

## EDITOR'S NOTE

I am glad to announce the launching of the print version of the Bulletin of the Society for East Asian Archaeology (BSEAA). The first issue, after collecting and publishing articles online at SEAA-web throughout the last year, has now been concluded and appears as BSEAA, Vol. 1 (2007), in a complete and paginated version and under its own ISSN (1864-6026).

BSEAA provides a means for publishing manuscripts, such as field reports, project outlines, conference reports, book reviews, museum roundups, descriptions of places of interest etc., or brief essays on various issues in East Asian archaeology. The articles of BSEAA will continue to appear online at varying intervals over the year. We are thus trying to diminish the usual delay between submitting a paper and having it published.

SEAA members enjoy a pre-reading period of three months for published articles, and will moreover have access to PDFs of the single articles with fully done layout, as well as to the complete PDF print version of BSEAA being prepared at the end of each year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our webmaster, Michael MOOS, for all the extra work he has done for both SEAA-web and BSEAA; without him our website wouldn't work at all. He also is responsible for the nicely done layout of both online and print version. I am grateful also to the authors of the first volume for sharing their expertise in the field and having their manuscripts published on SEAA-web. It was a great pleasure to work together.

The inaugural volume of BSEAA focuses on issues in Yayoi and Kofun period Japan from different angles:

More than five years have elapsed since the National Museum of Japan announced the re-dating of the beginning of the Yayoi period, based on new data obtained from AMS dating of organic samples attached to pottery sherds. Yayoi, so it was said, began more than

500 years earlier than thought. The announcement triggered a hot debate among archaeologists, mainly in Japan, and the controversy has not since lost its explosiveness. SHŌDA Shinya analyses the different levels of the Yayoi dating controversy in detail, and uncovers the reasons lying behind this unsettled and at the same time absorbing debate.

In September 2006, Jane OKSBJERG joined the team of the Kyūshū University Dep. of Archaeology for an excavation campaign at the Yayoi period Karakami site on Iki Island (Nagasaki Prefecture), lying off the coast of North Kyūshū. Her vivid and graphic account of the investigation, accompanied by numerous snapshots from the field, allows a genuine look at what digging is like in today's Japan.

Another stimulating field report from Jane OKSBJERG takes us to one of the centres of Kofun period culture in Okayama Prefecture. "The Last Excavation at Shōbuzako Kofun" allows intriguing insight into the development of large scale kofun mounds in ancient Kibi, and what it means for the perception of political power in Late Kofun.

A major issue in Japanese archaeology, the transition between Yayoi and Kofun cultures raises many questions relating to the emergence of keyhole-shaped mounds, state formation processes, and – needless to say – the whole range of the Yamatai/Yamato problem. Two contributions address specific topics in this context:

Joseph A. STYLES ("A Contested Chronology of the Yayoi-Kofun Transition"), reviewing aspects of Gina L. BARNES' as well as J. Edward KIDDER's latest publications, reevaluates absolute dating connected to the intriguing Hashikaka mound, linking it even closer to the historic account of queen Himiko.

TSUJITA Jun'ichirō calls attention to finds of fragmented bronze mirrors from latest Yayoi and Early Kofun environments, thus assessing "The Change in the

Distribution System of Bronze Mirrors at the Beginning of Kofun Period Japan" and its impact on the analysis of the appearance of local elites in the Kinki region.

Concluding Vol. 1 of BSEAA (2007), two reprints of early works of Edward Sylvester MORSE take us to the very beginning of western interest in Japanese archaeology. Annotated and introduced by Michael MOOS ("Two Essays on Japanese Archaeology by Edward S. MORSE"), MORSE's "Traces of an Early Race in Japan" (1879) and "Dolmens in Japan" (1880) start a small series on Classical Western Writings on East Asian Archaeology and Anthropology in BSEAA that will be continued in the next volume.

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*Hattingen, May 22, 2008*