwa* earthenware with a piece of cloth hanging down from her right shoulder to the side of the waist is believed to portray *Miko*, the shamanic diviner.[109]

If we assume that the Altaic group, powerful in military affairs but with a relatively undeveloped nomadic culture, penetrated the Japanese islands around the third century and established itself as the ruling class of the early Japanese kingdom in the fourth or fifth century, we can at least arrive at a plausible theory for explaining many of the social, cultural, and religious features and phenomena of Japan during the early historic period. Accepting this view, even on a tentative basis, however, still leaves many problems unsolved and also raises further questions. For example, we are far from certain about the

[105] Ōba Iwao, "Jodai Saigishi to sono Iseki ni tsuite," *JGZ*, Vol. XX, No. 8 (1930).

[106] Tanaka Yukio, "Chikuzen Okitsugu no Sekisei Mozōhin," *JGZ*, Vol. XXV, No. 2 (1935). See also Munakata Jinja Fukko Kisei Kai (ed.), *Munakata Jinja-shi* ("History of Munakata Shrine"), Vol. I (Tokyo, 1961).

[107] Cf. Matsumoto, *Nihon no Shinwa*, chaps. i and ii.

[108] Cf. Kobayashi, *Nihon Kōkogaku Gaisetsu*, pp. 221–22.

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 179.

nature of the culture complex developed during the Yayoi period, especially regarding the fusion of different religious outlooks, myths, symbols, and practices. To be sure, we can differentiate typologically the northern Asian and southeast Asian elements, so that we can tell that the shamanistic tradition in Japan, for instance, is a mixture of Siberian and southeast Asian or Oceanian types. But outside such a general typological distinction, we have a long way to go before we can pinpoint which specific area of Austroasian cultural tradition or which specific stream of Siberian tradition provided the shamanistic techniques and ideologies of Japan. We are equally at a loss as to the predecessors of many of the Japanese myths, even though we have no difficulty in assigning the myth of Izanagi ("He-who-invites") and Izanami ("She-who-is-invited"), for instance, to the south Pacific region in general without specifying which area thereof.[110] The future articulation of the problem of the culture complex of prehistoric Japan requires, among other things, as Beardsley rightly reminds us, similar studies in prehistoric cultures of "the vast territory of boreal Eurasia and North America, a coniferous and mixed-hardwood forest zone stretching from Finland across Siberia and the Bering Strait into Canada and New York."[111]

Within the Japanese context, too, there is a series of unsolved problems—ethnological, linguistic, archeological, historical, cultural, and religious. In this connection, Hattori makes it very clear that while a philologist can and must take seriously the contribution of scholars of other disciplines, it is his duty to make the final judgment primarily on linguistic grounds.[112] In the study of early Japanese chronicles, Tsuda likewise proposes to study them most assiduously, first and foremost, as written documents, even though he recognizes the importance of investigating the historical setting and cultural milieu in which these documents were written.[113] Similarly, in dealing with religion in the prehistoric and early historic periods, historians of religions should view it not simply as an interesting by-product of the process of culture-complex formation but as a genuine religious phe-

[110] Oka tentatively attributed the Izanagi-Izanami myth to the Austroasian cultural component (*B*); however, he suggests that it might belong to the Austronesian component (*D*) (cf. Oka, "Nihon Bunka no Kios Kōzō," pp. 10–13).

[111] Beardsley, *op. cit.*, p. 327. Similar views have been expressed by some Japanese scholars. Cf. Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen;* see also Aleksei P. Okladnikov, "The Role of the Ancient Baikal Region in the Cultural Relations between East and West," in Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, *International Symposium on History of Eastern and Western Cultural Contacts*, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–43.

[112] Hattori, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

[113] Tsuda, *Jōdai Nihon no Shakai oyobi Shisō*, p. 238.

nomenon with its own inner logic and structure, expressed in myths, symbols, rituals, and interhuman relations, however mixed they may have been in their origin.

This does not mean, of course, that historians of religions must neglect a critical analysis of the historic processes involved in the development of Japanese religion. Far from it. The ambiguous meaning of the term *kami* alone demands rigorous and multidimensional analysis and research. Its usual translation as "spirit" or "god" is quite unsatisfactory and misleading. Leaving aside the etymological origin of the term *kami*, we must bear in mind that it is used, on the one hand, to designate an impersonal quality, that is, the *kami* nature, somewhat analogous to the *numinous* or sacred, and as the other designation for specific beings endowed with the *kami* nature, be they human, divine, or other animate or inanimate beings.

As such, the pantheon of early Japan included, almost indiscriminately, numerous *kami* of diverse backgrounds.[114] Some of them show every indication of being mixtures of several different *kami*. Amaterasu, for example, came to be regarded as the ancestor and patron *kami* of the imperial clan in the historic period.[115] But she seems to have combined both the status of Takamimusubi, identified by Oka and others as the original chief celestial deity of the Altaic group, and the character of the sun-goddess in charge of agricultural food production, a popular deity of Austroasian origin. In the same vein, the names and characters of other *kami*, as well as those of rituals, festivals, and symbols, might have undergone transformation in the course of time.[116]

Corresponding to the enlargement of the pantheon was the development of Japanese society as the result of gradual fusion of various ethnic and cultural streams. The complexity of the early Japanese social order was due largely to the precarious mixture of different kinds of family, kinship, and social systems, for example, matrilineal or patrilineal traditions, and age-class or profession as the basis for social stratification. Oka postulates that the predominant pattern of society during the Yayoi period that was of *hara*, derived from the Tungusic

[114] Cf. D. C. Holtom, "The Meaning of Kami," *Monumenta Nipponica*, III, No. 1 (1940), 1–27 (see also Tsuda, *Jōdai Nihon no Shakai oyobi Shisō*, chap. ii, "Kami to Mikoto," pp. 147–238).

[115] For a traditional account of this *kami* see A. Eustace Haydon, *Biography of the Gods* (New York, 1945), chap. viii, "Amaterasu-Omikami," pp. 199–217.

[116] Nominal Christianization of pagan deities in Europe has been pointed out by many scholars. For a similar transformation of local festivals and deities in India see McKim Marriott, "Little Communities in an Indigenous Civilization," in *Village India*, edited by him (Chicago, 1955), pp. 171–222. It must be kept in mind, however, that a dominant culture or civilization analogous to Christianity in Europe and Aryan civilization in India was lacking in Japan until the penetration of Sino-Korean civilization and of Buddhism in the later period.

term *hala* or *hala-kala* which is a designation of the exogamous patrilineal clans. When the Altaic group entered the scene as the ruling class, its *uji*, the designation of patriarchal clans, was superimposed on the earlier social structure based on *hara-kara*.[117] Oka further suggests that the early Japanese word *kabane*, a designation of occupational clans or groups, derives from the Altaic cultural tradition.[118] At any rate, most scholars agree that Japanese society during the early historic period (or the Kofun period) consisted of many independent *uji* (clans). Each *uji* had *uji-bito* (clansmen), *be* (various hereditary professional groups of persons who were not necessarily blood relations of the *uji-bito* but had permanent relations with the *uji*), and *nuhi* (slaves), all of which were ruled by *uji-no-kami* (the clan chieftain) who later received such honorary appelations as Ōmi, Muraji, Ōbito, Sukuri, or Kimi.[119]

Each *uji* was not only a social, economic, and political unit but also a unit of religious solidarity centering around the *uji-gami* or *uji-kami* (the *kami* of the clan). The *kami* of the clan and his or her shrine were attended to by the *uji-no-kaji* (clan chieftain) with the assistance of his wife or sister. While the *kami* of the clan was considered the founder or ancestor of the clan, such a *kami* was venerated not only by the *uji-bito* (clansmen) but also by the members of the *be* who had no blood ties with the clansmen. When a certain clan expanded in size, and some parts of the clan—either clansmen or members of the *be*—had to migrate to a new area, they would establish a branch shrine dedicated to the same *uji-gami;* for the basis of group solidarity in early Japan was sharing the same clan *kami* and not necessarily blood relationship as such.[120] Should one powerful clan subjugate another, members of the latter were incorporated into the former by adopting

[117] Cf. Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, pp. 244–46. Today, the Japanese term *hara-kara* is used interchangeably with *kyōdai* ("brethren or kinfolk"), but this term was used as a synonym of *u-kara* and *ya-kara* in ancient Japanese. Ōno traces the origin of *hara-kara* to Manchu *hala*, Korean *kara*, Tungusic *kala*, and Mongolian *xala*, all of which have the meaning of nation, tribe, or kinfolk. He also traces the origin of the Japanese term *uji* (or *udi*) to the Korean term *ul* (tribe), to the Mongolian term *uru-q* (paternal kins), to the Turkish expression *uru* (relatives), and to the Buryat word *uri* (sons or decendants) (cf. Ōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 135–36).

[118] UNESCO, *Japan*, pp. 114–15: Ancient Korean vocational groups were also given a general title expressed by a Chinese ideograph meaning "bone." Oka thinks that there was a definite relationship between the Japanese or Korean vocational group structure and the Mongolian patriarchal clan which was also known as "bone."

[119] Cf. Reischauer, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–13. Evidently, only those who had blood relations within the *uji* were known as *ukara*, whereas the term *yakara* included both *ukara* and *be*. See Aruga Kizaemon, "Nihon no Iye," Nihon Jinruigaku-kai, *Nihon Minzoku*, p. 176.

[120] *Ibid.*, pp. 178–79.

the clan name of their new master. In such a case, the *kami* of the subjugated clan was propitiated and more often than not transformed into a kinsman of the *kami* of the conquering clan.

The life of the early Japanese was controlled not only by the *kami* of the clan to which they belonged but also by numerous other beings and things which had the *kami* nature. They are usually classified into four types—according to the geographical names, human names, names of things, and functions related to them—or two types—those which are related to social groups, such as clans or villages, and those which control health, fortune, and longevity of individuals.[121] Oka, on the other hand, attempts to classify spiritual beings into the following four types based on the different attitudes toward them on the part of the people. First is the *mono* or spiritual entity attached to human bodies or natural things. Second is the *tama* which may be translated as "soul," although it is not confined always to human bodies or other physical things. Third is the *marebito*, referring to spirits of the ancestors or ghosts who come from distant places to visit human communities. This belief is based on what Oka calls the horizontal cosmology and is related to the development of shrines. Fourth is the real *kami*, typologically speaking, although this term came to be used to designate all beings with the *kami* nature. This belief is based on a vertical cosmology, for *kami* were believed to descend from above to mountaintops, tall trees, forests, or pillars, and originally did not require shrines. Fifth is the celestial bodies, such as the sun, moon, stars, wind, and storms.[122]

However these spiritual beings are classified, it is understandable that the *uji-no-kami* (clan chieftains) were not equipped to deal with them, with the exception of the *kami* of their own clans. No doubt, they depended on many kinds of divination and fortune-telling. A Chinese account mentions the existence in the land of Wa (Japan) of the fortune-keeper who is selected when a group of people go on voyage. This man "does not arrange his hair, does not rid himself of fleas, lets his clothing [get as] dirty as it will, does not eat meat, and does not approach women." When the voyage was successful, he was rewarded. If it was not, he was killed on the ground that "he was not scrupulous in his duties."[123] The same Chinese record describes a queen, Pimiko, who "occupied herself with magic and sorcery, be-

[121] Yanagita, *Minzokugaku Jiten*, pp. 119–20.

[122] Cf. Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, pp. 59–62 (see also Eliade, *op. cit.*, p. 71).

[123] Quoted from "History of the Kingdom of Wei" (*Wei Chih*) in *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories*, trans. Tsumoda Ryusaku, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich (South Pasadena, Calif., 1951), p. 11.

witching the people." According to the writer of this document, Pimiko was not married and had a brother who assisted her in running the affairs of the state. She was secluded from people, and only one man "served her food and drink and acted as a medium of communication."[124] But not all the shamanic diviners were in high places. According to Oka, they can be classified into four main types. First is the *Miko*-A, a *Miko* (female shamanic diviner), who is usually a member of that family or clan. Her virginity is a necessary prerequisite. The medium's office is often handed down from aunt to niece. Second is the *Miko*-B who must be a hereditary *Miko* attached to a shrine, serving as a medium between the *kami* of the shrine and the people who belong to that shrine, or a non-hereditary *Miko* of the countryside who is believed to be chosen by the *kami*. Third is the *Ichiko*, who is a professional traveling shamanic diviner, engaged in fortune-telling, transmission of spirit messages, and healing. It is believed that a special training period is required before an *Ichiko* can establish rapport with her patron *kami* or *tama*. Fourth is the *Monomochi*, either a male or female member of a certain family, believed to be permanently possessed by the *mono* (spirits) of specific animals, such as the fox, snake, or badger. The quality of *Monomochi* is usually handed down from one generation to the next through the female line.[125] While this typology of shamanic diviners is admittedly tentative, there is no doubt that various kinds of *Miko* and the like played important roles in the religious life of the early Japanese.

Of the rituals, ethical and other injunctions, and doctrinal development of this period, we know little. It is probably a mistake to think of early Japanese religion as a unified system with a highly developed theology, metaphysics, liturgics, ecclesiology, and ethics. It is even questionable whether it is appropriate to use such an expression as early Shinto for this phase of Japanese religion. The need of some designation for Japanese religion arose only when Buddhism was introduced later, and two Chinese characters—*shin*, for "*kami*," and *to* for "the way"—were combined for this purpose. Thus, as Florenz pointed out, the term Shinto was really a translation of a Chinese expression into Japanese, and not the other way around.[126] Be that as it may, adoption of a name does not imply that the religion so designated was in effect a coherent system of beliefs and practices. On the contrary, there is every reason to suppose that early Japanese religion had with-

[124] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[125] Oka *et al.*, *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, pp. 62–84.

[126] Karl Florenz, "Die Japaner," *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, ed. Alfred Bertholet and Eduard Lehmann (Tübingen, 1925), p. 267.

in it several different traditions, and that it took many centuries before what may be rightly called Shinto took its shape. On the other hand, it is also a mistake to think that early Japanese religion is simply a name enveloping a mass of contradictory local religious practices scattered throughout the Japanese islands. Long before the compilation of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, people in Japan knew that they were not left alone, helpless, in this mysterious universe; for they posessed divine models for all human, social, and communal needs and activities. We try to trace the components of the culture complex and reconstruct the process of transmission and development of certain myths, beliefs, and symbols, as well as of cultural features. But people in Japan during the prehistoric and early historic periods, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, took it for granted that they or their ancestors had learned all the necessary knowledge and technique regarding social behavior and practical affairs from the world of the *kami* which was far away from, and yet closely related to, their world, such that the success or failure of their daily work, to say nothing of the meaning of the whole of life, was interpreted religiously.