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# In Pursuit of Himiko

## Postwar Archaeology and the Location of Yamatai

WALTER EDWARDS

A stubborn yet engaging problem in the history of ancient Japan is provided by an early Chinese text, *Wei chih* 魏志, or 'History of the Kingdom of Wei', compiled in the latter part of the third century A.D. and chronicling the period from the founding of the Wei kingdom in A.D. 220 until its end in 265. Considered one of the most reliable of the Chinese dynastic histories, *Wei chih* includes, among descriptions of various peoples living to the east of the kingdom, a passage known in Japanese as *Wajinden* 倭人伝, or the account of the people of 'Wa' 倭—the name for Japan used by the Chinese until the T'ang dynasty. The text of *Wajinden* is short, consisting of just under 2,000 characters, but its descriptions are vivid enough to offer a convincing portrait of its subject matter, the Japanese islands and their inhabitants, as they were probably observed by Wei envoys in the middle of the century. *Wajinden* portrays third-century Japan as comprising more than thirty countries, headed by one called Yamatai 邪馬台 and ruled by a Queen Himiko 卑弥呼; the image is that of a complex society with distinct differences between persons of high and low status, and central regulation over the distribution of goods. Although portions of the text are believed to be drawn directly from the reports of envoys who journeyed to Japan, the directions given for reaching Yamatai cannot be read literally. Accordingly, the question of Yamatai's location remains a mystery.

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Western students of Japan are relatively familiar with this account, translated into English by Tsunoda Ryūsaku in 1951<sup>1</sup> and excerpted in the well-used textbook, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*.<sup>2</sup> The broad outlines of Japanese historical treatment of *Wajinden* are also well known to a Western readership, thanks to work done nearly forty years ago by John Young. His book, published in 1958 as *The Location of Yamatai*,<sup>3</sup> gives a lucid presentation of the basic questions raised by *Wajinden*, and of its treatment by Japanese scholars until the end of the Pacific War.<sup>4</sup>

Japanese academic interest in *Wajinden* has continued in the postwar period as well, with various aspects of the text taken up by historians, archaeologists, and other scholars. The question of Yamatai's location remains a central issue, highlighted with each archaeological discovery claimed in the popular media to shed new light on the mystery. The purpose of the present contribution is to provide an overview of postwar archaeological approaches to this question, focusing in particular on the work of Kobayashi Yukio 小林行雄, 1911–1989, whose views on Yamatai and related issues became highly influential during the 1960s and '70s. Attention will also be given to developments subsequent to Kobayashi's work in two areas that bear on the puzzle of Yamatai's location: the date of the earliest keyhole-shaped tombs, and the degree of social complexity prior to these tombs' appearance.

### *Wajinden and the Riddle of Yamatai's Location*

It will be helpful to begin with a brief description of *Wajinden* itself, whose contents divide into three broad topics. The first is a cultural geography that includes general descriptions of the land, climate, economy, and social customs of Wa. The people are said to inhabit mountainous islands that are warm in climate, where they cultivate rice, hemp, and mulberry trees, practice sericulture, and weave cloth of linen and silk. Garments are simple, and are 'fastened around the body with little sewing.'<sup>5</sup> Tattooing and other forms of

<sup>1</sup> Tsunoda Ryūsaku, tr., 'History of the Kingdom of Wei', in L. Carrington Goodrich, ed., *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories: Later Han Through Ming Dynasties*, P. D. & Ione Perkins, South Pasadena, CA, 1951, pp. 8–20.

<sup>2</sup> Ryūsaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary & Donald Keene, comp., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, Columbia U. P., 1958, 1, pp. 4–7.

<sup>3</sup> John Young, *The Location of Yamatai: A Case Study in Japanese Historiography, 720–1945*, Johns Hopkins U.P., 1958.

<sup>4</sup> Young also details the reasons why the text is 'the most important source for material on third century Japan' (p. 31). It is considered the most accurate passage dealing with early Japan to be found in the Chinese chronicles, as the compiler, Ch'en Shou 陳壽, 233–297, evidently made extensive use of primary source materials from the time covered by the work, and the date of compilation is also relatively close to the period in question. Young gives 297, the final year of Ch'en Shou's life, as an upper limit for the date of compilation. In a more detailed examination of the historic background of the text, however, Yamao Yukihisa limits compilation to the period 280–289, based mainly on a consideration of Ch'en Shou's bureaucratic career. See Yamao Yukihisa 山尾幸久, *Gishi Wajinden: Tōyōshijō no Kodai Nihon* 魏志倭人伝: 東洋史上の古代日本, Kōdansha, 1972, pp. 26–29.

<sup>5</sup> Quotations from *Wajinden* are taken from Tsunoda, 'History of the Kingdom of Wei', with occasional slight modifications as noted.

bodily decoration are practiced. Iron is known, but its use does not appear extensive.

The land of Wa is said to comprise more than thirty 'countries', which may be interpreted as indicating chiefdoms or perhaps incipient states. There is clear evidence of social stratification:

Ordinarily, men of importance have four or five wives; the lesser ones, two or three. . . . There are distinctions in rank<sup>6</sup> among the people, and some men are vassals of others. . . . When the lowly meet men of importance on the road, they stop and withdraw to the roadside. In conveying messages to them or addressing them, they either squat or kneel, with both hands on the ground. This is the way they show respect.

There was also a centralized system of redistribution under some form of bureaucratic control: 'Taxes are collected. There are granaries as well as markets in each province, where necessities are exchanged under the supervision of the Wa officials.' Four separate ranks of officials are named in the text. In addition, one of the countries—Yamatai—is said to command the allegiance of nearly thirty others, and to have an official stationed in certain provinces to keep them 'in a state of awe and fear'. Another official oversees diplomatic exchanges with the Chinese and countries on the Korean peninsula.

The second topic dealt with in *Wajinden* may be characterized as a political history of Wa. The text notes that Wa 'formerly comprised more than one hundred countries,' a number perhaps subsequently consolidated to the thirty or so actually mentioned. One possible means of such consolidation—conflict—is suggested by the following passage:

The country was formerly ruled by kings, who stayed in power for some seventy or eighty years. After that there was a period of disturbances and warfare. Thereupon the people agreed upon a woman for their ruler. Her name was Himiko.<sup>7</sup>

Regardless of how she came to office, Himiko subsequently exhibited the char-

<sup>6</sup> Tsunoda translated this as 'class distinctions', but the term used (尊卑) refers more broadly to rank or status differences.

<sup>7</sup> Tsunoda translated this passage, 其国本亦以男子爲王住七八十年倭国亂相攻歷年, as indicating that a period of seventy or eighty years of disturbances followed the rule of a king. The wording here reflects readings given by contemporary Japanese scholars (see, for example, Saeki Arikiyo 佐伯有清, *Kenkyūshi Yamataikoku* 研究史邪馬台国, Yoshikawa, 1971, p. 8 of the back matter; Yamao, pp. 175 & 243; Yasumoto Biten 安本美典, *Yamataikoku Handobukku* 邪馬台国ハンドブック, Kōdansha, 1987, p. 60), and is based upon a passage in another text, *Liang shu* 梁書, which notes 'great disturbances' among the Wa in the period 178–183. This is interpreted as referring to the period of unrest mentioned in *Wajinden*. Perhaps Tsunoda wished to avoid the improbable suggestion that one man ruled for such a long period of time. This difficulty may be avoided in one of two ways: (1) taking the characters for king (literally, 'male monarch'), which are un-specific in regard to number, to refer to a line of kings, the interpretation given here, or (2) assuming the referent to be singular, and dismissing the improbably long period of office as reflecting an inaccuracy in reporting for the time prior to Himiko's reign. The interpretation taken by most contemporary Japanese scholars assumes that Himiko reigned for a period almost equal in length to the span characterized above as 'improbable'. Himiko's death is commonly placed in the year 248. If she was chosen as queen by 183, as suggested by the reading noted above, she would have held office for some sixty-five years.

acteristics of a sacred chief or divine monarch. Her sacral nature is suggested by the declaration, ‘She occupied herself with magic and sorcery, bewitching the people.’ Surely the subject of strict taboos,<sup>8</sup> she was separated from contact with the secular realm.

After she became the ruler, there were few who saw her. She had one thousand women as attendants, but only one man. He served her food and drink and acted as a medium of communication. She resided in a palace surrounded by towers and stockades, with armed guards in a state of constant vigilance.

Statements such as these have supported broad speculation about the nature of Himiko’s role, and the type of leadership she exercised. Japanese scholars commonly see her as some form of shaman—a term but vaguely defined by most who use it—and many thus regard her as holding an office that was primarily ritual in nature, with the secular aspects of leadership handled by ‘a younger brother’, said to have ‘assisted her in ruling the country.’<sup>9</sup>

Also included in the political history of Wa is an account of the diplomatic exchanges with the Wei court that were initiated by Himiko in 238. In that year the queen sent envoys to the Wei commandery at Tai-fang 帶方 in northern Korea; the envoys proceeded from there in the following year to the Wei capital itself, taking with them gifts of slaves and cloth, which were received by the Chinese emperor as ‘tribute’. In return, Himiko was granted an official Wei title, a gold seal to match, plus numerous gifts said to include one hundred bronze mirrors, brought to her by a Wei envoy in 240. Subsequent envoys were sent by Himiko in 243, and again in 247. She is believed to have died in the following year, and was buried in a mound described as about 150 meters in diameter.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ōbayashi Taryō has made a detailed examination of taboos placed on sacred chiefs and monarchs in Oceania and Southeast Asia, as possible models for interpreting the ritual separation indicated for Himiko. See Ōbayashi Taryō 大林太良, *Yamataikoku: Irezumi to Poncho to Himiko* 邪馬台国: 入墨とボンチョと卑弥呼, Chūō Kōronsha, 1977, pp. 92–112.

<sup>9</sup> Tsunoda’s translation of the original passage, 有男弟佐治国, as indicating that Himiko was assisted by a younger brother in ruling the country, is in keeping with readings given by contemporary Japanese scholars (see Saeki, p. 8 of the back matter; Yamao, pp. 208 & 243; Yasumoto, p. 61). But the significance attached to this statement, presumably based upon observations made by Chinese envoys, varies according to one’s interpretation of Himiko’s office and the nature of leadership in third-century Japan. Writers such as Naitō Torajirō and Kasai Shin’ya, for example, assumed that Himiko was primarily a religious figure who ruled in tandem with a higher-ranking male relative in secular office; the Chinese observers being unused to such a system mistook her for the paramount, relegating the male (for Naitō, the twelfth emperor, Keikō 景行; for Kasai, the tenth emperor, Sujin 崇神) to a subordinate role. See Naitō Torajirō 内藤虎次郎, ‘Himiko Kō’ 卑弥呼孝, in Saeki Arikio, ed., *Yamataikoku Kihon Ronbunshū* 邪馬台国基本論文集, Sōgensha, Osaka, 1981, 1, p. 17; Kasai Shin’ya 笠井新也, ‘Himiko sunawachi Yamato-toto-hi-momoso-hime-no-mikoto’ 卑弥呼即ち倭迹迹日百襲姫命, in Saeki, ed., *Yamataikoku Kihon Ronbunshū*, 1, pp. 250–51. Others assert that Himiko was not merely a religious figure, but a true paramount. Maki Kenji insists that she had authority over diplomatic, judicial, military, and fiscal matters as well, and Ueda Masaaki asserts that Himiko conducted diplomacy with the Chinese in her own name, as a monarch who also had priestly functions. See Maki Kenji 牧健二, *Nihon no Genshi Kokka* 日本の原始国家, Yūhikaku, 1968, p. 478; Ueda Masaaki 上田正昭, *Nyotei* 女帝, Kōdansha, 1971, pp. 29–30.

<sup>10</sup> The passage giving the size of the burial mound was translated by Tsunoda to read ‘over

The third topic covered by *Wajinden* concerns the location of various places named in the text. This information is recounted as an itinerary, starting from the Wei commandery at Tai-fang in Korea, and giving the cardinal directions and distances required for reaching each subsequent locale. From the southern coast of Korea, for example, it is said that

going across the sea . . . after over one thousand *li* 里 one reaches the country of Tsushima 対馬. . . . Setting sail again across the sea . . . after a journey of one thousand *li* or more toward the south one arrives at the country of Iki 一伎. . . . Going again across the sea for over one thousand *li*, one reaches the country of Matsuro 末廬. . . .<sup>11</sup>

A total of eight such passages brings the reader to the queen's country, Yamatai. As Young noted in his study, this aspect of the text has received considerable attention, because the location of Yamatai is critical for interpretations of early Japanese history.

Specifically at issue is the question of when the Kinai region, locus of the emergence of the archaic Japanese state, outstripped Kyushu in cultural and political prominence. Kyushu was the port of entry for the rice agricultural complex at the start of the Yayoi period, sometime in the late fourth to the early third centuries B.C., and remained more advanced—as judged by the greater number of bronzes and other prestige items—through the first century

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100 paces in diameter'. But the character rendered as 'pace' (步), which indeed has the meaning of 'a step', was also used by the Chinese as a unit of linear measurement. In Wei times its value was about 1.45 meters; most Japanese scholars thus treat the text as indicating a mound about 150 meters across. See Yamao, p. 137; Okazaki Takashi, 'Japan and the Continent', in Delmer M. Brown, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan, 1: Ancient Japan*, Cambridge U.P., 1993, p. 292; Sugimoto Kenji 杉本憲司 & Mori Hiromichi 森博達, 'Gishi Wajinden o Tsūdoku Suru' 魏志倭人伝を通読する, in Mori Kōichi 森浩一, ed., *Nihon no Kodai* 日本の古代, 1: *Wajin no Tōjō* 倭人の登場, Chūō Kōronsha, 1985, p. 153. This passage often serves as basis for discussions about which of the many ancient burial mounds might possibly be Himiko's grave. It has been argued, for example, that since the keyhole mound known as Hashihaka 箸墓, located in Nara and believed to be the earliest of the great tombs, has a diameter for its round portion of about 150 meters, it matches in this sense the description of Himiko's grave. See Kasai Shin'ya, 'Himiko no Chōbo to Hashihaka' 卑弥呼の冢墓と箸墓, in Saeki, *Yamataikoku Kihon Ronbunshū*, 1, pp. 434–35. But there is little reason to believe that the figure given in *Wajinden* is an accurate record of the size of Himiko's grave; more likely the number 100 was merely used to suggest a mound of extremely large size, whose actual dimensions were unknown to the Chinese. Just after this statement there is a declaration that 'over a hundred male and female attendants' followed Himiko to the grave. Whereas the practice of placing human sacrificial victims in royal tombs is known for ancient China, there is no archaeological evidence for this ever having occurred in Japan. Thus the description of Himiko's burial is better regarded as a Chinese scholar's interpretation of how a queen was probably buried, rather than an actual eyewitness account.

<sup>11</sup> According to Yamao, *Gishi Wajinden*, p. 62, a *li* in Wei times was about 435 meters. The inaccuracy of the distances given in the text is immediately evident; a straight line from the southern Korean coast to northern Kyushu measures less than 200 kilometers, yet the text calls for a journey of 3,000 *li*, or over 1,300 kilometers from Korea to reach Matsuro, usually identified as Matsuura on the Kyushu coast. Tsunoda gives the literal translation of 'another large country' for 一大国, rendered here as 'the country of Iki'. Modern scholars commonly agree that the character 大 is the result of a mistake in copying what was originally a phonetic designation (*iki* 一伎) of the native place name of Iki, now written 壹岐.

A.D. By the early part of the ensuing Kofun period, however, the situation had clearly reversed. Sometime before the end of the fourth century a highly standardized form of mounded tomb (*kofun* 古墳), with a distinctive keyhole-shaped outline and common assortments of grave goods, had diffused over a wide area ranging from Kyushu to the Kantō region. The largest and oldest keyhole tombs concentrate in the ancient province of Yamato, in the heart of the Kinai region; the outward diffusion from this region of the keyhole shape is believed to indicate the unification of most of the country under Yamato's political leadership.

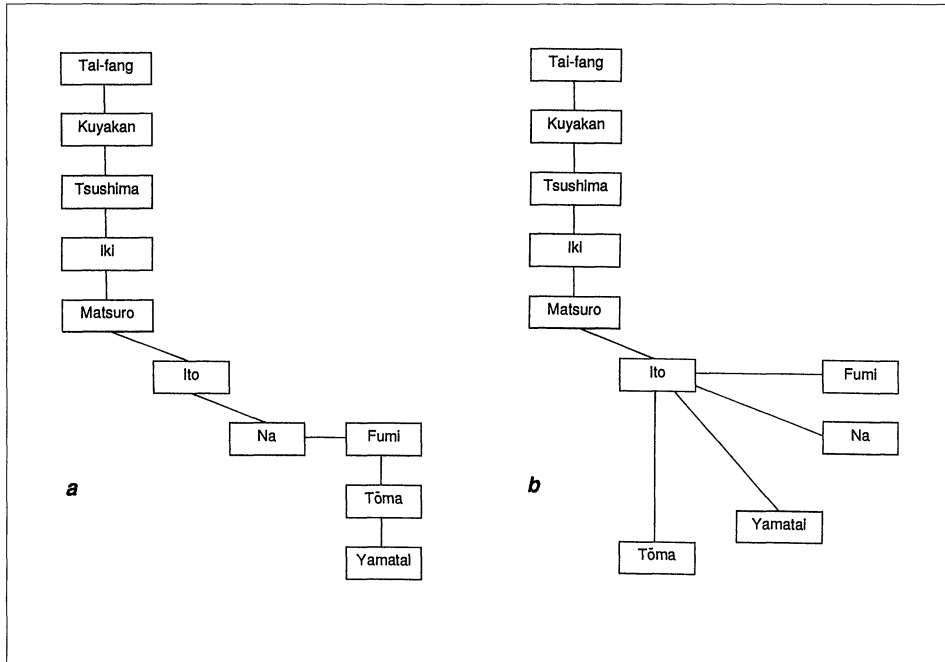
Knowing the precise location of the third-century polity of Yamatai might tell whether the later political superiority of Yamato resulted from a gradual evolution within the Kinai region, or whether there was a sharp disjuncture between a third-century, Kyushu-based alliance, and the subsequent Yamato ascendancy. Unfortunately, attempts to read *Wajinden's* itinerary as coherent set of instructions, going serially from one point to the next (as indicated in Figure 1a—from Kuyakan 狗邪韓 to Tsushima, then Iki, then Matsuro, then Ito 伊都, Na 奴, Fumi 不弥, Tōma 投馬, and Yamatai),<sup>12</sup> are fraught with ambiguity. As Young pointed out, a literal interpretation places Yamatai nowhere near the Japanese archipelago, but well out at sea, south of Kyushu. If the cardinal directions are assumed to be reasonably accurate, however, but the distances exaggerated, then Yamatai can be located within Kyushu. But if the distances are followed and the directions assumed to have been distorted, then Yamatai can indeed be located in Yamato—or just about any other place in western Honshu or Shikoku.

Another possibility, advanced in the prewar period although not taken up by Young, is to abandon the notion that the directions are meant to be followed in serial fashion to the end, but only as far as the country of Ito—where the official was stationed ‘to exercise surveillance over [nearby] provinces’, and where envoys going to and from the mainland were also required to pass. If Ito, which is identified with an area in coastal Fukuoka bearing an ancient place name with the same pronunciation, was a central point in the northern Kyushu area, then it is conceivable that the ensuing directions (to Na, to Fumi, to Tōma, to Yamatai) all took Ito as their starting point (Figure 1b). The resulting interpretation places Yamatai in the southern part of Kyushu, with the remaining countries spread radially over that island.<sup>13</sup>

Of these three approaches to reading the directions in *Wajinden*, then, two place Yamatai somewhere in Kyushu. Moreover, all of the places named in the text that can be identified with a high degree of confidence lie in Kyushu, or between Kyushu and Korea. Accordingly, approaches to the question of

<sup>12</sup> Tsunoda gives Ito as ‘Izu’, and Na as ‘Nu’. The readings used here are favored by contemporary scholars.

<sup>13</sup> This suggestion appears to have been made as early as 1922 by Toyota Isami 豊田伊三美, and was used five years later by Andō Masanao 安藤正直 to argue that Yamatai was located in Kumamoto. See Saeki, *Kenkyūshi Yamataikoku*, pp. 148, 163 & 192–93.



1. Two interpretations of the *Wajinden* itinerary: (a) as a set of serial instructions leading directly to Yamatai; (b) with Ito as the starting point for all ensuing directions.

Yamatai's location that give greater weight to textual evidence, as opposed to archaeological data, usually favor a Kyushu location. Until Japan's wartime defeat, moreover, there was another impetus for interpreting Yamatai as lying in Kyushu, rather than in the ancient political center of Yamato. As Young pointed out, *Wajinden* posed a challenge to the native histories recorded in the eighth century, *Kojiki* 古事記 and *Nihon Shoki* 日本書記, which portrayed the imperial line of Yamato as the sole legitimate authority in Japan from the most ancient times. How could a 'Queen of Wa' named Himiko have been in diplomatic contact with the Wei court, if native traditions contained no material giving witness to such exchange?

When *Nihon Shoki* was compiled in 720, its authors avoided potential conflict by a simple ruse: they suppressed the bulk of the Chinese material on Yamatai. *Wajinden* and one other Chinese source are quoted but briefly, and only to mention the envoys sent by Himiko and her successor, and by the Wei court in return. None of the Chinese descriptions of the customs or geography of Wa was included, and Himiko is referred to only as the 'Queen of Wa'. The quotes moreover appear in the chapter on the Empress Jingū 神功, with the implication that Himiko could be none other than this dynamic person, portrayed as the chief consort of the fourteenth emperor, and wielder of political authority as regent after his death.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> See Young, pp. 51–54, for a fuller discussion. Whereas Young states, p. 53, that 'the name



Fuller treatment of the Chinese text, including discussion of the location of Yamatai, did not emerge until much later, in the Tokugawa period. It was facilitated by an analytical turn that posited Himiko as a Kyushu figure, thereby separating Yamatai from direct association with the central Yamato polity. This perspective traces back to the *kokugaku* 国学 scholar Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長, 1730–1801. Norinaga accepted *Nihon Shoki*'s identification of Himiko with Jingū, but argued at the same time that the directions given in *Wajinden*, while consistent as far as Kyushu, could not lead to Yamato. Surely the Chinese envoys could not have traveled as far as Yamato, but were duped by a local Kyushu leader, who had conducted the diplomatic exchanges with the Chinese, falsely using the name of the empress. Norinaga thus cast Himiko in the role of usurper, and moreover identified her with a region regarded as peripheral to the center stage of Japanese history. His argument, embellished by later scholars, remained the dominant explanation until the end of the Tokugawa period.<sup>15</sup>

Scholars continued to favor Kyushu throughout most of the Meiji period as well, although the identification of Himiko with Jingū was invalidated by historian Naka Michiyo 那珂通世, who demonstrated in 1888 the inaccuracies in *Nihon Shoki* chronology. Naka's revision adjusted the dates given for Jingū's regency to the latter part of the fourth century, too late to have any connection with the Wei court.<sup>16</sup>

The reassertion of Yamato as the locus of Yamatai was first made in 1910 by another historian, Naitō Torajirō 内藤寅次郎. Noting that Chinese texts are often inaccurate with regard to compass directions, Naitō argued that the *Wajinden* itinerary is more readily interpreted as leading to Yamato by adjusting the direction, than as remaining within Kyushu by adjusting the distances. Naitō proceeded to identify other 'countries' named in the text as places in the Kinai area, and also to link the names of officers of Yamatai with persons in the imperial genealogies. In similar fashion, he identified Himiko as the sister of Keikō, the twelfth emperor.<sup>17</sup> A number of archaeologists followed Naitō

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Himiko was quoted under the section on Empress Jingō [sic], there is in fact no use of the name Himiko itself, but only references to the 'Queen of Wa' or the 'Ruler of Wa'. For an English translation of the passages in question, see W. G. Aston, *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, Tuttle, 1972, pp. 245–46 & 253. Both Aston and Young transliterate the name of the empress in whose chapter the passages appear as 'Jingō'; contemporary scholars prefer the alternative 'Jingū'. A more serious consideration in the treatment of this figure is the question of historicity. Because of her connection with the imperial line, open discussion of such issues was difficult prior to the Pacific War; since then it has become widely accepted that Jingū, her husband Chūai 仲哀, and the preceding ruler Seimu 成務, were fictitious characters inserted in the record to cover a break in the imperial genealogy. See Ōmi Masashi 近江昌司, 'Miwa Ōken to wa: Shoki Yamato Chōtei no Tanjō' 三輪王権とは:初期大和朝廷の誕生, in Ōmi Masashi, ed., *Yamato Ōken no Seiritsu: Miwayama o Meguru Kodai Nihon* 大和王権の成立:三輪山をめぐる古代日本, Gakuseisha, 1992, pp. 31–33.

<sup>15</sup> Young, pp. 75–85.

<sup>16</sup> Young, pp. 93–95.

<sup>17</sup> Young, pp. 105–08. See also the discussion in n. 9, above.

in arguing for Yamato as the location of Yamatai, beginning with Tomioka Kenzō 富岡謙蔵, Kyoto University, and his protégé, Umehara Sueji 梅原末治. The archaeological basis for their argument is discussed below; it need only be noted here that both scholars agreed with the identification of Himiko with Yamato. Umehara asserted she must have been ‘a sovereign of the Yamato court’ without making any specific identification.<sup>18</sup> Another archaeologist, Kasai Shin’ya 笠井新也, was less reticent, naming Himiko as Yamato-toto-himomoso-hime, a figure who appears in the *Nihon Shoki*’s chapter on Sujin, the tenth emperor.<sup>19</sup>

Whereas these prewar proponents of Yamato varied in the identifications they made of Himiko with the imperial genealogy, they were not free—in the manner of Kyushu theorists—to suggest that a Kinai figure other than someone in the Yamato court had conducted diplomacy with the Chinese as the ‘Queen of Wa’. Thus all scholars, both those who relegated Yamatai to marginal status in Kyushu and those who treated it as the central polity of Yamato, found some way to blunt the *Wajinden*’s potential challenge to the imperial line’s claim to universal authority. Moreover, all were circumspect in their handling of native texts such as *Nihon Shoki*. Even Naka Michiyo, who pointed out the chronological inaccuracies of the latter, justified his criticism by claiming, ‘It would be against the wish of the emperor who supervised the compilation of *Nihon Shoki* if the error should be left untouched.’<sup>20</sup> Incidents of censorship and persecution of scholars who questioned the official interpretation of history highlighted the dangers of open criticism. In the 1930s the increasing rigidity that accompanied Japan’s militarism all but brought an end to meaningful scholarly treatment of the nation’s origins until the end of the war.<sup>21</sup>

### *Tombs and Mirrors: The Contributions of Kobayashi Yukio*

The person responsible for reopening debate on the issue of Yamatai’s loca-

<sup>18</sup> Umehara Sueji 梅原末治, ‘*Kōkōgaku yori Mitaru Jōdai no Kinai*’ 考古学より観たる上代の畿内, in Saeki, *Yamataikoku Kihon Ronbunshū*, 1, p. 240.

<sup>19</sup> Young, pp. 131–32, and n. 9, above.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Young, p. 95.

<sup>21</sup> See Young, pp. 161–71. A fairly active discussion was initiated by historical materialists during the 1930s over the degree of social development illustrated by *Wajinden*. Specifically at issue were questions of how far class division had emerged, and what the inclusion of ‘slaves’ (*seikō* 生口) as part of the tribute sent by Himiko to Wei meant in terms of the economic structure. One theme prominent in the early postwar historiography was a continuation of this type of inquiry, such as the consideration of whether authority wielded by Himiko was truly despotic and centralized, or represented a much looser ‘confederation of tribes’. The vocabulary and conceptual frameworks used in this literature shows strong influence of Marxist writings, especially Frederick Engels’s work on the evolution of the state. See Kitō Kiyooki 鬼頭清明, ‘*Yamataikoku Ronsō to Kōkōgaku*’ 邪馬台国論争と考古学, in Kondō Yoshirō 近藤義郎 et al., ed., *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Kōkōgaku* 岩波講座日本考古学, 7: *Gendai to Kōkōgaku* 現代と考古学, Iwanami, 1986, pp. 280–83; Saeki, *Kenkyūshi Yamataikoku*, pp. 209–76; Tsude Hiroshi 都出比呂志, ‘*Nihon Kodai no Kokka Keiseiron Josetsu: Zenpōkōdenfun Taisei no Teishō*’ 日本古代の国家形成論序説: 前方後円墳体制の提唱, in *Nihonshi Kenkyū* 日本史研究, 343 (March 1991), pp. 7–14.

tion in the postwar period was Kobayashi Yukio, an archaeologist on the faculty of Kyoto University.<sup>22</sup> Kobayashi's major contribution involves the study of Kofun-period materials, the keyhole tombs and their contents. When he joined the staff of Kyoto University in 1935, the Imperial Household Agency strictly controlled the excavation of all such tombs, and Kyoto University held a virtual monopoly in western Japan over the investigation of tombs for which excavation was permitted: ones that had already been plundered or were scheduled for destruction. By the end of the war, Kobayashi had participated directly in more than twenty such excavations, and was indirectly involved with many more, in the preparation of materials for publication. Kyoto University's domination of the field extended well into the postwar period, with Kobayashi overseeing or participating in a number of key excavations in the early 1950s as well. Beginning in 1952, he published a series of influential articles, integrating data on the Kofun period into a new synthesis that dramatically changed the approach taken to interpretations of the keyhole tombs' emergence, and of their bearing on the question of Yamatai.<sup>23</sup>

Earlier arguments by Kyoto University archaeologists Tomioka and Ume-hara had favored Yamato as the location of Yamatai on the basis of (1) the broad uniformity seen in early keyhole tombs, and their distribution outward from the Yamato region to the rest of the country, and (2) the greater concentration in tombs of the Yamato region of mirrors believed to be of Later Han, and especially, of Wei-period manufacture.<sup>24</sup> The latter group of mirrors comprise mainly a style called *sankakubuchi shinjūkyō* 三角縁神獸鏡,<sup>25</sup> a name derived from these mirrors' distinctive rim, triangular in cross-section, and from common decorative motifs of deities and mythical creatures from Chinese lore.<sup>26</sup> Several examples bear Wei-dynasty dates, and it has long been suggested that the hundred mirrors noted in *Wajinden* were of this style.

<sup>22</sup> Material on Kobayashi's career is drawn from the biographical sketch by Anazawa Wakō 穴沢味光, 'Kobayashi Yukio Hakase no Kiseki: Kansei no Kōkogakusha no Hyōden' 小林行雄博士の軌跡:感性の考古学者の評伝, in Tsunoda Bun'ei 角田文衛, ed., *Kōkogaku Kyōto Gakuha* 考古学京都学派, Yūzankaku, 1994, pp. 178–210.

<sup>23</sup> The earlier articles were republished in 1961 as an anthology: Kobayashi Yukio, *Kofun Jidai no Kenkyū* 古墳時代の研究, Aoki, 1961.

<sup>24</sup> Young, *Yamatai*, pp. 127–30. Young does not mention the emphasis given to the stylistic uniformity of the keyhole pattern; archaeologists since the Meiji period had regarded this as a significant indicator of the spread of centralized control. For a detailed discussion of the study of tomb distribution by archaeologists, including extensive treatment of Kobayashi's work, see Iwasaki Takuya 岩崎卓也, 'Kofun Bunpu no Kakudai' 古墳分布の拡大, in Shiraishi Taichirō 白石太一郎, ed., *Kodai o Kangaeru: Kofun* 古代を考える:古墳, Yoshikawa, 1989, pp. 36–72.

<sup>25</sup> An alternative pronunciation of these characters is '*sankakuen shinjūkyō*'. The difference seems to be regional, with *sankakubuchi* preferred by most archaeologists working in the Kansai area.

<sup>26</sup> A recent presentation of the archaeological material relevant to the question of Yamatai refers to these mirrors as having 'sawtooth borders and deity-animal designs' (Okazaki, p. 294). This appears to be a misrendering of the term *sankakubuchi shinjūkyō*, which literally means 'triangle-rim deity-beast-mirror'. Two objections may be raised to this translation. The first is relatively minor: the creatures depicted on the mirrors are not animals in the conventional sense

An unusual feature of these mirrors, rare or unknown for most other styles, is the common practice of casting two or more specimens from a single mold, or from identical molds made from a single model. More than 80%<sup>27</sup> of the triangular-rimmed mirrors found to date are known to have at least one or more duplicates—other specimens comprising the set made from a single mold or from identical molds. Occasionally two, or even three, members of a set of duplicates are unearthed from the same tomb. But it is far more common to find the members of a single set deposited in different tombs, often in widely separated regions. Whereas the existence of this phenomenon had been recognized in the Meiji period, prior researchers had regarded the dispersal of duplicate mirror sets as the result of random circumstances.<sup>28</sup> Kobayashi refuted this by first tracing out in meticulous fashion the actual relationships of sharing involved, citing the many instances in which two tombs shared more than one duplicate set between them, as well as the complex networks of sharing that were formed among specific groups of tombs.<sup>29</sup> Rather than being dispersed in chance fashion, he argued, mirrors were distributed along the lines of particular social relationships. He reconstructed those relationships, and the events leading to the distribution of mirrors, in the following fashion.

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of the term, but dragons and other imaginary beings from the realm of Chinese mythic lore. This is one factor that enables identification of continental mirrors from domestic imitations; when Japanese artisans, unfamiliar with the mythic background, began copying these mirrors, the beasts degenerated into abstract designs. A more serious objection is to the gloss of *sankakubuchi* as ‘sawtooth border’. These mirrors indeed bear concentric bands of sawtooth designs near the rim, comprising strings of triangles lined up with bases touching, edge to edge. But sawtooth bands sometimes appear on other mirror types as well, including *ryūkōkyō* 龍虎鏡, *naikō kamonkyō* 内行花文鏡, and *hōkaku kikukyō* 方格規矩鏡. (For examples, see Tanaka Migaku 田中琢, *Nihon no Genshi Bijutsu* 日本の原始美術, 8: *Kōkyō* 古鏡, Kōdansha, 1979). It is the triangular outline of the cross-section of the rim that is the most distinctive feature of *sankakubuchi shinjūkyō*, as this type of rim is only rarely found associated with other design elements.

To keep matters simple, *sankakubuchi shinjūkyō* is here rendered throughout as ‘triangular-rimmed mirror’. Only items regarded by archaeologists as of Chinese manufacture are included under this designation; similar mirrors that were clearly made domestically are referred to as ‘domestic imitations’.

<sup>27</sup> Based on data presented in the abstracts of a conference, held in August 1994, and focusing on third- and fourth-century mirrors (Maizō Bunkazai Kenkyūkai 埋藏文化財研究会, *Wajin to Kagami sono 2: 3–4 Seiki no Kagami to Funbo* 倭人と鏡その2:3・4世紀の鏡と墳墓, Dai 36-kai Maizō Bunkazai Kenkyū Shūkai 第36回埋藏文化財研究集会, Osaka, August 1994, pp. 363–65). The abstracts list all triangular-rimmed mirrors found by the date of the conference. Of the 329 known specimens, 275 belong to duplicate sets having between two to nine members each.

<sup>28</sup> Tanaka Migaku, *Wajin Sōran* 倭人争乱, Shūeisha, 1991, p. 226; Kondō Takaichi 近藤喬一, *Sankakubuchi Shinjūkyō* 三角縁神獸鏡, Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1988, p. 13.

<sup>29</sup> An influential summary of Kobayashi’s work with duplicate mirrors was included in his 1961 anthology as a chapter written expressly for that volume (Kobayashi Yukio, ‘*Dōhankyōkō*’ 同範鏡考, in *Kofun Jidai no Kenkyū*, pp. 93–133). A slightly abridged translation of this work appears as Walter Edwards, ‘Kobayashi Yukio’s “Treatise on Duplicate Mirrors”: An Annotated Translation’, in *Tenri University Journal*, 178 (March 1995), pp. 179–205. The ensuing synopsis of Kobayashi’s views also draws on interpretations of his research contained in the following: Iwasaki, pp. 36–41; Tanaka, *Wajin Sōran*, pp. 226–29; Anazawa, pp. 194–98.

Kobayashi focused on the extraordinarily high number of duplicate mirrors found at a single tomb: Tsubai Ōtsukayama 椿井大塚山, located in the southern part of the ancient province of Yamashiro (now part of Kyoto Prefecture), just north of Yamato.<sup>30</sup> Of an unusually large number of mirrors found at this tomb to begin with, thirty-six in all, thirty-three were identified as belonging to the triangular-rimmed style, and twenty-two of these were members of duplicate sets. These duplicate sets were shared by Tsubai Ōtsukayama with nineteen other tombs, distributed from Fukuoka to Kanagawa. Moreover, by including tombs that shared other sets of mirrors with these nineteen, Kobayashi showed that an immense network of tombs could be seen as directly or indirectly linked with Tsubai Ōtsukayama through sets of shared mirrors. The easiest way to explain this concentration of relationships of sharing on a single tomb, he argued, is to see the occupant of Tsubai Ōtsukayama, whom he referred to as a ‘chief’ (*shuchō* 首長), as being the principal distributor of the mirrors to other chiefs.

Kobayashi assumed that the triangular-rimmed mirrors were received from Wei through the diplomatic exchanges described in *Wajinden*. In addition to the hundred mirrors recorded as presented to Himiko in 240, subsequent chances for receiving mirrors were given by the envoys sent in 243, 247, and again in the time of Himiko’s successor. The several hundred mirrors thus obtained by the central polity were then conferred on regional chiefs who allied with Yamato, Kobayashi argued, as signs of recognition of their local authority, thereby incorporating them into a centralized hierarchy while extending Yamato’s influence geographically. The right to construct keyhole tombs was another aspect of this process of incorporation and recognition, in which Tsubai Ōtsukayama played a leading role as agent for the central polity.

Scrutinizing the materials excavated from early tombs, Kobayashi analyzed them as dividing into two groups. Tombs containing only imported mirrors of the Wei period or earlier comprised an older phase distributed from the central Kinai region along the Inland Sea to northern Kyushu. A later group of tombs, containing a mixture of older mirrors plus some newer imported items or domestically made imitations,<sup>31</sup> is distributed across a broader area ranging to Kyushu in the west, but concentrating in the area east from Kinai as far as Gumma in the Kantō region. Kobayashi interpreted these data as showing

The first efforts to establish a network of political relations made by the Tsubai Ōtsukayama chief, or the authority standing behind him, were directed toward chiefs in the western group and involved the distribution of relatively large

<sup>30</sup> Treatments in English of this tomb and its significance may be found in the following: C. Melvin Aikens & Higuchi Takayasu, *Prehistory of Japan*, Academic Press, New York, 1982, pp. 255–63; Tanaka Migaku, ‘Tsubai Ōtsukayama: Mirrors within a Burial Mound’, in Richard Pearson, ed., *Ancient Japan*, Braziller, New York, 1992, pp. 216–19.

<sup>31</sup> Another criterion for differentiating this group from the older one is the inclusion of jasper arm ornaments among the grave goods for this group, and their absence in older tombs. See Iwasaki, pp. 38–39; Edwards, ‘Kobayashi Yukio’s “Treatise”’, p. 198.

numbers of duplicate mirrors, with two or more duplicates from the same set often given to a single chief. As relations with the western region were firmed up, operations were begun toward the east as well.<sup>32</sup>

By this time the initial stock of imported mirrors had run low, however, and domestic imitations and other items from a newer cultural phase were included. As the grave goods belonging to the Tsubai Ōtsukayama chief represent the older phase, it appears that these operations continued after his withdrawal from active involvement. Kobayashi dated the tombs in the older phase, including Tsubai Ōtsukayama, to around 300, and those of the newer phase to the fourth century.

From an archaeological perspective, Kobayashi's accomplishments are two-fold. First, he demonstrated the value of painstaking distributional analysis, raising the standard of the field in this regard—in much the same way that he also raised professional standards of methods for excavation, and for the observation, recording, and publication of data on artifacts.<sup>33</sup> Second, he turned an examination of such materials into an argument about political process, thereby asserting that archaeology could move beyond the realm of merely collecting artifacts and publishing site reports, and serve as a means for researching social developments as well. As a result, Kobayashi's views became widely accepted in the 1960s and 1970s, especially among archaeologists, but also among the general public.<sup>34</sup> But some scholars, such as historian Inoue Mitsusada 井上光貞, remained unswayed by archaeological evidence to begin with, asserting the limitations of material remains for understanding social relations.<sup>35</sup> But for those who credit archaeology with having some say in questions such as the location of Yamatai, Kobayashi's theories had become, by the time of his retirement in 1975, the established point of view, and thus the primary target for anyone wishing to raise a critical voice.

The first to launch such an attack was Mori Kōichi, a protégé of one of Kobayashi's former senior rivals at Kyoto University.<sup>36</sup> Mori was especially

<sup>32</sup> Edwards, pp. 198–99.

<sup>33</sup> See Anazawa, pp. 181–83, 193 & 200–01.

<sup>34</sup> Whereas Anazawa asserts that Kobayashi's theories gained widespread acceptance in part because they were 'clear and easily understood', this should not be taken to indicate that Kobayashi's writings themselves, which are extremely tedious and difficult to understand, ever enjoyed a popular readership. Rather, owing to the influence of his views in academic circles, 'a great number of works on archaeology and ancient history came to be written based on Kobayashi's paradigm: his theory about the duplicate mirrors, the Yamato-as-Yamatai thesis, and the distribution of Kofun culture as indicating the sphere of political influence of the Yamatai monarchy' (Anazawa, p. 204). A good example, found in a widely read series aimed at a popular audience, is Naoki Kōjirō 直木孝次郎, *Nihon no Rekishi* 日本の歴史, 1: *Wakoku no Tanjō* 倭国の誕生, Shōgakusan, 1973, pp. 294–301.

<sup>35</sup> Inoue's views regarding the difficulties of ascertaining political and social relations with archaeological evidence are cited in Kitō, p. 282.

<sup>36</sup> Mori's views are summarized in Anazawa, pp. 20–25, and in Tanaka, *Wajin Sōran*, pp. 228–9. An early critical appraisal of Kobayashi's Kinai theory made by Mori in 1964 has been reprinted as Mori Kōichi, 'Yamataikoku to Kōkogaku e no Shiken' 邪馬台国と考古学への私見, in Saeki, *Yamataikoku Kihon Ronbunshū*, 3, pp. 431–37.

active in movements to save tombs from development, and therefore clashed early with Kobayashi, who was more accommodating toward development schemes as long as proper excavation was permitted. From the early 1960s, Mori began to criticize the weak points of Kobayashi's theories, pointing out, for example, that Late Yayoi-period burials in Kyushu have yielded more than one hundred Han-period mirrors, while the Kinai region has none from Yayoi graves. Mori also challenged the assumption long held by pro-Yamato theorists that the lack of such archaeological finds in Kinai was due to a custom in that region of treating mirrors as heirlooms up until the Kofun period, when mirrors were placed in tombs in large numbers. Kobayashi had turned this somewhat awkward assumption into an argument about the nature of political leadership, asserting that the mirrors were needed by earlier sacerdotal figures as symbols of their mystical power, and as such were passed on to their successors. Once a new order of secular power was established, however, a power that moreover became hereditary in nature, the mirrors were no longer essential as symbols of authority, and were deposited in the tombs.<sup>37</sup> As elegant as such a theory may be, it depends on an assertion not easily disproved—that mirrors are absent from the archaeological record because they were treated in a manner that kept them from being detected archaeologically—and accordingly, the theory has been charged with being ultimately unscientific.<sup>38</sup>

Turning to the triangular-rimmed mirrors on which much of Kobayashi's view rests, Mori argued on the one hand that their association with Yamatai is questionable: the diplomatic exchanges with Wei took place only shortly after the fall of the Han dynasty, and it is not reasonable to expect that mirror styles would change so quickly. Mori asserted that the bulk of the hundred mirrors given to Himiko were probably of Later Han styles, and suggested that the wide distribution of such mirrors across northern Kyushu in Late Yayoi graves is the result of events in the time of Himiko and Yamatai, or perhaps just prior to that time. He further pointed to the well-recognized fact that, while the triangular-rimmed mirrors are commonly regarded as of Wei manufacture, they have been found only in Japan, with no continental examples known despite the considerable amount of archaeological research that has been conducted in China.<sup>39</sup>

Mori's line of argument received a dramatic boost in the early 1980s with the publication of views by influential Chinese archaeologists,<sup>40</sup> who not only pointed to the lack of triangular-rimmed mirrors of the style found in Japan,

<sup>37</sup> Kobayashi Yukio, 'Kofun no Hassei no Rekishiteki Igi' 古墳の発生の歴史的意義, in *Kofun Jidai no Kenkyū*, pp. 140–466.

<sup>38</sup> Kondō Takaichi, p. 10, notes that partly for this reason, the view that mirrors were treated as heirlooms is falling into disfavor.

<sup>39</sup> Mori, 'Yamataikoku to Kōkōgaku', p. 436.

<sup>40</sup> Material on the Chinese scholars' views, and the rebuttal made by Japanese archaeologists, is taken from two sources: Tanaka, *Wajin Sōran*, pp. 229–36; Kondō Takaichi, pp. 20–48. For a partial discussion of these issues in English, see Okazaki, pp. 294–96. (Okazaki's contribution does not deal with the 1986 discovery discussed below.)

but argued that its basic design, the mixture of deities and mythical beasts, developed in southern China, not in the northern region where the kingdom of Wei lasted for forty-five years after the collapse of the Later Han dynasty. One of the Chinese scholars, Wang Zhong-shu 王仲殊, has asserted from these facts, and from his own readings of the inscriptions on certain mirrors recovered from Japan, that the triangular-rimmed mirrors were made by artisans from the southern kingdom of Wu 吳 who had fled from their homeland and sought asylum in Japan. Then in 1986, while archaeologists were still trying to assess Wang's interpretations, a mirror was unearthed in Kyoto Prefecture bearing the dynastic date of Ching-ch'u 景初 4, which corresponds with 240, except that the dynastic name of Ching-ch'u was used only through Ching-ch'u 3, or 239.<sup>41</sup> The death of the Wei emperor during that year prompted a change to a new dynastic name from the beginning of the following year, which was designated Cheng-shih 正始 1. Wang asserted that the use of a bogus dynastic date underscores the distance of the artisan who made the mirror from sources of information about happenings at the Wei court.

Even pro-Yamato archaeologists have been forced to admit that Wang's assertions deserve careful consideration. The most ardent among them, such as Tanaka Migaku 田中琢, have answered that the stylistic division between northern and southern Chinese mirror-traditions is overdrawn, and that the deities and beasts motifs of Japanese triangular-rimmed mirrors are entirely consistent with Wei materials. Others have pointed out logical flaws in Wang's arguments. Kondō Takaichi 近藤喬一 asks why bogus dynastic dates necessarily imply domestic manufacture, countering with examples of items, also inscribed with improper dates, recovered from Chinese commanderies on the Korean peninsula. A more significant question is why an errant southern Wu artisan seeking haven in Japan would be compelled to make mirrors with northern Wei dynasty dates in the first place. While two instances of Wu dynastic dates are known from mirrors discovered in Japan,<sup>42</sup> neither is on an example of the triangular-rimmed style central to Kobayashi's theory.

As yet there are no final answers to the questions raised by the Chinese scholars, and it is unlikely that the matter will be settled for some time. But even if it could be established with certainty that the so-called Wei mirrors were actually made in Japan or elsewhere, and thus not equatable with the one hundred mirrors given Himiko, the complex network of sharing of duplicate mirrors, and the social relationships upon which that network presumably stood, would remain as an incontrovertible fact of early Japanese history. Moreover, as Kobayashi showed, the network is centered firmly on the Kinai region, and points to a social hierarchy stemming outward from Yamato in the early Kofun period. Ultimately, the question of the relationship between

<sup>41</sup> The mirror is not of the *sankakubuchi shinjūkyō* style, but is of a style (*ryūkōkyō* 龍虎鏡) related in many ways. See Tanaka, 'Wajin Sōran', pp. 232–33.

<sup>42</sup> See J. Edward Kidder, Jr., 'Yoshinogari and the Yamatai Problem', in *TASJ*, Fourth Series, 6 (1991), p. 126.



that hierarchy and the one headed by Yamatai depends on two factors. First and foremost is the age of the earliest keyhole tombs. Second is the degree of social stratification that existed prior to the appearance of those tombs, and the pattern of regional distribution exhibited by such stratification.

*Origins of Stratification: Changing Images of Yayoi Society*

It will be easier to begin with the second factor, the degree of social complexity prior to the Kofun period. Kobayashi had assumed that the emergence of a high degree of stratification was first signalled by the sudden appearance of the keyhole tombs, which represented a quantum leap over the cultural remains of the preceding Yayoi period. The start of tomb construction therefore pointed to a fundamental social change: the formation of a strong political alliance centered on Yamato, forged by conferring mirrors obtained through diplomatic exchanges with Wei, and the attendant emergence of a hereditary, aristocratic elite. By contrast, Kobayashi viewed Yayoi society as relatively undifferentiated. The only clear markers of status difference in Yayoi materials known at the time consisted of burials, found within communal cemeteries, containing occasional concentrations of precious items such as Chinese mirrors or bronze weapons, and sometimes covered with megalithic stones. These materials were limited to parts of northern Kyushu, however, and were taken by Kobayashi as reflecting that region's interaction with the continent, rather than a process of internal differentiation. Moreover, to the extent that such differences indeed indicate the presence of hierarchy and social inequality, Kobayashi argued, the rest of the country must be viewed as lacking those qualities.<sup>43</sup>

This image of Yayoi society has been largely rewritten in recent decades, thanks to numerous discoveries made as economic development has spurred the level of archaeological investigation nationwide.<sup>44</sup> One type of Yayoi

<sup>43</sup> Kobayashi Yukio, 'Kofun Jidai Bunka no Seirin' 古墳時代文化の成因, in *Kofun Jidai no Kenkyū*, pp. 62–63. Like most writers of his day (see the discussion in n. 21, above), Kobayashi was evidently working with concepts drawn from Marxist writings on the evolution of the state, and his discussion focuses accordingly on evidence for the emergence of 'class society' (*kaikyū shakai* 階級社会). He took the construction of keyhole tombs for an aristocratic elite as the first clear sign of the existence of such a class, and thus of class society itself. As a result, Kobayashi downplayed the significance of *Wajinden*'s account of differences between 'men of importance' and others, or of the construction of Himiko's burial mound. These passages are, he claimed, insufficient as a basis for asserting the general practice of constructing keyhole tombs at the time, and thus for showing the existence of a true aristocratic class prior to the Kofun period. See Kobayashi, 'Kofun no Hasei', p. 139.

<sup>44</sup> A useful summary in English of the changing understandings of Yayoi society is provided by Mark J. Hudson, 'From Toro to Yoshinogari: Changing Perspectives on Yayoi Period Archaeology', in Gina L. Barnes, ed., *Hoabinhian, Jomon, Yayoi, Early Korean States*, Bibliographic Reviews of Far Eastern Archaeology, Oxbow Books, Oxford, 1990, pp. 63–111. The treatment here of Yayoi burial practices draws upon this work (pp. 87–96), and two others: Shiraiishi Taichirō, 'Nihon Kofun Bunkaron' 日本古墳文化論, in *Rekishigaku Kenkyūkai & Nihonshi Kenkyūkai*, ed., *Kōza Nihon Rekishi* 講座日本歴史, 1: *Genshi Kodai* 原始古代, Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1984, pp. 161–65; Tsude Hiroshi, 'Funbo' 墳墓, in Kondō Yoshirō et al., ed., *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Kōkogaku*, 4: *Shūroku to Saishi* 集落と祭祀, 1987, pp. 219–24.

burial facility, known as *hōkeishūkōbo* 方形周溝墓 and consisting of a moated precinct up to ten meters across and containing one or more burial pits, was completely unknown until the mid-1960s. Since then examples have been found widely from Kinai as far east as the Kantō region for the Middle Yayoi period; in the Late Yayoi they spread to northern Kyushu as well. At the Uryūdō 瓜生堂 Site in Osaka, which was covered by a thick deposit of flood-borne sediments, unusually well-preserved examples were found to have low central mounds within the moats; it is believed that most other moated burial precincts had similar mounds, which were subsequently leveled in most cases by cultivation.

For a while archaeologists regarded these moated precincts as possible precursors to the later keyhole-shaped mounded tombs. Subsequently, however, a separate type of Yayoi burial was identified as a more likely candidate. Consisting of a larger and higher mound, usually built by partial shaping of a natural hill (cutting as well as mounding), these mound-burials have been found in recent decades from Kyushu to the Kantō area. Archaeologists interpret them as the graves of a chiefly elite; significance is attached to their isolated positions away from common cemeteries, to their large size (ranging up to forty meters or more in diameter), and to other signs that a considerable amount of labor was expended in their construction, such as partial covering of the surface with rocks, or elaborate stone-lined burial chambers. Interestingly, they often have shapes consisting of a main mound with some form of projection, such as the *yosumi tosshutsugata funkyūbo* 四隅突出型墳丘墓 ('burial mound with four projecting corners') found widely in the Chūgoku area and especially along the Japan Sea coast as far as Fukui Prefecture. Shapes vary in other areas, however, as do aspects of the burial facilities. Archaeologists such as Shiraishi Taichirō 白石太一郎 have recently pointed to this lack of uniformity, and to the gap in size between even the largest such mounds and the earliest keyhole tombs (such as the 280-meter Hashihaka, in Nara) as indicating that there is still something of a quantum difference between the two, and that the emergence and rapid spread of the keyhole tombs indeed signal a significant social transformation.<sup>45</sup> But there is no question now that social differentiation had advanced during the Yayoi period to produce a chiefly class, that such differentiation was widespread geographically, and that it assumed a variety of regional forms.<sup>46</sup>

That Kyushu was in no way isolated from the development of such social complexity was dramatically demonstrated in the late 1980s with the excavation of the largest Yayoi settlement known to date, the Yoshinogari 吉野ヶ里

<sup>45</sup> See Shiraishi, '*Nihon Kofun Bunkaron*', pp. 165–66; Shiraishi Taichirō, '*Yayoi, Kofun Bunkaron*' 弥生・古墳文化論, in Asao Naohirō 朝尾直弘 et al., ed., *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Tsūshi* 岩波講座日本通史, 2: *Kodai* 古代, 1, Iwanami, 1993, pp. 262–64 & 268–69.

<sup>46</sup> An excellent English summary of recently discovered materials in the Izumo region, showing the development of a local tradition of leadership there, is Joan R. Piggott, 'Sacral Kingship and Confederacy in Early Izumo', in *MN* 44:1 (Spring 1989), pp. 45–63.

Site in Saga Prefecture.<sup>47</sup> Situated on a low terrace jutting out onto a broad alluvial plain, and thus too high for rice cultivation, the site was spared the ravages of both agricultural and urban development. But a plan to convert the area into an industrial park prompted exploratory excavation in 1982, which resulted in a full-scale investigation of thirty hectares of the site over a three-year period, starting in 1986. By early 1989 the outlines of a large village, surrounded by concentric moats and containing the remains of more than 350 dwellings from the Middle and Late Yayoi periods, had come to light. The total area of the moated village is believed to be more than twenty-five hectares.

Equally impressive is the number of burials found within the moated area and in cemeteries located outside. Because of the practice common in Kyushu of using large earthenware jars as coffins, the burials are well preserved and easily identified. Over 2,000 such burials have been found and excavated. The most notable of these lie within a forty-meter mound-burial dating from the early Middle Yayoi period, or the first century B.C. Eight jar burials had been discovered in the mound by the time the preliminary report was issued, and five of the six that had been excavated were found to have bronze daggers, whereas no bronze items have been recovered from graves outside the mound.<sup>48</sup> In addition, one of the burials also yielded seventy-five cylindrical glass beads, the only glass known at the site. The glass appears to be of Chinese manufacture, and the bronze daggers are believed to have been imported from Korea. The elite status of the occupants of the burial mound is beyond doubt.

Other features of the site that caught public attention in 1989 were discovered within the concentric moats. At two points along its perimeter, the inner moat juts outward to include a semicircular or rectangular area in which a series of post-holes show the remains of a lofty, sturdy building perhaps several meters high, that would have offered an excellent view over the surrounding plain. It is accordingly postulated that these remains indicate the presence of watchtowers along the moat, itself furnished with a low rampart and palisade. In addition, within the moated area is a precinct marked off with a meter-wide rectangular ditch, containing the remains of several buildings, both pit-dwellings and buildings with raised floors. Again, it can only be speculated that some sort of special facility was housed in this area.

<sup>47</sup> Material for the current treatment of this site was drawn largely from an early report in English on the discovery: Mark Hudson & Gina L. Barnes, 'Yoshinogari: A Yayoi Settlement in Northern Kyushu', in *MN* 46:2 (Summer 1991), pp. 211-35, and from the preliminary site report, Saga-ken Kyōiku linkai, *Kangō Shūroku Yoshinogari Iseki: Gaihō* 環濠集落吉野ヶ里遺跡: 概報, Yoshikawa, 1990. Useful discussion of Yoshinogari in the context of its implications for the location of Yamatai may also be found in Kidder, 'Yoshinogari and the Yamatai Problem'.

<sup>48</sup> In a subsequent report, an additional seven jar burials were said to have been discovered and excavated, of which three contained daggers, bringing the total number of daggers reported from the mound to eight. See Yoshimoto Ken'ichi 吉本健一, 'Saga-ken Kanzaki-gun Kanzaki-chō, Mitagawa-chō, Higashi Sefurimura Yoshinogari Iseki' 佐賀県神埼郡神埼町・三田川町・東脊振村吉野ヶ里遺跡, in *Nihon Kōkōgaku Nempō* 日本考古学年報, 46 (1993), p. 567.

The value of such speculation is not to be belittled, however, especially in terms of its ability to capture the popular imagination, provided the right set of images is employed, as was demonstrated in the movement that arose to preserve the site.<sup>49</sup> In February 1989, as the three-year excavation was drawing to a close, prominent archaeologists learned of the site by word of mouth and rushed to visit Yoshinogari before the start of construction later that spring. All were struck by the site's importance. But it was an observation made by Sahara Makoto 佐原真, then on the staff of the prestigious National Cultural Properties Research Institute in Nara, that made the difference. Looking at the moat, at the watchtower-like remains, and at the central precinct, Sahara was struck by a similarity to the *Wajinden* description of Himiko's palace, said to be 'surrounded by towers and stockades, with armed guards in a state of constant vigilance.' Prefectural officials relayed the remark in their press announcement of the site; on the following day the *Asahi Shinbun* carried a front-page story quoting Sahara as likening Yoshinogari to 'a capital of one of the "countries" in *Wajinden*'.<sup>50</sup>

The result of that news release, which deliberately highlighted the similarity to Yamatai in an attempt to build public concern over the fate of the site, was the launching of the 'Yoshinogari fever' of 1989. Under intense media focus, decisions to preserve a vast portion of the site were made in short order by the prefectural and national governments. Work continued under almost constant newspaper and television coverage, 'while scores of books, magazine articles, glossy pamphlets, and . . . documentaries appeared.'<sup>51</sup> The site became an instant tourist attraction, drawing 1.7 million visitors within six months of the initial publicity;<sup>52</sup> by early 1995 (the site now reconstructed as a park, complete with museum) that figure had reached eight million. But the success of the campaign is not without its drawbacks. As Tanaka Migaku, Sahara's colleague at the Nara National Cultural Properties Research Institute, laments, when the richest of the jar burials in the Middle Yayoi-period mound was discovered, in the midst of all the publicity, it was hailed as 'a king's grave' in the press. Tanaka asked,

But were there 'countries' at this time? Were there 'kings'? . . . Things have been made into 'countries' and 'kings' without adequate explanation. Moreover, the grave of this 'king' is of the second century B.C., while the moated village with its 'towers and stockades' is of the second century A.D. Between them lie 300 years or more. But if you follow only the mass media, this time lapse fades completely away. It's the age of Himiko, it's written in the Chinese texts, so 'country' and 'king' are fine—the kind of reporting that invites misunderstanding.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> A record of the events leading from the site's discovery to the decision to preserve it is presented in Yamamura Shin'ichirō 山村紳一郎, *Yamataikoku wa Mieta ka: Yoshinogari no Atsui 100 Nichi* 邪馬台国は見えたか: 吉野ヶ里の熱い100日, Bungei Shunjū, 1990.

<sup>50</sup> 'Wa no Hitotsu no Kuni no Chūshinbu ka' 倭の1つのクニの中心部か, in *Asahi Shinbun*, 23 February 1989.

<sup>51</sup> Hudson & Barnes, p. 211. <sup>52</sup> Hudson & Barnes, p. 211.

<sup>53</sup> Tanaka, *Wajin Sōran*, pp. 51–52.

If media overkill has indeed led some Japanese to believe that Yoshinogari is the capital of Yamatai—an identification that scholars do not support—this may perhaps be seen as only an extreme outcome of the amount of attention generated by Late Yayoi finds in Kyushu over the past fifteen years. When Sahara and his senior colleague, Kanaseki Hiroshi, co-edited their comprehensive ten-volume treatment of the Yayoi period in the mid-1980s,<sup>54</sup> it was commonly believed that the Kinai area was more advanced for the Late Yayoi, as sites in that region looked bigger and more populous. Kanaseki notes that this view, now questionable, was partly the result of a lack of data, itself due to the relatively late development of areas such as Saga. Salvage work is still the most common form of archaeological activity in Japan, and until development comes there is little impetus for excavation.<sup>55</sup>

Regardless of the reasons, Kyushu is now firmly within the orbit of areas that show enough social complexity, in terms of Late Yayoi archaeological materials, to serve as viable candidates for the location of Yamatai. Where, then, do we go for the means to determine the most likely among these?

### *Emergence of Keyhole Tombs: Chronological Reconsiderations*

It was noted earlier that a crucial factor is the age of the earliest keyhole tombs. This is also one of the most difficult questions posed by Japanese archaeology. Until Kobayashi's time there was considerable variation in opinion, with some, such as Umehara Sueji, his senior colleague at Kyoto University, asserting that keyhole tombs extended back as far as the second century, overlapping with Yayoi materials.<sup>56</sup> Kobayashi helped clarify the temporal separation of the two, but the timing of the boundary between them remains an issue. Kobayashi asserted repeatedly that the construction of keyhole tombs did not extend very far back into the third century. Accordingly, he placed Tsubai Ōtsukayama, which he regarded as perhaps the earliest tomb, as not older than 280 at the earliest, and gave the possible range of dates for this tomb as 280–350.<sup>57</sup>

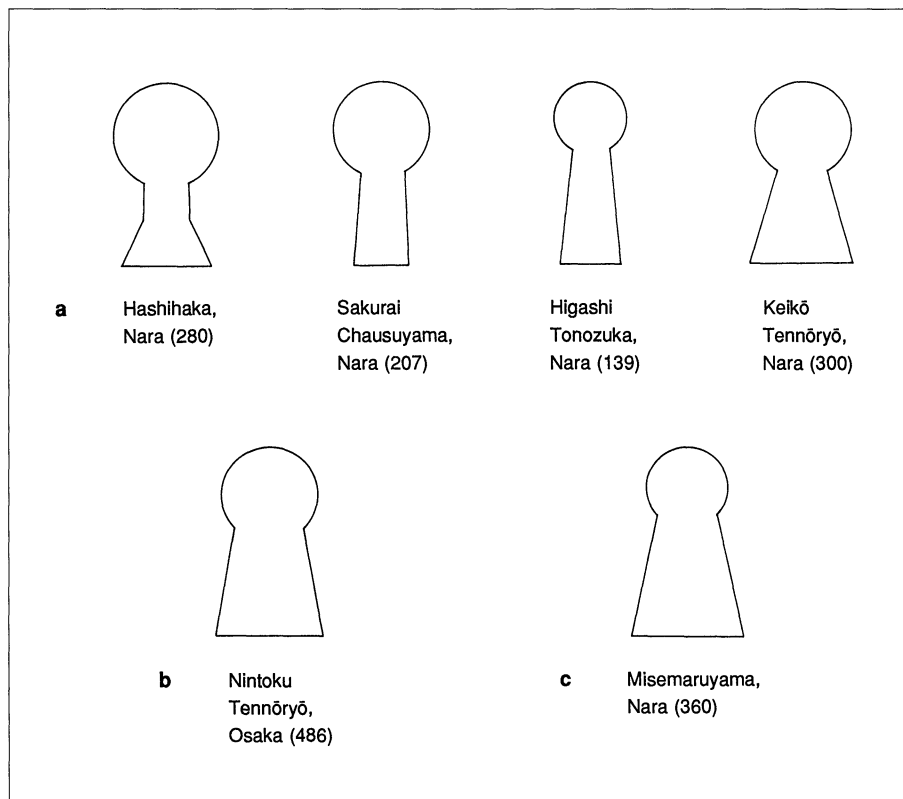
Since Kobayashi's time, advancements have been made in the typological concepts used for assessing the relative ages of tombs. In terms of their external outlines, for example, it has long been recognized that the rectangular or trapezoidal portions of the keyhole shapes of Early Kofun-period tombs are characteristically long and narrow in comparison with later periods. Recently, as more attention has been paid to variations in shape seen at the beginning of the period, it has been established that the oldest tombs commonly show an outward flare at the base of this portion (Figure 2a, left), an outline resembling that of a plectrum used for playing the shamisen, hence the term of *bachi-gata*

<sup>54</sup> Kanaseki Hiroshi 金関 恕 & Sahara Makoto, ed., *Yayoi Bunka no Kenkyū* 弥生文化の研究, 10 vols., Yūzankaku, 1985–1989.

<sup>55</sup> Kanaseki Hiroshi, professor of archaeology, Tenri University. Informal interview conducted on 20 March 1995.

<sup>56</sup> Anazawa, p. 194.

<sup>57</sup> See Edwards, 'Kobayashi Yukio's "Treatise"', pp. 194–99.



2. A comparison of keyhole tombs, in schematic representation, of the (a) Early, (b) Middle, and (c) Late Kofun periods. Scales have been adjusted to make each figure the same length; actual tomb lengths in meters are given in parentheses.

撥型 for this shape.<sup>58</sup> Similar advancements have been made in the study of *haniwa* 埴輪, the large earthenware pieces, some in cylindrical form and others in the shapes of humans, animals, and various objects, that were placed on the tops and perimeters of the mounds, often in great numbers. The derivation of *haniwa* from Yayoi ceramic prototypes was firmly established in the late 1960s,<sup>59</sup> and subsequent work has clarified the sequence of change in *haniwa* form, and in methods of manufacture.<sup>60</sup> Based on typological considerations

<sup>58</sup> Iwasaki, p. 41; Kondō Yoshirō, 'Zenpōkōenfun no Tanjō 前方後円墳の誕生, in Kondō Yoshirō et al., ed., *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Kōkōgaku*, 6: *Henka to Kakki* 変化と画期, Iwanami, 1987, p. 183. Figure 2 is based in part on material presented in Terasawa Kaoru 寺沢薫 & Chiga Hisashi 千賀久, *Nihon no Kodai Iseki* 日本の古代遺跡, 5: *Nara Chūbu* 奈良中部, 2nd ed., Hoikusha, 1990, pp. 142–46.

<sup>59</sup> Kondō Yoshirō & Harunari Hideji 春成秀爾, 'Haniwa no Kigen' 埴輪の起源, in *Kōkōgaku Kenkyū* 考古学研究, 13:3 (1967), pp. 13–35. Kondō and Harunari trace the development of cylindrical haniwa from a Yayoi ceramic pedestal, *tokushu kidai* 特殊器台, used to hold vases, and known from funerary contexts. An early type of cylindrical haniwa retaining the incised curvilinear designs of this Yayoi prototype, known as *tokushu kidaigata haniwa* 特殊器台形埴輪, evolved first in Okayama and was utilized soon after in the Kinai region.

<sup>60</sup> Typological work on haniwa has been conducted for both representational and cylindrical

such as these, archaeologists now generally agree that the oldest major tomb in the Kinai region is not Tsubai Ōtsukayama, but Hashihaka, which lies in the southeastern corner of the Nara basin.<sup>61</sup> One of the largest of the early tombs, with an overall length of 280 meters, Hashihaka has often been suggested as a possible candidate for Himiko's grave.<sup>62</sup>

Another aspect of Kobayashi's views that are being reassessed is the basis for deriving absolute dates for the relative sequences that are established, in the above manner, on typological grounds. Kobayashi based his chronology ultimately on a number of tombs that are attributed to members of the imperial line, accepting both the attributions as made, and the information recorded in the native histories about the dates when these tombs' alleged occupants died.<sup>63</sup> As both the identifications of the tombs and the accuracy of chronological information on earlier historical periods are open to question, archaeologists are looking for other ways to date the earliest tombs. Shiraishi Taichirō has pioneered the possibility of using the sequence of styles of a type

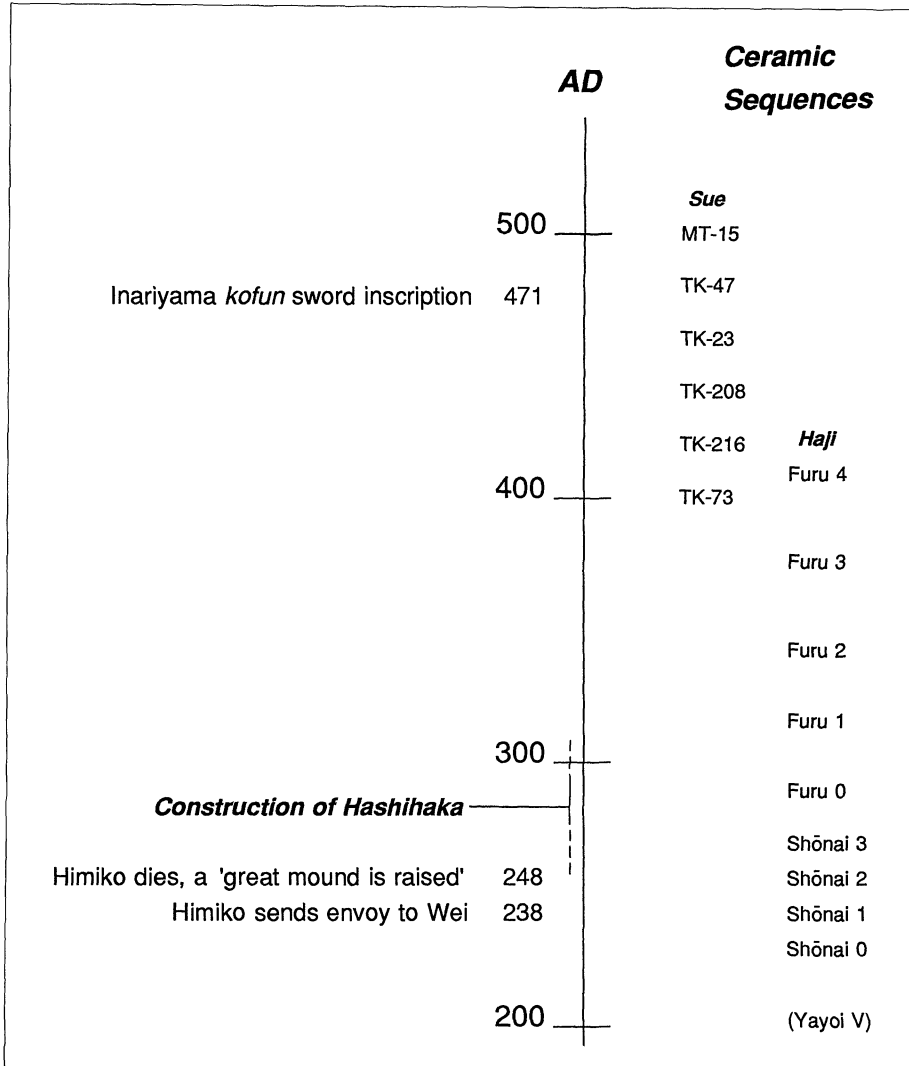
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forms, but it is the latter that is especially relevant to the discussion here, as the appearance of representational types postdates the emergence of the earliest keyhole tombs. The elaboration of cylindrical haniwa typologies is an ongoing process, conducted on a regional basis in the same manner as for other ceramic sequences; a recent summary of this work appears as Fujisawa Atsushi 藤沢敦 et al., 'Haniwa no Shurui to Hennen' 埴輪の種類と編年, 1: 'Entō Haniwa' 円筒埴輪, in Ishino Hironobu 石野博信 et al., ed., *Kofun Jidai no Kenkyū* 古墳時代の研究, 9: *Kofun III: Haniwa* 古墳Ⅲ: 埴輪, 1992, pp. 21–89. The basic framework for these regional sequences is a schema presented in 1978 by Kawanishi Hiroyuki 川西宏幸, 'Entō Haniwa Sōron' 円筒埴輪総論, in *Kōkōgaku Zasshi* 考古学雑誌, 64:2 (1978), pp. 1–70.

<sup>61</sup> Factors often cited in assigning Hashihaka the oldest status among major tombs (those over 100 meters in length) include the *bachi-gata* flare, and the recovery of sherds from the surface of *tokushu kidaigata haniwa*, the earliest cylindrical form (see n. 59, above). An example of this argument is Shiraishi Taichirō, 'Kyodai Kofun no Zōei' 巨大古墳の造営, in Shiraishi, ed., *Kodai o Kangaeru: Kofun*, p. 83. It is worth noting that several mounds in the immediate vicinity of Hashihaka have received considerable attention as being even earlier, and thus possibly having a more direct connection with Himiko or the time of her reign, depending on how the relative chronology of the mounds is situated in terms of absolute dates. At the very least, these mounds, and the large site of Makimuku 纏向 in which they lie, are of interest with regard to the formation of the local political base on which the occupant of Hashihaka and later Yamato keyhole mounds built a nationwide hegemony. But these earlier tombs themselves, such as the 90-meter mound of Ishizuka 石塚 lying to the northwest of Hashihaka, are smaller and somewhat irregular in shape, and moreover lack the height characteristic of major keyhole tombs. Their precise status is thus in question, with many archaeologists regarding them as examples of the Yayoi mound-burial tradition, rather than belonging to the Kofun period proper. For detailed discussion, see Ishino Hironobu, 'Makimuku Iseki to Shoki Yamato Seiken ni tsuite' 纏向遺跡と初期ヤマト政権について, in *Higashi Ajia no Kodai Bunka* 東アジアの古代文化, 63 (1990), pp. 26–62.

<sup>62</sup> See discussion in n. 10, above.

<sup>63</sup> Anazawa, p. 205. Shiraishi notes that Kobayashi drew on work done in the early part of the twentieth century by historian Kida Sadakichi, who relied especially on data in *Engishiki* to identify a number of principal tombs for constructing an absolute chronology. Subsequent reevaluations of this text, together with comparative work using Chinese chronicles recording information about fifth-century exchanges with Japan, render Kida's dating of tombs prior to the sixth century suspect. See Shiraishi Taichirō, 'Nendai Ketteiron (2): Yayoi Jidai Ikō no Nendai Kettei' 年代決定論(二): 弥生時代以降の年代決定, in Kondō Yoshirō et al., ed., *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Kōkōgaku*, 1: *Kenkyū no Hōhō* 研究の方法, Iwanami, 1987, pp. 227–28.



3. A possible method for dating the start of the Kofun period (seen to begin with the construction of Hashihaka) using ceramic typologies, and a comparison with events of *Wajinden*.

of pottery, known as *sueki* 須恵, or Sue ware, as a basis for making better estimates.<sup>64</sup> His method relies on a sword recovered from the Sakitama Inariyama 埼玉稲荷山 tomb in Saitama, inscribed with a sexagenary date read as A.D. 471, to estimate the age of a particular style of Sue ware (designated MT-15) found in the mound.<sup>65</sup> Shiraishi then calculates the age of the earliest Sue style (TK-

<sup>64</sup> See Shiraishi, 'Nendai Ketteiron', pp. 218–42.

<sup>65</sup> Allowance must be made for the lapse between the sword's manufacture in 471 and its interment after the death of its owner. Accordingly, Shiraishi attributes the pottery found in association with the sword, which he characterizes as an early form of MT-15, to the final stage of the fifth century (Shiraishi, p. 230).



73) as extending back to at least the beginning of the fifth century, by multiplying an assumed average duration for any particular style by the number of intervening styles (Figure 3). This places the start of domestic production of Sue ware one half century earlier than the date previously assumed.<sup>66</sup> By implication, the age of the earliest tombs yielding Sue ware must be fifty years older than previously believed, and the dates for tombs standing typologically earlier must also be pushed back in corresponding fashion. Shiraishi suggests, in this manner, that the beginning of tomb construction may extend back as early as the middle of the third century.

In addition to these reassessments of received chronological understandings, archaeologists working in the Kinai region are now actively looking for new data on the tombs of the Nara basin, believed to be the oldest in Japan. After a lull of nearly thirty years, in which no excavations of major tombs of the Early Kofun period in this region were conducted, investigations have been made during the past four years on several keyhole tombs in the southeast area of the basin. One reason for this development has been the realization that important information may be obtained by digging *around* the perimeter of the tombs, a number of which are designated by the government as mausolea of imperial family members and thus off limits to direct investigation.<sup>67</sup> In 1992, for example, trenches placed just next to the base of Nishi Tonozuka 西殿塚, a tomb claimed to be that of the chief consort of the sixth-century monarch Keitai 継体, yielded pottery showing the mound to belong to the early fourth century.<sup>68</sup> In similar fashion, work just outside the perimeter of Hashihaka

<sup>66</sup> Shiraishi, p. 229. See also Walter Edwards, 'Event and Process in the Founding of Japan: The Horserider Theory in Archaeological Perspective', in *JJS* 9:2 (1983), pp. 274–79 & 280, n. 15. Sue is a stoneware fired at temperatures of around 1000°C; the technology for its production was brought by artisans from Korea. Accordingly, the start of Sue production can be regarded as a temporally compact event. Sue is not found in tombs belonging to the early part of the Middle Kofun period, which is traditionally equated with the fifth century.

<sup>67</sup> The number of such tombs, especially keyhole-shaped mounds, is small. Whereas the total number of keyhole tombs in the country is estimated at over 4,000 (Tsude, '*Nihon Kodai no Kokka Keiseiron Josetsu*', p. 24), only thirty-six keyhole mounds have been designated as imperial mausolea (Yoshinari Isamu 吉成勇, ed., *Tennōryō Sōran* 天皇陵総覧, *Rekishi Dokuhon Jiten Shirizu* 歴史読本辞典シリーズ, 19, Shinjinbutsu Ōraisha, 1993, pp. 416–30). In addition, a smaller number of keyhole tombs have been specified as possibly being imperial mausolea (called *sankōryō* 参考陵), and are also off-limits. Even though the restricted tombs are thus but a fraction of the total, they include most of the largest and earliest keyhole mounds in the Kinai area, and the restriction is seen as a hindrance to research. Archaeologists dispute many of the designations, made during the Tokugawa and Meiji periods on the basis of textual evidence that is now suspect, and call for an end to the prohibition. The Imperial Household Agency has refused to consider such requests.

<sup>68</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, '*Saidaikyū no Haniwa, Kofun no Horini Hahen*' 最大級の埴輪, 古墳の堀に破片, 4 March 1993. The pottery in question is of the type known as *tokushu kidai*, a precursor of haniwa (see n. 59, above). Whereas the discovery highlighted the opposition between archaeologists and the Imperial Household Agency over the issue of access to the tombs, it had little impact on the latter's firm stance. The Agency was quoted as commenting that it is entirely possible that a sixth-century queen was buried in a mound previously built for someone else ('*Nishi Tonozuka "Ōkimi no Haka" Setsu, Urazukerareta ga . . .*' 西殿塚古墳「大王墓」説, 裏付けられたが..., in *Asahi Shimbun* [Nara edition], 5 March 1993).

in February 1995 found the base of the platform on which it was built.<sup>69</sup> Like Nishi Tonzuka, Hashihaka is designated by the government as the tomb of an imperial family member (Yamato-toto-hi-momoso-hime), and access to the tomb itself is prohibited. The excavation was conducted in conjunction with repair work on the dike of a pond situated immediately adjacent to the restricted area, on the north side of the tomb. As the natural setting slopes downward from southeast to northwest, a foundation had to be built on the lower northern side to provide a level platform on which the lowest tier of the tomb was then constructed. The excavators quite unexpectedly uncovered the base of this foundation, nearly two meters below the present ground surface and extending northward beyond the boundary of restricted access. This allows dating the start of the tomb's construction to the latter decades of the third century—or perhaps earlier, depending on how the pottery associated with the platform is identified and its age calculated.

The method for estimating the age of the tomb is an extension of that used by Shiraishi for assessing the start of Sue production, although the pottery involved is an earthenware generically referred to as *hajiki* 土師器, or Haji ware. Haji represents an indigenous pottery tradition that evolved out of earlier Yayoi-period earthenwares. The style of Haji found at the base of Hashihaka is identified by the excavator, Terasawa Kaoru 寺沢薫, as 'Furu 0'. In an earlier study of Haji typology, Terasawa notes that a style that he labels 'Furu 4' is found in the same contexts with the earliest Sue styles, TK-216 and TK-73.<sup>70</sup> According to Terasawa, this allows dating Furu 4 to the beginning of the fifth century; if we calculate backward, the number of intervening styles multiplied by an estimated average duration per style (20–25 years) places Furu 0 at the end of the third century (Figure 3).<sup>71</sup> It should be noted, however, that there is considerable variation in opinion among archaeologists working in the region regarding the definition of pottery styles. Also, analysis of the pottery from Hashihaka has only just begun, and the preliminary identifications are open to question. Different assessments of the tomb's age are accordingly possible, and some researchers indeed suggest an age of 250, thereby taking the tomb right to the time of Himiko's death, and strengthening the circumstantial argument for Yamatai being Yamato.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>69</sup> 'Hashihaka Kofun "Chikuzō wa 3 Seiki Kōhan"' 箸墓古墳「築造は3世紀後半」, in *Asahi Shimbun*, 17 February 1995.

<sup>70</sup> Terasawa Kaoru, 'Kinai Furushiki Hajiki o Meguru Ni San no Mondai' 畿内の古式土師器をめぐる二、三の問題, in *Nara-ken Shiseki Meishō Tennen Kinenbutsu Chōsa Hōkoku* 奈良県史跡名勝天然記念物調査報告, 49: *Yabe Iseki* 矢部遺跡, Nara Kenritsu Kashihara Kōkogaku Kenkyūjo, Kashihara, Nara, 1986, pp. 366 & 383.

<sup>71</sup> Terasawa Kaoru, researcher with the Nara Prefectural Archaeological Research Institute at Kashihara. Informal interview conducted on 24 February 1995.

<sup>72</sup> Okita Masaaki, who has worked extensively on Haji typologies in the Kinai region, suggests that the earliest pottery from Hashihaka is more properly classified as belonging to the Shōnai 庄内 styles that preceded Furu 0. Okita Masaaki, professor of archaeology, Tenri University. Informal interview conducted on 24 February 1995.

*An Irreducible Area of Doubt in an Ongoing Debate*

The pendulum of argument over Yamatai's location—firmly linked with Kyushu in the early Edo period, claimed by Kyoto archaeologists Umehara and Kobayashi as belonging in Kinai, and more recently associated in the popular mind with the spectacular discoveries in Kyushu—thus appears to be swinging once again toward the Kinai region. For many archaeologists currently working on the problem of the emergence of keyhole tombs, however, the link between the early Yamato polity and Yamatai as its Late Yayoi precursor was never in doubt. Such an assertion is found, for example, in an important synthesis of archaeological data on Kofun-period political and economic developments recently made by Tsude Hiroshi 都出比呂志, a Kobayashi protégé and one of the most influential figures among currently active archaeologists.<sup>73</sup> Noting the apparent superiority of northern Kyushu in the first century A.D., as judged by its wealth of imported grave goods, Tsude associates the decline of this region in the following century with the period of 'disturbances and warfare' mentioned in *Wajinden*, and proposes that one cause was a struggle for control over access to sources of raw iron in southern Korea, a resource especially vital prior to the start of domestic smelting in the sixth century. The spread of Kinai-style moated precinct burials to Kyushu in the Late Yayoi period suggests that the strife concluded with a league of Kinai chiefs gaining superiority. Just after these developments the standardized form of keyhole tomb emerges, indicating the spread of Yamato political influence over the major portion of the archipelago. Given these considerations, notes Tsude, 'we should probably regard the country of Yamatai, where Himiko is said to have dwelled in *Wajinden*, as lying in the Kinai region.'<sup>74</sup>

In my opinion, the argument for Kinai will continue to gain in persuasive power as more is learned about the early keyhole tomb complex: the nature of the socioeconomic processes leading to its emergence, and especially, the timing of these developments. But whatever final judgment may be given on the age of the tombs, and whatever arguments made thereon about the location of Yamatai, I suspect there will always be (barring the highly unlikely discovery of a truly definitive piece of evidence, such as the gold seal recorded as given to Himiko) an irreducible element of doubt enveloping the issue, grounded in the ambiguous nature of *Wajinden's* geographical descriptions. Even if the archaeological preeminence of Yamato is demonstrated for the mid-third century, for example, it is always possible to make the same argument that held sway during most of the Edo period: that the Chinese envoys never journeyed beyond Kyushu, where they were duped by a local figure posing as the mightiest authority in the land. Hence it is unlikely that the riddle of Yamatai's location will be answered with complete certainty at any point.

<sup>73</sup> Tsude, '*Nihon Kodai no Kokka Keiseiron Josetsu*'. I am preparing a translation of this work for publication in the near future.

<sup>74</sup> Tsude, p. 33.

Continuation of debate over the issue is assured by the ongoing level of interest in the question of Yamatai, and the multiplicity of voices that have recently been heard. New book titles dealing with Yamatai, which averaged about one per year during the 1950s and '60s, increased to more than ten yearly in the 1970s and over fifteen per year during the 1980s.<sup>75</sup> Kitō notes that the recent spurt in publications on Yamatai is caused partly by the participation of non-academic figures, such as mystery novelist Matsumoto Seichō, and suggests that the popularization of the issue is linked with a renewed sense of cultural pride and interest in national roots fueled by postwar economic success.<sup>76</sup>

From a longer perspective, it may be argued that the postwar interest in national roots is linked with a fundamental change in the sense of historical understanding. With the military defeat, the emperor-centered view of history that had earlier held sway was discredited, and open investigation of the past became feasible for the first time. This triggered an archaeological 'boom' of the early postwar years that was fed in part by a desire to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of the prewar view of history, and to establish new understandings of national origins.<sup>77</sup> As the Japanese continue to take a renewed look at the past for sources of identity in the present, Himiko, the earliest named historical figure, will surely remain a magnetic source of interest, and an inspiration for continuing efforts to determine the location of Yamatai.

<sup>75</sup> These data are taken from the Diet Library database, and represent holdings indexed under the keywords 'Yamatai' and 'Himiko', edited to delete duplicate items and reissued titles.

<sup>76</sup> Kitō, pp. 272–73 & 286–91.

<sup>77</sup> For an example of an early postwar investigation and its significance in terms of changing understandings of history, see Walter Edwards, 'Buried Discourse: The Toro Archaeological Site and Japanese National Identity in the Early Postwar Period', in *JJS* 17:1 (1991), pp. 1–23.