



15 Ewer with bridge handle and "erased cord" designs, from Ibaraki prefecture. Late Jōmon phase (c. 1500–1000 B.C.E.). Earthenware; height 8 ¼ in. (22.3 cm). Tatsuuma Archaeological Museum, Nishinomiya City, Hyōgo prefecture.



16 Lacquered shallow bowl with painted designs, found at Aomori, Kamegaoka site. Final Jōmon phase (c. 1000–400 B.C.E.). Earthenware; diameter 8 in. (20.5 cm). Aomori Prefectural Museum, Aomori.

The explosion of diversity that characterized Middle Jōmon pottery is countered in the last two phases by a reduction to a much more standardized output. However, the number and size of kiln sites suggests that the scale of pottery production seems, if anything, to have increased, with centralized manufacture becoming the norm. Among the standardized

cooking pots with only slightly flared walls and others with spouts, resembling teapots, there are also some vessels of very refined execution which can only be described as serving dishes, including a kind of shallow bowl. These Late and Final Jōmon wares are distinctively black with highly polished surfaces, and they are commonly decorated with a technique referred to as "erased-cord marking". With this method, designated zones of decoration were incised on the surface of a vessel, cord markings were applied and the area surrounding the zones smoothed out. A particularly refined example of this technique is a Late Jōmon "teapot" from Ibaraki prefecture (Fig. 15). On the swelling sides of the body, in a wide zone marked off by a pattern resembling a double-stranded cord, bands of incised lines form a circle, within which is a shape resembling a figure eight. S-shapes are cut into the incised bands at irregular intervals, and the whole is framed by a curved and angular zigzag design.

In the Final Jōmon, the Tōhoku region of northern Honshū became the center both of the population and of pottery production. Kamegaoka, a site in Aomori prefecture, gives its name to the wares of this phase. Kamegaoka ceramics were frequently burnished, painted with red iron oxide and lacquered with a clear resin over pigment, presumably to reduce their porosity as well as to decorate them. An excellent example of this is the shallow bowl (Fig. 16) found at Aomori, which is also an example of the new kind of serving dish. The bold iron oxide swirls on a black ground elegantly echo the carefully modeled body of the bowl. There has been a certain amount of speculation that such fine serving/presentation wares in the Late and Final Jōmon might be one of the indications that the much reduced population of this period was beginning to stratify into a strict hierarchy, these bowls being important signifiers of a person or family group's status within this hierarchy. Certainly there seems to be some differentiation in burial practices during this period, with a small, but significant minority of graves being better equipped than those of their neighbors. However, such speculation has often led to the projection of earlier Jōmon phases, which do not have such clear indications of social differentiation, as a kind of Arcadian republic, a lost golden age of human equality succeeded by ages that brought civilization but also despotic tyranny. Tempting and comforting though this image might be, it should be remembered that twentieth-century anthropological studies of societies existing at a paleolithic or neolithic level have seldom if ever stumbled across such a utopia.

The Yayoi Period (c. 400 B.C.E.–300 C.E.)

While the Jōmon population was shifting ever further north, according to archaeological evidence the southern extremes of Honshū and Kyūshū became ever more sparsely populated. Never the principal areas of settlement during the Jōmon period, they suddenly from around 400 B.C.E. became the focus for a new kind of agricultural-based culture—the Yayoi.

Ironically enough Yayoi is in fact the name of a district of Tokyo where the first archaeological finds relating to this period were found. Yet it would not be until the period was somewhat advanced that Yayoi-type settlements would actually extend up into this ancient heartland of the Jōmon. Yayoi culture is distinguished from the Jōmon by several elements: the manufacture of bronze and iron objects, the cultivation of rice and, in association with it, the establishment of comparatively large (when compared with Jōmon) settled communities. It remains a matter of considerable debate and ongoing research exactly how Japan stepped so late, but so suddenly, from a hunter-gatherer lithic culture to one that worked metal and focused almost entirely on the cultivation of rice.

One long-standing theory has been that the people of the Yayoi are a colonial invasion from Korea and/or China, displacing the indigenous Jōmon. The case for this arises from the fact that the earliest yet known Yayoi sites have been located in Kyūshū—not far from the southern tip of the Korean peninsula—and that these sites display a complete and fully evolved practice of rice cultivation as also employed on the continent where it had taken many thousands of years to evolve. Although charred rice grains have been discovered at the few Final Jōmon sites to be found in Kyūshū, their presence a few hundred years prior to the Yayoi is unlikely ever to be convincingly argued as evidence for an indigenous evolution of rice culture. Furthermore, although much of the Yayoi metalwork appears rough, crude and even deliberately archaic in comparison to contemporary developments on the Asian mainland, it nevertheless does not resemble the products of a nascent metalworking culture.

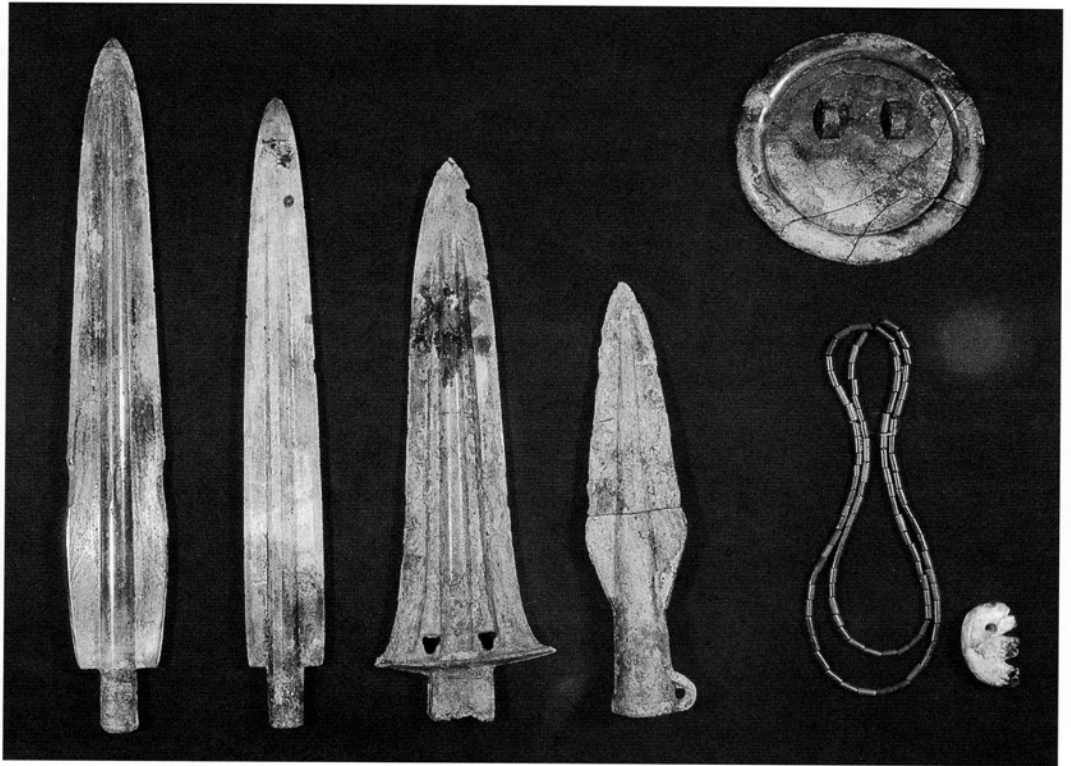
Apart from the archaeological evidence, supporters of the colonization theory look also at the case of the Ainu, who live on Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido. The Ainu believe themselves, and are traditionally believed by the Japanese, to be descended from people who once inhabited all the islands of the archipelago, but were pushed ever northward across the islands by the Japanese, only retreating entirely to the island of Hokkaido in early historic times in the second half of the first millennium C.E. Until the late nineteenth century, the Ainu lived in a well-developed hunter-gatherer society. These people, the colonial theorists would argue, are the remnants of the Jōmon culture, while the Japanese are descendants of the Yayoi colonizers.

A more recent line of thought, however, is that the Yayoi is not so much a colonial invasion, as a revolution—and a technological and social one at that. This argument runs that the presence of a fully formed ricegrowing and metalworking culture need not indicate displacement, but instead a kind of industrial and agricultural revolution. Certainly these changes were imported from the continent, but they could as easily have been brought back and used to transform the existing Jōmon society, just as after 1868 Japan—long cut off from the world—became fully exposed to the fruits of the Western Industrial Revolution, and within the space of a century utterly transformed itself.

One of this theory's supporting arguments is that there is very little evidence of violent death amongst the buried of the early Yayoi period, or of an inordinant amount of dead, or burnt or otherwise violently destroyed settlements, as one would expect to find with a colonization and displacement of the aboriginal community. Oddly enough, such evidence does surface in the middle Yayoi period—around the beginning of the first millennium C.E.—but in a context where the adversaries must almost certainly have been other Yayoi peoples. Furthermore, while there are many details of the material culture that are exactly mirrored on the continent, there is nothing in Korea or China from which the whole of Yayoi society could be derived, whereas there are likely inheritances to be found in Yayoi culture from the Jōmon, most tangibly in the ceramic and lithic production.

It is also important not to overlook the testimony of Japan's first written history, the *Kojiki* (*Record of Ancient Matters*). Compiled in 712, it gathered together all of the myths surrounding the gods of Japan, how the islands were created, and how they came to be ruled by the Japanese imperial house (the Yamato), and related the reigns of the emperors of that house up to the Empress Gemmei (r. 708–14) who commissioned the work in the early eighth century. It was supplemented by the *Nihon shoki* (*Chronicle of Japan*, alternatively titled *Nihongi*) in 720, which revised the earlier text and added mythological and historical information gathered by imperial officials from the different prefectures and written up in reports known as *fudoki*. Of course, both texts were intended to glorify the imperial house and to justify its right to rule the whole of Japan. Therefore, the first ruler, Ninigi, is the grandson of the sun goddess Amaterasu, who sent her descendent with a retinue of eight million deities down to the earth (i.e., Japan) to rule it. Ninigi found Japan already ruled by a race of earth deities (he and his grandmother being of the race of heavenly deities). Therefore, Ninigi formed alliances with, fought with, intermarried with, and ultimately subdued the legions of earth deities. Ninigi's great grandson, Jimmu, is the first human emperor, and tradition holds that he reigned from 660 to 585 B.C.E. Furthermore, Ninigi descended to and subdued the island of Kyūshū, and it was only in the reign of Jimmu that the imperial house departed for southern Honshū where they ultimately made the Yamato Plain their home.

The traditional dates for Jimmu and presumably that of his great grandfather Ninigi place them squarely within what archaeology so far believes to be the non-agricultural and lithic society of the Final Jōmon phase. These dates established in the eighth century C.E. are—like a great deal in the text and of the period—influenced and shaped by Chinese historical precedents, in whose relatively ancient written historical culture dates in the mid first millennium B.C.E. would be considered venerable, but hardly the mists of time. Nevertheless, allowing for a bit of chronological hyperbole on the part of the compilers of the *Kojiki* as well as for the pitfalls they must have encountered in applying the Chinese sixty-year calendar cycle to dates for Japan's protohistorical period, the arrival of Ninigi



17 Swords, halberd, spear, mirror, tubular beads and *magatama* jewel, from Yoshitake Takagi, Fukuoka prefecture. Yayoi period, 2nd century B.C.E. Bronze and steatite; length (swords only) 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. and 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (33.4 cm and 30.2 cm). Fukuoka City Museum, Fukuoka, Agency for Cultural Affairs.

in Kyūshū and the departure of Jimmu for Honshū and the Yamato Plain only differ by a couple of hundred years from the appearance of the first Yayoi sites in Kyūshū and their spread north from the island.

THE THREE SACRED TREASURES

Curiously enough, another aspect of Japanese traditional lore appears to be borne out by a grave in northern Kyūshū dating to the second century B.C.E. (Fig. 17). In the grave were a quantity of objects, including a bronze mirror very probably of Korean manufacture and cast with sophisticated geometric designs on its back, two bronze daggers, a bronze spearhead, a bronze halberd, and an E-shaped stone bead known in later epochs as a *magatama*, although it is more often in a C-shaped form. Within a scientific archaeological context, these are goods that belong to a high-status member of the community, the bronze blades are Korean in form and (in a period when iron would have been used for actual weapons) ceremonial in nature. Whether that ceremonial purpose was limited to burial, or if it was also applied in life remains open to speculation. In the opinion of Koji Mizoguchi, the mirror and *magatama* were certainly indicators of the deceased's status while living. He points out that the lens of the mirror is not flat, but is instead curved inward so that it will concentrate the light and is therefore designed to reflect and communicate with the spirit world. Based on the combination of the blades, mirror, and *magatama*, Mizoguchi describes the deceased as a shamanistic leader.

For the *Kojiki* and Shinto religion, this grouping of objects is nothing other than the *Sanshu no jingi* (Three Sacred Treasures), regalia given by the imperial grandmother, the sun goddess Amaterasu, to her grandson Ninigi to bring down to earth. The association of the mirror with Amaterasu remains an all-important symbol. According to mythology, it relates to the occasion when Amaterasu, angered by the irresponsible and destructive antics of her brother Susano-o no Mikoto, shut herself into a cave, thereby extinguishing all light from the world. When the contrite Susano-o and the other gods managed to persuade her to rejoin them, the mirror was placed in the cave to be a proxy for the goddess. When Amaterasu hands the mirror to Ninigi, she charges him:

My child, when thou lookest upon this mirror, let it be as if thou wert looking on me. Let it be with thee on thy couch and in the hall, and let it be to thee a holy mirror.

W.G. Aston, trans., *Nihongi*, London, 1896, 83.

Thus the mirror carries several associations: the magic power to reflect an image even in the dark, the symbol of the sun goddess, and the extension of her power to others. By the time of the writing of the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*, these others meant only one entity, the imperial house. To this day, this grouping of sword, mirror, and *magatama* remain the imperial regalia, although the original mirror is held to be in the custody of the Ise Shrine. Yet within Yayoi culture, perhaps people other than the ancestors of the Yamato emperors also held the mirror as an extension of divine and/or continental authority.

The nature of the transition from the neolithic Jōmon to the Iron Age Yayoi may never be completely understood. Still, the combination of archaeological and written testimony can give some idea. It does seem that well before the advent of the first Yayoi site Jōmon settlement in the Kyūshū, Shikoku, and southern Honshū islands had declined to a point where vast areas of these territories were unlikely to have been occupied on a permanent basis. If there had been an incursion of technologically advanced colonists to this southern region, would they necessarily have encountered any significant amount of armed resistance to their occupation? By the same token, it is evident from Final Jōmon sites in Kyūshū that rice was not unknown to these communities, and that, increasingly dependent on the sea, they might have more opportunity of commerce and trade with the kingdoms of the Korean peninsula. Perhaps, at least in part, the Yayoi transition to metalworking and agriculture took place within formerly lithic communities, while the wholesale adoption of the external accoutrements and social organization of their Korean (and possibly also Chinese) neighbors—particularly by the community's elite—may have been seen as an important factor in the agricultural and technological revolution. Certainly such a passionate adoption of foreign technologies and customs and the setting aside of native custom occurs to varying degrees throughout Japanese history.

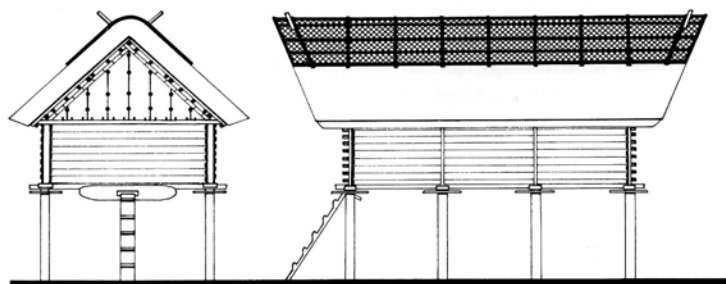
Another popular theory of recent years is that perhaps some Korean elites abandoned their homeland due to overly aggressive neighbors and set themselves up instead in southern Kyūshū either through force or through intermarriage—bringing some of their people with them, but not entirely displacing the native population which (perhaps eagerly) was assimilating to this technologically advanced and ecologically more stable society. That amongst the new Japanese of the seventh and eighth centuries there still persisted, even in the central Yamato Plain, *emishi* (barbarian; i.e., uncivilized and unassimilated) elements within the greater population (usually in the unenviable position of slaves), suggests that what perhaps did begin as a lifestyle choice in the fourth century B.C.E. had a thousand years later become an ethnic division between what was regarded as the Japanese and an uncivilized other.

By the second century B.C.E., however, the transition to Yayoi-type settlements across Kyūshū, Shikoku, and all but the Tohoku region of northern Honshū appears to have been effected. These settlements do not seem to have been connected under a central authority, but each operated as an independent polity. As evinced by the grave goods in these communities, they had not only taken on agricultural and metalworking technologies from—most likely—Korea, but they had also adapted (or brought with them) a continental social organization with a shamanic/warrior aristocracy atop an agricultural peasant base.

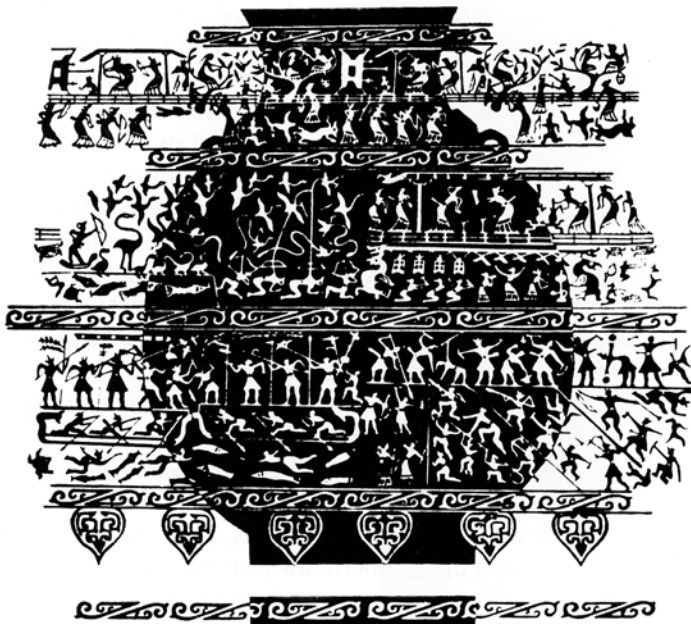
The discovery in 1989 of the Yoshinogari site on the island of Kyūshū adds to our picture of life in the early Yayoi period. It is one of the largest settlements found to date, consisting of some three hundred pit dwellings—one significantly

larger than the rest, presumably the residence of the local leader—and all enclosed within two moats. Inside the inner moat were four watchtowers estimated to be about 36 feet (11 m) tall and outside the outer moat were twenty raised storehouses. More than two thousand burial sites were found to the northwest of the village. Occupation of the site began in the second century B.C.E. at the beginning of the middle Yayoi period and peaked around the first century C.E. Yoshinogari demonstrates that by the middle Yayoi period relatively large agricultural communities had formed in Kyūshū. Moats are not an infrequent feature of early to middle Yayoi settlements, and in the past have generally been interpreted as defensive structures. However, Koji Mizoguchi has pointed out that these moats existed during a period when the archaeological evidence points to a fairly peaceful coexistence between the different communities, whereas later in the period, when there is considerable evidence of armed conflict, such moats are not found or have silted up. Furthermore, if the moats were defensive, why were the rice granaries placed outside them? He posits the theory that, instead of being defensive structures, the moats are in fact elements of a primitive system of irrigation for the rice paddies.

Certainly, by the middle of the Yayoi period when the moats fall out of use, cultivation techniques had advanced to a more recognizable irrigation system that allowed for relatively easy regulation of the flow of water into the rice paddies. These techniques, together with the development of new farming tools, resulted in a rapid increase in the number of villages in Kyūshū, and subsequently the spread of Yayoi settlements into southwestern Honshū, and later throughout this larger island. In addition a new type of building had been designed to store the harvests as demonstrated by the Yoshinogari site. In the Jōmon, their gathered crops of nuts and roots were kept in storage pits, but in the Yayoi—perhaps influenced by continental prototypes—a new granary was developed to store rice. A rectangular building made of wood planks, it was covered with a thatched roof, and the whole raised off the ground on stilts, and reached by a set of steep steps or ladder (Fig. 18). The obvious advantage of this type of



18 Elevations of a Yayoi raised storehouse. Yayoi period (c. 400 B.C.E.–300 C.E.). (Pierre and Liliane Giroux, after Ōta Hirotarō, from *The Art of Ancient Japan*, Editions Citadelles, Paris.)



19 Schematic reconstruction of scenes on Chinese bronze vessel. c. 480–222 B.C.E. Courtesy Zhang Suicheng, *China Today*, Beijing.

structure is that it prevented the rice from rotting by providing a layer of air between it and the moist ground. More interestingly it would be adapted in the succeeding centuries as a kind of sacred architecture.

Metal objects—bronze weapons and mirrors, and iron tools—were first imported from Korea and China early in the Yayoi period, and soon afterward there is evidence that these objects were beginning to be locally made. By the end of the Yayoi period, Japanese craftsmen had advanced enough to reproduce the complicated designs cast on Korean and Chinese mirrors. Curiously, however, these bronze objects, the mirrors and weapons, and also a kind of bell (*dōtaku*), were reproduced in styles that had often long gone out of fashion on the mainland—usually by at least a couple of hundred years. As demonstrated by the *Sanshu no jingi* (Three Sacred Treasures) of the second-century B.C.E. grave burial in Kyūshū, the bronze mirror and blades were markers of status and ceremonial. The archaic nature of these objects' design, therefore, would appear to hark back to some continental heritage which justified their possessor's status within the community—just as the original Three Sacred Treasures were given as imperial regalia to Ninigi by the sun goddess Amaterasu as indication that he ruled on the earth by the will of herself and of heaven.

DŌTAKU

While bronze blades and mirrors are a feature of burials in Kyūshū, in southern Honshū, primarily the Kyoto–Osaka area, and on Shikoku there can also be found the bronze bell, or *dōtaku*. More than four hundred of them have been discovered,

often deliberately buried in hoards. In type, they seem to be related most closely to the Chinese *zhong*, a kind of bell without a clapper common to Chinese cultures of the first millennium B.C.E. *Zhong* of decreasing size and tone would be suspended from a framework along with stone chimes and struck as part of ritual music. One such assemblage is depicted on the side of a Chinese bronze vessel dating to between 480 and 222 B.C.E. (Fig. 19). Framed above and below by scenes of warfare, the *zhong* and chime assemblage can be seen above figures poised to strike them. A pair of fantastic bird or dragon figures frame the supporting bar. Whether in Japan the *zhong/dōtaku* were ever meant for musical use or simply for ceremonial presence is the topic of continuing research.

Yayoi *dōtaku* are 4–51 inches (10–130 cm) in height and consist of an oval body, a semicircular handle, and a flange that extends from the base of the bell to its apex. Most have geometric designs arranged in bands or blocks over the body, though occasionally a few figural images appear. The most



20 *Dōtaku* with designs of animals, plants and daily life, from Kagawa prefecture. Late Yayoi period, c. 100 B.C.E.–300 C.E. Bronze; each: height 16 7/8 in. (42.8 cm). Tokyo National Museum.



21 Pedestal and other vessels, found at Kurita. Middle Yayoi Period, c. 100 B.C.E.–100 C.E. Painted earthenware; height 20 7/8 in. (53 cm). Prefectural Amagi Museum, Fukuoka.

interesting bells, both visually and from the point of view of history, are those showing figures interacting. A bell from Kagawa prefecture in Shikoku has reliefs of people engaged in various activities, as well as animals, birds, and insects (Fig. 20). Reading from right to left, in the upper tier of blocks are depicted a praying mantis, dragonflies, and a salamander. In the middle tier there are two cranes and a turtle, a man shooting at a deer, and a figure in midair, identified by J. Edward Kidder as a shaman performing a ritual involving leaping. The bottom tier of illustrations is perhaps the more interesting. A man aims a bow and arrow at a wild boar held at bay by five small animals, perhaps dogs trained to hunt. Next, a turtle and a salamander are shown together, and finally there are two village scenes showing a granary and two people pounding rice.

The sticklike treatment of the human figures is too diagrammatic for gender distinction, but, as Kidder has pointed out, the heads of the leaping shaman, the hunter, and one of the pounders are suggested by outlines, while the head of the other pounder is solid, possibly representing a woman. Although the pictures are simply and even crudely executed, perhaps this—as with the mirrors and blades of Kyūshū—is a deliberate archaism.

CERAMICS

Although the appearance of metal objects is the most dazzling development within Yayoi material culture, the objects most commonly found at Yayoi sites are—as with the Jōmon—ceramics. Like their neolithic predecessors, they are unglazed earthenware ceramics used both as ritual objects and for everyday living, and virtually in continuation of developments in the Final Jōmon phase, their shapes are standardized, being limited primarily to tall, narrow-necked vessels, pitchers, wide-mouthed cooking pots, and storage jars and bowls, some with pedestals (Fig. 21). As in the Jōmon period, they are built of stacked coils of clay, although their final shaping and embellishing has sometimes been done on a recent innovation, the rotating wheel. They continued to be fired in open fires, but also were sometimes placed in pit kilns. Although many Yayoi vessels are simply painted red, some are decorated with incised geometric designs such as zigzags, pricked lines, and patterns made with a comb. Others have raised appliqué designs that run the gamut from a simple row of button-like shapes around the neck of a vessel to shapes symbolizing a human face.

A clay vessel from the western plain of Honshū, in the region of ancient Yamato and present-day Kyoto, Osaka, and Nara, is a particularly fine example of the drag and press technique of decoration (Fig. 22). To make this pattern, the comb was pressed into the clay vertically and then dragged

22 Pitcher, from the Kansai region, Nara prefecture. Middle Yayoi period, c. 100 B.C.E.–100 C.E. Clay; height 8 3/8 in. (21.9 cm). Nara Prefectural Kashihara Archaeological Institute Museum, Kashihara.





across the surface. The vessel sits on a rather tall base, into which leaf-shaped holes have been cut. The belly swells outward above the base and the form narrows again at the neck. The surface of the vessel has been divided into registers, four on the neck and seven on the body, and these have been decorated with a variety of motifs: zigzag lines, diagonal pricking of the surface, and a design the Japanese call the "bamboo blind," a combination of wide horizontal and thin, raised vertical lines. A handle is attached horizontally below the lowest point of the curving lip. The shape of the pitcher is sturdy but refined, contrasting the smooth surface of the cylindrical base with the natural swelling and narrowing of the body, which is embellished with shallowly impressed comb markings.

Although they are relatively rare, there is a group of Yayoi pottery vessels that present interesting problems of interpretation. While varying greatly in shape, the individual pieces share a common characteristic: the depiction of a human face on the neck or body of the jar. One such vessel is seen in Figure 23, and was found in a cemetery in Ibaraki prefecture with forty-one separate burials. It is unusually tall, measuring about 28 inches (70 cm), has a flat base, and swells to its



23 Vessel with human face, from Ibaraki prefecture. Middle Yayoi period, c. 100 B.C.E.–100 C.E. Earthenware; height 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (70.2 cm). Tokyo National Museum.

widest point midway between the base and the rim. On one side, beginning at the neck and extending to the rim, is the representation of a human face, suggested by a thin ridge of clay that curves below the mouth at the jawline, two ear-like projections, and raised ridges to indicate the nose, lips, and eyelids. The areas around the eyes and mouth are scored with diagonal lines cut into the clay.

Kidder has suggested that large vessels with short necks like that in Figure 23 may have been used for storing grain, with the face intended as a protecting presence. In a funerary context, these grain containers would be either an offering to the spirit world or food for the deceased. Other theories revolve around Yayoi burial preparations, in particular the practice of a secondary burial. With all except a minority of very high-status burials (such as the one in Kyūshū with the Three Sacred Treasures), after a body had been buried for a certain period of time, it would be exhumed, the bones washed and possibly painted with red ocher, and reburied in a large earthenware jar. A vessel with a long narrow neck and a face just below the rim may have contained water and been used in the bone-washing ceremony, while a large, wide-necked storage jar would have received the bones. As these pieces with human faces are usually found singly in a cemetery among many plain jars, the protecting presence symbolized by the face may have been intended to protect the spirits of all the deceased buried around it.

Although there has so far been no evidence of written documents found at Yayoi sites, the period is still considered to be a protohistorical one because of the mention of Japan in contemporaneous Chinese records, and in particular those of the *Hanshu*. This history of China's first great imperial dynasty, the Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), records mention of an embassy arriving in 57 C.E. from a ruler of Na (JAP. Wa) who craved recognition by the Emperor Guangwu (r. 25–58) as the supreme ruler of Na. This the emperor conferred in the form of a golden seal. In fact, Na/Wa has been correlated with not the entire archipelago, but merely with Kyūshū, which is described in the Chinese annals as a congregation of tiny kingdoms. Almost two hundred years later in the *Weizhi*—the annals of the state of Wei (220–52), one of the successor states of the Han empire located on the southeastern coast of present-day China—there is mention of an embassy of 238 from a certain Himiko, a female ruler of Yamatai (an alternative reading of Yamato), which is once again located in Kyūshū. Himiko is also referred to in the Chinese text as the sovereign of Na, conjoining the name of the future imperial house with that of the ancient name given by China and Korea for Japan. The *Weizhi* also records the sudden death of Himiko and that a vast tomb mound was erected to her, accompanied by the sacrifice of many hundreds of people—something which no archaeological finds of any Japanese period can even begin to confirm. In the Japanese *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, there is also a female ruler at this period, the empress Jingu (r. 201–70). Although embassies to Wei are not specifically mentioned, Jingu is most famous for having invaded and subdued the kingdoms of