University of Southern California – Meiji University
Faculty and Graduate Student Research Exchange 2013
12/5 DML 233 and 12/6 WPH 104*

Thursday 12/5, 11 AM – 11:15 PM, Doheny Library 233
Opening Greetings by Profs. Piggott & Prof. Sasaki

Thursday 12/5, 11:15 AM – 12:00 PM, Doheny Library 233
Temporal Change in Mortuary Practices during the Transition from the Yayoi to Kofun Periods (Third Century C.E.) in Eastern Japan
DOI Shôhei, Graduate Student in Archaeology, Meiji University

Previous research into the transitional phase from the Yayoi to Kofun periods has been skewed toward mortuary practices because, while mortuary practices in the Yayoi Period were regionally very distinctive, mortuary practices during the Kofun Period seems to be uniform. This uniformity has also seemed to characterize people’s daily life during the Kofun Period. Here I look into the case of the old province of Kamitsuke (the present Gunma Prefecture) in the northern Kanto, where archaeological excavations have revealed mortuary practices of both the late Yayoi and early Kofun periods. I have compiled information for all the burial mounds thus far excavated, paying special attention to the morphology of coffins and other facilities where dead bodies were placed, spatial arrangements of mounds, and ceramic offerings to the dead. As a result I have discovered two epochs that mark temporal change in mortuary practices. In the late second century the late Yayoi Period, differences in coffins and other facilities where the dead bodies were placed became apparent, and in the early third century that saw the beginning of the Kofun Period, it is clear that various types of pottery that differed by region as well as morphologically different types of burial mounds were constructed. This suggests to me that various regional cultures were introduced into the Kamitsuke region even as the process of standardization in keyhole-shaped tumuli construction was ongoing. **

Thursday 12/5, 12:00-12:45 PM, Doheny Library 233
Craft Production in Kofun-age Japan from the Perspective of Agricultural Tools
KAWANO Masanori, Postdoctoral Scholar, Meiji University

The mid-Kofun Period (the fifth century) witnessed a drastic change in people’s daily life, owing to rapid technological innovation. This technological innovation owed much to immigrants from the Korean peninsula who brought advanced technologies with them. Among such innovations,
changes in the morphologies of iron plowheads and iron sickles resulted in a marked increase in the rice productivity for the first time since the Yayoi Period. What remains unclear however is to what extent Korean immigrants and native Japanese craftsmen were involved in the evolution of craft production. In order to approach this difficult issue, I have focused on investigating the production of various types of iron sickles in the fifth century. My conclusion is that we can distinguish between lunar-shaped curved blade iron sickles produced with native Japanese technology and quite similar to Korean iron sickles. While the former were produced by Japanese craftsmen, the latter was either imported from the Korean peninsula or produced either by Korean craftsmen in Japan or by Japanese craftsmen under the guidance of Korean craftsmen in Japan. In the early fifth century, most iron sickles were of the former type, which suggests that Japanese craftsmen imitated Korean products without mastering the Korean technology. In the late fifth century, however, most of the iron sickles were of the latter type, suggesting that Korean immigrants possessing advanced technology were actively involved in the production of agricultural tools. This resulted in technological innovation, which is also resulted in the changing morphology of iron plowheads. Analysis of iron agricultural tools can contribute substantially to our understanding of the craft production system during the Kofun Period.

Thursday 12/5, 12:45-1:20 PM, Doheny Library 233

Political Organization in Kofun-age Japan

Prof. SASAKI Ken’ichi, Meiji University

I will talk about various archeological perspectives on political organization across the Japanese archipelago during the Kofun Period. I was raised in Kyoto, to the north of Nara and Osaka, considered the center of the Kofun culture. And I once believed that studying the Kofun culture represented by the giant keyhole-shaped tumuli in the Nara-Osaka-Kyoto region would be enough to understand the history of the Kofun Period. I also thought that the central polity of Yamato was so strong that it controlled many different regions of Japan from Iwate in the east to Kagoshima in the distant west, across which great expanse keyhole-shaped tumuli were constructed. Professor TSUDE Hiroshi under whom I prepared my dissertation at Osaka University also argued that there was a strong central polity during the Kofun Period. But in 1999 I was hired by the Department of Archaeology at Meiji University, and I was given charge of fieldwork in southern Ibaraki Prefecture (old Hitachi and Shimōsa provinces) and laboratory work for publication concerning excavations at the Ōmuro Burial Mound and the Carin Cluster in Nagano Prefecture (old Shinano province). These opportunities gave me a good opportunity to reconsider my view of Kofun Period political organization. The fact is, Kofun-period cultures in eastern Japan were so regionally distinctive that it seems to me we should recognize that local polities were relatively autonomous. That is why I now argue that the central polity of Yamato was relatively weak, and that the nature of the Kofun Period political organization was a loose confederacy of regionally autonomous polities.

LUNCH BREAK
Thursday 12/5, 2:15-3:00 PM, Doheny Library 233

Acts of Looking and Listening in the Kojiki

YAMAGUCHI Naomi, Graduate Student in Japanese Literature, Meiji University

The section devoted to the reign of the monarch known as Nintoku Tennô in the eighth-century Kojiki, or Record of Ancient Matters, begins with the geneology of the monarch and then records an episode when he looked out over his realm from a hill. At the time he observed that very few families were cooking their meals and thus he decided not to tax people for three years. Three years later Nintoku looked out again and observed smoke from fires where rice was cooking at numerous residences. So he knew that the people prospered and he decided to tax them again. In later times people praised the reign of Nintoku Tennô and called it a divine sovereign's era. This act of a monarch looking out over his realm was an important royal ritual called “kunimi,” and we find it described in extant gazetteers (fudoki) and in the Man'yoshu (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves).

In my view however, a careful reading of the Kojiki suggests that the action of listening was as important as the action of looking. Listening too had ritualistic significance, a fact that has not received the note it deserves. In this paper I will discuss acts of listening and their meaning as described in the Kojiki.

Thursday 12/5, 3:00-3:45 PM, Doheny Library 233

Ordering the Man'yoshu

Prof. YAMAZAKI Kenji, Meiji University

The order of poems in the Man'yoshu is different depending on the manuscript copy of the Man'yoshu. I would like to consider the possible background and significance of this difference in order, and I will show slides of old manuscript copies of the Man'yoshu.

Thursday 12/5, 4:00-4:45 PM, Doheny Library 233

Military Issues under the Ritsuryô System, Military Campaigns to Northeastern Japan

IGARASHI Motoyoshi, Graduate Student in History, Meiji University

One of the military issues that the ritsuryô state of ancient Japan was faced with in the eighth and ninth centuries C.E. was preparation for military campaigns to northeastern Japan. The ritsuryô state referred to indigenous people residing in northern and northeastern Japan who were not conquered by the central government as Emishi. The central government systematically attempted to expand its territory by gradually taking over land under Emishi control. In the process, the central government had to dispatch military campaigns numerous times; and hostile military tensions constantly existed in northeastern Japan.

The military strength of the ritsuryô state depended upon organized troops consisting
of large numbers of soldiers and materials, including weapons. The Emishi people, however, were divided into numerous groups, and for this reason they were inferior in their capacity for continuing military engagement over a long time span. While the ritsuryô state found it difficult to cope with the considerable ability of the Emishi, the state finally achieved the goal by overwhelming them with enormous manpower and materials. At the same time the ritsuryô state was not enthusiastic about the development of new weapons and new tactics.

It is true that the military system of ancient Japan drastically transformed itself after the loss at the Hakusonkô battle in southern Korean peninsula in 663. In order to compete with Tang-dynasty China and the kingdom of Silla on the Korean peninsula, the ritsuryô military system became more systematic and structured. Nevertheless I have not found evidence of considerable progress in important aspects of the military system even when the ritsuryô state experienced numerous battles in northeastern Japan. In other words, military campaigns to northeastern Japan in the eighth and ninth centuries had a limited impact on the ritsuryô state.

Discussion 5:00-5:30

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Friday 12/6, 11 AM - 11:45 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104

Gender in the Japanese Administrative Codes, An Ongoing Project

Prof. Joan Piggott, History Department, USC

I will report on the ongoing project for which members (Yoshie, Ijuin, Piggott) are translating and annotating relevant sections of the Yôrô-era administrative code (ryô), two parts of which are now finished for publication. I will highlight particular challenges of the project and why I think such multilingual translation/annotation projects are critically important for the study of Japanese history.

Friday 12/6, 11:50-12:30 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104*

Issuing, Receiving, and Organizing Documents on Paper and Wood in Classical Japan

Prof. KATO Tomoyasu, Meiji University

In classical Japan the ritsuryô codal system was adopted as the mode of government. All the functions of the state were based on it. And in accord with the ritsuryô code, all orders and directives were transmitted through written documents. In this process that may be referred to as the “ritsuryô documentation system,” large quantities of documents on paper or inscribed on wooden tablets (mokkan) were created. In order to understand the nature of the state during the Nara and Heian periods, it is essential to examine how this system to transmit, organize, and
manage a large amount of information was maintained. My presentation deals with: 1) the information processing system mandated by the Kushikiryô, a section of the administrative code (ryô) that regulated documents on paper, and the nature of those documents; 2) the processing of information on wooden tablets; and 3) perspectives to be considered in interpreting documents as historical sources, with special reference to the Tôdaiji Tônan’in archives, a large collection of documents organized in the late Heian Period.

Friday 12/6, 12:30-1:15 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104*

*Hachiman Cult Foundation Legends (engi) as Cultural and Social Capital*

Kevin Wilson, Ph.D. Candidate, History Department, USC

The Hachiman cult is one of the most ubiquitous and important cults in premodern Japan. In this presentation I will analyze foundation legends (engi) associated with two key centers of Hachiman worship: the shrines at Usa and Iwashimizu. Foundation legends associated with Hachiman have rarely been studied in western scholarship and there has been little consideration as to how these legends function. Through an analysis of the *Usa Hachimangû Mirokuji Konryû Engi* (844), *Iwashimizu Gokokuji Ryakki* (863), along with engi variants found in the *Tôdaiji Yôroku* (1134) and *Hachiman Usagû Gotakusenshû* (1313), I will demonstrate how foundation legends functioned as repositories of what Pierre Bourdieu calls “cultural or social capital.” I will also show how I think engi authors manipulated the image of Hachiman — as well as key figures associated with the establishment of shrine-temple complexes dedicated to Hachiman — in order to increase the cultural and social capital associated with such engi. This study points not only to the importance of engi in the study of the Hachiman cult but also to the importance of acknowledging changes in foundation legends and to understanding how these changes reflect trends at court and the personal aspirations of engi compilers.

*LUNCH*

Friday 12/6, 2:00-2:45 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104*

*Studio Production in Mid-to-Late Heian Japan: Craftsmen or Artists?*

Dr. Yoshiko Kainuma, Associate, USC Project for Premodern Japan Studies

Buddhist sculptors in Nara and early Heian Japan were generally regarded as craftsmen or artisans, rather than as artists in the modern sense. Around the mid-Heian period however, some drastic changes in environment led to a rise in their social status and greater independence for them as Buddhist sculptors who could then assert their own
aesthetic values in their works of art. In this talk I present a history of a brilliant epoch for the mid-to-late Heian sculptors who carved in wood.

Friday 12/6, 3-3:45 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104*

Land-based Power of Retired Royal Ladies (Nyoin) in Early Medieval Japan:
A Case Study of Senyōmon’in (1181-1252), an Unmarried Royal Daughter

Sachiko Kawai, Ph.D. Candidate, USC History Department

My research explores the economic and religio-political roles of late Heian and Kamakura nyoin, whose titles made them female equivalents of male retired monarchs. And although women had ceased to ascend the throne, nyoin owned a large number of royal properties, that helped them attain economic, political, and even military influence. But my research demonstrates that they did not automatically succeed in wielding that influence. They had to overcome challenges in securing material and human resources from their estates. Through this case study of Senyōmon’in, I explore the challenges and coping strategies that nyoin used in managing their estates. By closely analyzing a list of miscellaneous dues levied on estates, The List of the Chōkōdō Estates that dates from the late twelfth century, I have investigated the religio-political roles played by Senyōmon’in as an unmarried royal princess while also reconstructing the material culture and economic power she was able to obtain from her estate holdings.

Through this analysis I argue that Senyomon’in utilized three strategies: first, she strengthened her control over land by raising royal offspring and sponsoring memorial services (for whom?) to justify her levy and collection of dues; second, she stabilized her income by supporting the political advancement of her officials and providing them with estate management positions to ensure their economic prosperity; and third, rather than maintaining independent control over her land, she capitalized on alliances and the influence of other powerful authorities. By explaining the complex relations between socially acknowledged rights over estates and the ability to actually acquire resources, this research contributes to the understudied but nevertheless important issues of medieval nyoin and women’s land-based power.

Friday 12/6, 4:00-4:45 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104*

A Geographic Analysis of Domestic Trade in the Late Medieval Seto Inland Sea

Michelle Damian, Ph. D. Candidate, History Department, USC

This presentation will demonstrate how a geographic analysis of written and archaeological records can reveal new information about maritime trade in late medieval Japan (14th - 15th c). Although several Japanese scholars have examined the Records of
Incoming Ships at the Hyōgo Northern Checkpoint (Hyōgo Kitaseki Iriune Nōchō) to determine major ports and cargoes, my study emphasizing the geography of the area illuminates new connections and roles of the people and places recorded in the Nōchō. I have incorporated this information into a Geographic Information System (GIS), which aids in showing which ports were vital transshipment hubs and how ships’ captains collaborated with each other in their voyages. This methodology even suggests resolutions for debates revolving around disputed port sites. Moreover investigating archaeological evidence together with the written record provides additional information about lateral trade ties as well as the flow of goods from the Inland Sea periphery to the center in the capital district. This geography-based study of trade in the medieval Inland Sea region reveals to a much greater extent than in past connections between smaller ports and the historical actors who lived and worked in them.

Final Discussion  4:45-5:15 PM, Waite Phillips Hall 104*

*Room subject to change—please check Project for Premodern Japan Studies Website for updated information

** Many talks will be in Japanese, but we will endeavor to meet the language needs of the audience.