

IKEYA, KAZUNOBU, HIDEFUMI OGAWA & PETER MITCHELL (eds). *Interactions between hunter-gatherers and farmers: from prehistory to present*. iv, 280 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2009. (paper)

If anything useful was learned from the Kalahari debate, it was that hunter-gatherers do not become non-hunter-gatherers overnight. There is a long transition from first contact with herders or cultivators to the disappearance of a hunter-gatherer ideology. This is true even for hunter-gatherers who have themselves taken up herding livestock – either their own livestock or animals looked after for other people – or planting crops. The papers in this volume, mainly from a session of the World Archaeological Congress Inter-Congress held in Osaka in 2006, examine such issues in the context of the hunter-gatherer/agriculturalist divide in Japan, China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Southern Africa.

In their introduction, the editors identify three phases in the study of forager/farmer relations: a classic period of hunter-gatherer studies, with little concern for the history of interaction (basically the 1970s); a period of special interest in history and interaction (the 1980s); and a period of consolidation and comparison (since the 1990s). They also identify three general questions posed in the volume: whether symbiosis between foragers and farmers is possible; what specific relationships might be entailed in light of social hierarchies, the establishment of states, and the transition to market economies; and what relation there might be between archaeological remains and ethnographic observations. On the latter question, three forms of relationship are suggested: exchange relations, consignment

relationships (e.g. those involving labour across the divide), and intermarriage.

Peter Mitchell examines 1,800 years of interaction in the Maloti-Drakensberg region of Southern Africa, including previous debates on the direction of borrowing and the diversity of things borrowed (pottery, iron, ornaments, elements of rock art, aspects of symbolism and belief, and aspects of social organization). He urges an approach that emphasizes historical relationships, rather than one which merely has them tacked onto ethnographic analysis.

Tracy L.-D. Lu looks at the expansion of farming from the Yangzi towards the southwest. Her data suggest some 3,500 years of symbiosis between farmers and foragers in northern Guangxi, and that prehistoric farmers may also have hunted and gathered in a complex set of subsistence strategies. Hidefumi Ogawa talks of interaction along the lower Cagayan River in the Philippines. Although the evidence is not yet conclusive, he concludes that the advance of farmers from nearly 4,000 years ago led to a retreat of hunter-gatherers into hilly forested areas and the slow development of the exchange of information and goods.

The three chapters by Ryuzaburo Takahashi, Leo Aoi Hosoya, and Kaoru Tezuka concern Japanese prehistory. Takahashi considers symbiotic relations between paddy-field rice-cultivators and hunter-gatherer-fishers on Honshu and Kyushu, and the transition to agriculture, from the late Jomon period (around 1,000 BCE) to the Yayoi (500 BCE–300 CE). Hosoya extends the analysis in the same period, by focusing not on material relations but instead on models of social organization which relate community leadership to power extension, to ritual negotiation, and to the importance of the central building. He favours a 'Central Building Model'. Tezuka turns to the northern island of Hokkaido to examine relations between Ainu there and the Japanese of Honshu to the south, over the last 1,000 years. She employs a quantitative analysis of the distribution of wooden artefacts to explain trade and the advance of the market economy.

In a finely detailed paper, Tessa Minter explores relations between Agta hunter-gatherers and farmers in the recent history of the Philippines. Sakkarin Na Nan considers the complexity of competition and co-operation between Mlabri hunter-gatherers and Hmong farmers in northern Thailand, as well as relations with tourists and the Thai state. He also considers the self-representation of Mlabri and their representation by outsiders. In their paper,

Kazunobu Ikeya and Shinsuke Nakai discuss other aspects of Mlabri/Hmong relations, and the gradual sedentization of both groups from the early twentieth century to the present. In the final paper, linguist Lawrence A. Reid returns to the Philippines, where he has worked, and to Japan. He compares the maintenance of independent identities of former hunter-gatherers in the former case to the complete assimilation of hunter-gatherers, apart from the Ainu, in the latter.

The volume is well illustrated (especially the paper by Hosoya), and well produced. It will certainly be of most interest to those with specialist concerns in Asian prehistory. What comes through is the very long period of interaction between foragers and farmers, and the maintenance of some degree of the foraging lifestyle and identity among the former. What is needed is a fuller comparative treatment of Asian and African data and models.

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