Hunter-Gatherers of the North Pacific Rim.

Edited by Junko Habu, James M. Savelle, Shuzo Koyama, and Hitomi Hongo. *Senri Ethnological Studies* No. 63, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, 2003. ISBN 4-901906-07-0 (paper). 277 pp.

After Douglas Price coined the term ‘complex hunter-gatherers’ in 1981, the prehistoric and ethnographic variability recognized by archaeologists today has created substantial theoretical depth, making the field of hunter-gatherer studies itself complex compared to 25 years ago. On the heels of that initial article, the pioneering 1985 monograph by Price and Brown set the stage for what we see today: a plethora of archaeological literature seeking to showcase the variability in hunter-gatherer lifeways. According to Ames (2004: p. 370), the future of this literature may be either manifold and multifarious, or characterized by “stagnation and irrelevancy”. It is my opinion that the latter does not apply to *Hunter-Gatherers of the North Pacific Rim* as it represents a solid contribution to the growing body of hunter-gatherer research, with the theme of complexity appearing as an important focus.

The volume grew out of a satellite session of the 8th CHAGS (Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies) held in Osaka and Aomori in 1998. This is, in essence, the second installment of a series on hunter-gatherers of the North Pacific Rim and the second one published in the National Museum of Ethnology’s *Senri Series*, the first volume being the classic 1981 *Affluent Foragers: Pacific Coasts East and West*, edited by Shuzo Koyama (one of the co-editors of the present volume) and David Hurst Thomas.

The book is divided into three parts: Part I, *Evolutionary changes in hunter-gatherer cultures: theoretical perspectives* (2 chapters); Part II, *Pacific rim hunter-gatherers in different environments: ecology, history, and diversity* (5 chapters); and Part III, *Jomon hunter-gatherers at Sannai Maruyama and its vicinity: prehistoric hunter-gatherers in northeastern Japan* (6 chapters). This final section is notable in that it makes results from Sannai Maruyama (the largest Jomon site yet discovered) available to an international audience.

Hunter-Gatherers of the North Pacific Rim, appropriately omitting the word ‘affluent’ from the title, and thus distinguishing it from the Koyama and Thomas volume, is unique in at least two respects: it contains (thirteen) articles that span the entire scope of the North Pacific Rim from southern Chukotka to California, with two contributions coming from slightly outside this vast region; two from the far north, one dealing with whaling and ranked social structure in the Bering Sea and eastern Canadian Arctic (Savelle and Wenzel), and the other being an investigation of a single site with a polar bear hunting focus from the eastern Siberian high Arctic (Pitul’ko); the other exception is from the south, and further afield, in subtropical Okinawa (Takamiya). Thus, the focus is not solely on the North Pacific (as the title states) but offers some spice in which to view prehistoric/historic hunter-gatherer developmental trajectories by stretching its arms past the boundaries of the North Pacific. The second unique quality rests in the third section, which is devoted

almost entirely to northeastern Japan detailing research on the dynamic Middle Jomon period.

The first of two chapters in Part I, Chapter 2 by Fitzhugh, discusses the evolution of complexity on Kodiak Island (Gulf of Alaska), particularly dealing with the Kachemak and Koniag periods. The lessons learned from this work lead Fitzhugh to clarify that without exploring the social, political, and economic relationships in prehistory and clearly defining what we seek to explain (i.e. inequality and its variations), we will be plagued with contributing to the “messiness of concepts like complexity”. To clarify, complexity can occur in one aspect of society (e.g. politically) while others are not altered in the same manner (e.g. economically).

Chapter 3 by Prentiss and Chatters discusses several important issues regarding North Pacific hunter-gatherers such as the emergence of cultural variation and subsequent middle Holocene decline, and the origin of collecting systems around 3500 BP. They state that the pattern of cultural diversification in the Pacific Northwest is similar to many prehistoric periods on a global level. It is apparent to this reviewer that this also holds true for the end of the Middle to Epi-Jomon span in Japan, although this is not discussed in their chapter.

Part II begins with Chapter 4 by Schweitzer, who asks why there is such great diversity in social and political institutions within the broad North Pacific Rim, which is defined as the Kamchatka peninsula north to Chukotka and across the Bering Sea to the Inupiaq, and Yupiq regions, south to the Gulf of Alaska and the northern North Pacific. Savelle and Wenzel (Chapter 5) aim to use an analogical argument from modern Canadian Inuit groups and historic Inupiat whaling societies to interpret prehistoric Thule culture (ca. 1000 BP) social structure. They apply Inupiat whale hunting crew social relationships and Baffin Island extended family (*ilagii*) kinship relations as a means to discuss the development of social complexity of corporate groups among hunter-gatherers. Using data from the Glass Mountain Project of northeastern California, Dillian (Chapter 6) states that geographic and economic approaches to territoriality must be augmented by an understanding of how territoriality affects interaction between and within group boundaries. One conclusion is that Modoc knappers made bifaces with Karok groups acting as middlemen across territorial boundaries. Dillian stresses that a holistic (cognitive, social, cultural, and economic) approach must be used in territorial analyses. Takamiya (Chapter 8) reveals that Okinawan Jomon sedentism increased through time with some evidence of territoriality; increasing complexity, as opposed to climatic perturbations, serve as an insufficient explanation.

Part III begins with Okada (Chapter 9) who compares the Sannai Maruyama site houses with other settlements in the Tohoku region, and concludes that the change from the single settlements of the Middle Jomon to the communal regional, multiple-settlements is based on changes in social principles and ritual. Sato et al. (Chapter 10) provide a significant contribution in their DNA analysis of chestnuts from Middle Jomon sites (ca. 5500–4000 BP) revealing reduction in DNA diversity, an indication of domestication. Energy-dispersive x-ray fluorescence of trace elements in pottery led Habu, Hall, and Ogasawara (Chapter 11) to dis-

cover that pottery from the Sannai Maruyama site was produced locally, an important factor in the development of sedentism. Chisholm and Habu (Chapter 12) reveal through carbon and nitrogen isotope work that a large portion of an individual's diet from an Early Jomon burial at the Furuyashiki site, Aomori derived from marine protein. They state that there may be a north to south preference for marine foods. In Chapter 13, Kodama concludes that the emergence of the unusually large three-ringed, Late Jomon Komakino site stone circle in Aomori prefecture is due to environmental change. Such changes necessitated settlement structure changes and a "new ritual ideology". The debate over stone circles as graves or ceremonial features is addressed with the interpretation that Komakino is a burial site separate from a settlement.

The final chapter, reserved for Hudson, with the charismatic title of "Foragers as Fetish in Modern Japan", is a poignant social commentary about how hunter-gatherers are viewed by Japanese scholars and public alike. Essentially, a desire for prehistoric longevity in the Japanese imagination has created a fixation that, in turn, has led to a "Japanization" of foragers within the national identity/history. Hudson states further that the early Euro-American scholarship on band-level, 'primitive' people has been ignored by Japanese scholars who stress the particularistic or 'natural' aspect of an impossibly unique Japanese hunter-gatherer legacy; attempts to separate the shared hunter-gatherer heritage of all humanity from a distinct Japanese version is clearly ethnocentric, unique to Japanese scholarship, and narrow-minded. Hudson (p. 270) states, "the fetish-like focus on the 'Japanese past' prevents them from seeing the exciting abundance of ... variation in prehistoric Japan and hinders a deeper international understanding of the significance of" hunter-gatherers throughout Japan.

A major criticism of this work is the lack of a firm definition of the North Pacific that should appear in the introductory chapter, while the addition of papers (although quite welcome) outside this range also misrepresents the volume title. Ostensibly, the boundaries are clear; however, culturally and historically there are some gray areas as some chapters imply. Perhaps a map detailing the region and its cultural periods would have been a useful addition, despite those provided by Prentiss and Chatters, and Schweitzer. The overall layout of the volume follows others in the Senri series and is of good quality.

The importance of this volume is that it presents hard data situated within theoretical ideas regarding the evolution of hunter-gatherers in general across one (albeit, quite a large and diverse) region of the world. Specifically, unpacking the complexity issue dealt with in the introduction, and mentioned in almost every chapter, deserves further attention in the archaeological/anthropological literature. Finally, the inclusion of research (still rare in English) dealing with the Jomon period in the Tohoku region of Japan alongside other

North Pacific, Okinawan, and Bering Sea contributions serves to highlight the necessity of tying together this diverse (and lengthy) cultural period to the global investigation of hunter-gatherer origins and adaptations.

Hunter-Gatherers of the North Pacific Rim is another in a line of recent tomes that add to expanding knowledge and theoretical ideas (e.g. complexity and subsistence-settlement modeling) in the hunter-gatherer literature. I recommend that the volume be consulted by researchers in the hunter-gatherer subfield, by those working with prehistoric remains in East Asia and Japan, and to anthropologists in general. It is clear that the pervasive nature of hunter-gatherers in global prehistory and history, and the elusive labeling of these groups have helped to stimulate the vast amount of research up to the present. Furthermore, I feel it will increasingly expand its scope as an ongoing interdisciplinary academic venture of great significance in the years to come. Finally, this volume and others of late reveal that the progressive allusion from simple to complex is no longer appropriate for hunter-gatherers past and present (see, Rowley-Conwy, 2001); thus, the days of the paradigmatic model of the "OAS" (Original Affluent Society) have drawn to a close due to the overwhelming variability and 'complexity' recognized through both archaeological research and ethnographic studies of the very recent past.

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Mark C. Diab

Institute of History and Anthropology, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba Science City, Ibaraki, 305-8571; and Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, 457-4 Motoyama, Kamigamo, Kita-ku, Kyoto, 603-8047 Japan

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