March of the dogū

The perception of Japanese prehistoric figurines

in contemporary society

A bachelor thesis by Joran Smale

Cover illustrations

Top: 'Jōmon man Lost' by Sahoko Aki
Source: http://www.tkazu.com/saho/e/Art_works/art01.htm
(retrieved 08-01-2012)

Right: Dogū-chan, main character of the television show *'Kodai Shoujo Dogu-chan'* ('The Ancient Dogoo Girl'
Source: http://www.jefusion.com/2009/08/kodai-shoujo-doguchan-new-pictures.html
(retrieved 08-01-2012)

Bottom left: A float in the Nebuta Matsuri in Aomori City, Japan, in the form of Sanmaru, the dogū mascot of archaeological site Sannai Maruyama
Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/sudachi/2859576213/
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Left: Goggle-eyed dogu at the 'Power of Dogū'-exhibition in London
Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/davide-ferro/4046483950/
(retrieved 19-12-2009)

March of the dogū:
The perception of Japanese prehistoric figurines in contemporary society

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Preface

The subject of this thesis has undergone quite a bit of change, before finally settling on what sparked it all along: the Japanese prehistoric figurines known as dogū. Ever since discovering them in my first year of college, it seems my fate has been intertwined with these mysterious figurines from ancient times. They seemed familiar, and I realized I had unknowingly come across them before: in videogames and television series no less. This made me want to get to the bottom of their story. My first encounter in person would follow a year later in London in 2009, at the Power of Dogū exhibition in the British Museum. A year later they would be present in spirit at a Jōmon heritage colloquium in Paris, looking at us from brochures and badges. Both of these events I would not have been able to attend without my teacher, Dr. Ilona Bausch, to whom I am greatly indebted for all her continued support. Last year I finally had the opportunity to travel to Japan myself, and in my journey south from Hokkaido to Osaka our paths crossed yet again: while staying in Aomori city with Prof. Junko Habu's team I visited the Sannai Maruyama archaeological site museum, a place where many fragments of dogū where unearthed. It was also here that I could not help myself and stocked up on dogū and other Jōmon period merchandise. During my stay in Kyoto at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, once again made possible by Dr. Bausch, I met with the NEOMAP team and accompanied Junzo Uchiyama, Peter Jordan and several others for a public lecture as we visited two more museums, getting a good look at genuine Jōmon artifacts. My first journey to Japan has left many good memories in my mind, and I can't wait to add even more wonderful experiences the next time I visit. As it stands, this thesis would not have seen the light of day if it were not for inspiration I have received from those around me, as well as those I was fortunate enough to meet in my travels. For this I would like to thank, in no particular order: Simon Kaner, Tatsuo Kobayashi, Peter Jordan, Junko Habu, Junzo Uchiyama. Lastly, I have to give special thanks to my family and in particular my mother, for always backing me up and helping me in getting over the many hurdles that the writing of a first thesis brings with it.

1 – Introduction

Prehistoric anthropomorphic figurines have puzzled us for a long time. But while we might never be sure of their original meanings, it is possible to investigate what we do with these prehistoric figurines in our time and how they affect us. What does the way in which we nowadays interact and engage with figurines tell us about ourselves? And how does their perception in modern society influence their interpretation?

These are but a few of the many questions one can ask about figurines. It is not surprising that figurine studies are a well-established part of archaeology (Kaner 2009, 16). Figurines have something that fascinates us. They allow us to see the human form that is so familiar to us, moulded in clay or other materials. All over the world figurines have been unearthed, and everywhere they command great attention. This can be seen through a growing interest in miniature figures, resulting in an increasing number of publications on them in articles or catalogues since the turn of the century (e.g. Bailey 2005; Bailey, Cochrane and Zambelli 2010; Gheorghiu and Cyphers (eds.) 2010) as well as multiple museum exhibitions and symposia.

Japanese prehistoric figurines however are a special case. Known there as '*dogū*', written with the Chinese characters for 'earth'(土) and 'spirit' (偶), they were made from clay by the people who have created the oldest known pottery to date. They were made in great quantities in the Jōmon period (about 15.600 years to 3200 years ago), mainly in the second half of this period. Japan has also seen a large increase in archaeological excavation since the 1960s (Habu 2004, 19; Ikawa-Smith 1982, 296). This has yielded relatively many pieces of figurines compared to other regions. Typologies have been developed to make sense of their changing form over time. The extensive knowledge of figurines in this area therefore makes them a rich subject for archaeological research.

On the other hand, through the rise of media influence since the eighties that brought new and faster ways to broadcast and reach audiences, more than

ever dogū have also entered the public domain. As Nicole Rousmaniere has pointed out, they are visible not only in museum and art exhibitions but in popular culture, from manga to television to internet (Rousmaniere 2009, 79). They seem to have been adopted as an image, representing Japan's Jōmon past and cultural values, actively used inside as well as outside Japan.

Peter Ucko describes how figurine research in the 1950s and 1960s of the last century centered around descriptions of their appearance and how there was a neglect to use ethnographical comparisons. There did however appear a recognition of their variety of possible meaning, opening the door for theoretical discussions. In the sixties and seventies the gender diversities of the supposedly mostly female figurines (often all explained under the monolithic explanation of them being mother goddesses, an idea) became apparent, by pointing out the existence of figurines that were genderless or had male characteristics. In the following years traditional associations between for example obesity and fertility came under fire but it was still difficult to step away from these and on the one hand stylistic analysis was ignored (Ucko 1996, 301-302). In the eighties and nineties interpretation of figurines was simplified into apparent obvious uses and any attempt to with any certainty reconstruct the deeper meanings of the objects' makers was fruitless. Theories from anthropological analysis and ethnography were sought out to tackle this issue. The recognition of ambiguity in figurines reemerged and there was again a place for variety in interpretational theory. The critical analysis of gender in the nineties did away with the uncritical Mother Goddess approach (Ucko 1996, 302). Attention was shifted to questions of who made figurines, what their context was and their biographies as objects.

Relatively little research has been done on the perception of figurines in modern society as opposed to the more traditional focus on what their meanings and use could have been in the past. The aspects of interaction with figurines in the present day have consequences for the way in which they are presented to a larger audience and broader issues of identity and heritage. The relevance of this thesis lies in using dogū as a case study to elucidate this modern reception of figurines in order to come to a better way of representing them.

How can we explain the rediscovery of dogū? To examine this phenomenon, I will ask two questions: in what areas of modern society are dogū encountered, and why are they found there? To understand the reasons behind their recent revival, it will be necessary to take a look at Japan's own history with archaeology and the Jōmon Period. My hypothesis is that the modern surge of dogū popularity is a result of recent changes in Japan's dynamic identity and sense of connection with the past, as a result of which the figurines have now been given new roles, focusing on figurines as carriers of values. By approaching dogū in this way, I hope to make a fresh contribution to figurine studies from the angle of modern society's connection with the past.

To answer these questions, I have a dataset concerning dogū that consists mainly of publications by Westerners and also several Japanese who have published internationally in English. For documenting the occurrences of dogu in popular culture, the work of Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere (2009) as well as internet sources have been a great help. Last but not least I make use of my own experiences, from my visit to Japan in the summer of 2011 and attending The Power of Dogu exhibition in London and a Jōmon heritage colloquium in Paris.

The theoretical framework consists of many different fields of archaeological theoretical study, which due to the brevity of this thesis does not allow me to extensively delve into each subject. I nevertheless hope to apply at least part of the theory applicable to the subject of this thesis. I employ theory on nationalist archaeology and the political use of archaeology (Glover 2006, Trigger 1995). I also incorporate theory on identity (Díaz-Andreu 2005) and the perception of Japanese prehistory (Mizoguchi 2006a, 2006b). Views on heritage by Robin Skeates (2000) and both general museum studies (Ellis 2004) are supported by information about the modern archaeological practices in Japan (Habu 2004) and its musea (Barnes 1993).

I have constructed this thesis in such a way that it starts in the next chapter with a short background of the Jōmon period and its figurines. In this way I hope to provide a general understanding of the subject matter at hand, that is the Jōmon period and its figurines. After that I will explain my methodology and theoretical

framework in Chapter 3. The research this thesis presents will be split into two parts, chapter 4 examining dogū in Japan itself and chapter 5 in the West, to accommodate the research question concerning the places in which they occur and the factors explaining this. It must be noted it is absolutely not my intention to create an artificial inherent contrast between Japan and the West from some orientalist perspective, and the Japan-West construction merely followed from my attempt to organize and explain the appearance of dogū in both regions. Lastly, chapter 7 deals with the conclusions of this thesis by answering the research questions and also looking ahead to what they might mean for dogū in the future.

2 – Background: The Jōmon Period and its figurines

At the risk of generalizing too much, I shall first attempt a concise overview of our knowledge of the Jōmon period and its figurines. In order to better understand our view of dogū, it is important to know some of the facts on which our knowledge is based and the circumstances in which the Jōmon people found themselves when they expressed themselves through making clay figurines. This chapter therefore acts as a background to the study, being a short introduction to these aspects of prehistoric Jōmon Japan.

Dating

The Jōmon period is generally accepted to have lasted from about 15.600 years to 3200 years ago, making it, according to Japan's own definition, the single longest archaeological period in existence. It marks the entire period from the end of the last Ice Age to the start of rice cultivation. It is subdivided in six parts: Incipient (15.600-11.200 BP), Initial (11.200-7300 BP), Early (7300-5500 BP), Middle (5500-4500 BP), Late (4500-3200 BP) and Final (3200-2900 BP) Jōmon (approximations in BP from BC dates from Kobayashi 2004a, 5). The end of the Jōmon period in about 900 BC is when immigrants from the mainland arrive, bringing rice cultivation and metallurgy. Their new culture and techniques take root in most of Japan, save the north where remnants of Jōmon culture continue to manifest for a while longer.

Characterization and environment

The Jōmon is considered by many to be a Neolithic culture, though this definition is a controversial one. In the past, because of the prehistoric developments in the Near-East, the Neolithic had come to be seen as a 'package' consisting of sedentism, agriculture and pottery. Pottery specifically has been seen as a part of the Neolithic revolution (Hayden 2009, Jordan and Zvelebil 2009). In many

places pottery not only predates farming but occasionally even the Holocene (Jordan and Zvelebil 2009, 34). The Jōmon period seems to be a good example of a case where hunter-gatherer societies do make use of ceramics. The Jōmon people lived a sedentary lifestyle and made pottery, but without practicing any form of large-scale agriculture. As Kobayashi (2004a, 88) views it, the idea of Jōmon agriculture does not fit the interpretation of the Jōmon period, and it would be more appropriate to consider any possible cultigens that have been found as part of a broad spectrum subsistence strategy. Whether or not they practiced plant cultivation is still a hot topic of debate, but in a few cases possible cultigens have been found (Habu 2004, 60). The rising sea levels, starting 15.000 years ago with the end of the last Ice Age, resulted in a position of isolation as the Japan Sea now separated the archipelago from the mainland. The disappearance of the land bridge in the northern Soya strait has likely contributed to the developments of some of the Jōmon people's distinctive traits, such as their semi-neolithic lifestyle and large variety of pottery styles. A warming trend continued for the first half of the Holocene. The Early and Middle Jōmon period have been called a 'climatic optimum', characterized by deciduous forests and evergreen broadleaf forest. This was followed by a cooling down in the Late and Final Jōmon (Habu 2004, 42-44). The Late Jōmon climate shift sees a collapse in population numbers as many sites disappear and people resettle in more coastal areas (Doi 2009, 44).

Pottery

Japanese pottery developed from a ceramic tradition which marks the beginning of the Jōmon period about 15.600 years ago, a tradition to which dogū production is also unequivocally related. The early radiocarbon dates make it the oldest known pottery up to this day (Kobayashi 2004a, 19). Not surprisingly it has been the focus of a lot of archaeological research (e.g. Kaner 2009b; Kuzmin 2006; Kenrick 1995; Yoshida 2004). In fact, the word 'Jōmon' is the Japanese term for cord-marked, referring to the distinctive type of decoration on certain styles of ceramics. A detailed chronology has been developed, placing the many types and styles in order of appearance and allowing for precise relative dating through

potsherds. The first pots, mostly deep bowls in the Incipient Jōmon, had a round or pointed bottom, suited to rest in the earth to keep the pot upright. They were fired in the open air and used mainly for cooking and storage. It is not until the Middle Jōmon that a large variety of sometimes exuberant styles developed (Habu 2004, 203-204). Towards the end of the Jōmon period shallow bowls for the serving of food appear. Come the Yayoi period, pottery becomes more plainly decorated and more simple and practical in design.

Subsistence

The Jōmon people lived a hunter-gatherer lifestyle that was well adapted to the seasons. The rich environment that they lived would have provided them with so many foodstuffs that it allowed them to live in settlements year-round without having to set up camp elsewhere. According to Habu (2004, 243) many

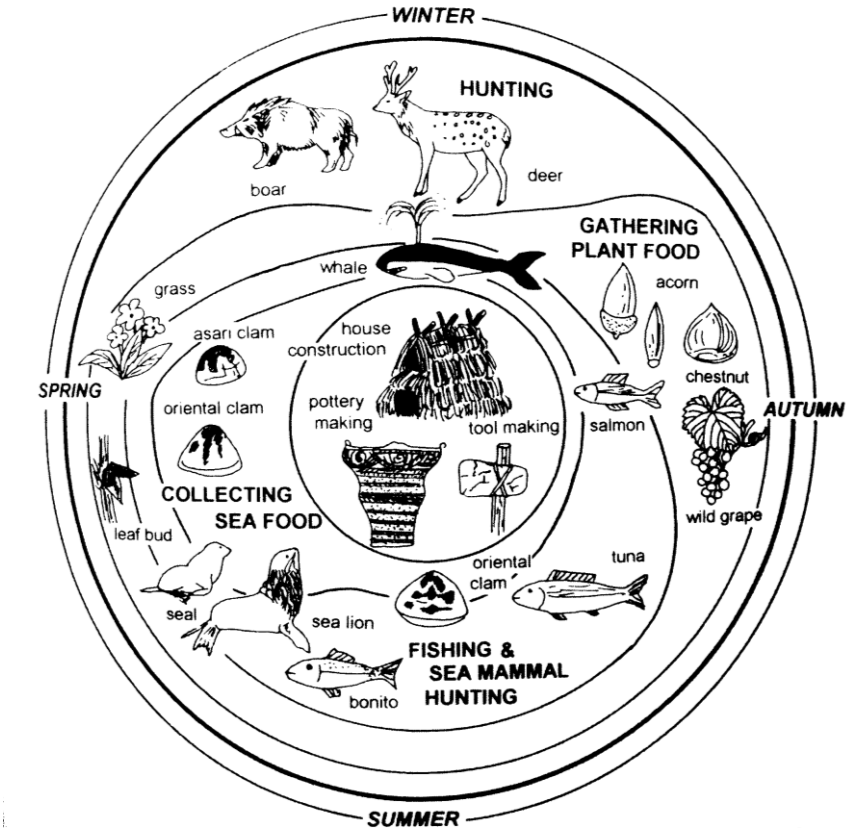


Fig. 1 - The Jōmon calendar, showing the sources of food available for every season (Habu 2004, 61, after Kobayashi 1977, 158)

researchers saw the Jōmon as a Neolithic period, establishing the image of the Jōmon as sedentary affluent foragers because they would have had rich natural resources. This would have allowed them to grow into a rich and complex society (Habu 2004, 63). To keep the food from spoiling, storage became an important factor (Kobayashi 2004a, 73). To this end, storage pits were employed.

The diet of Jōmon people would have consisted of plants, nuts, berries. Sea food was also a rich source of nutrients with fish, shells and the hunting of sea mammals. On land, a preference for hunting boar and deer is visible. Figure 1 shows roughly what was available each season of the year, based on the Jōmon calendar developed by Tatsuo Kobayashi in the seventies (see also Kobayashi 2004a, 94). Nuts and other ingredients were combined to form some sort of cookie, one of which has been found carbonized in a quern stone. Sites along bodies of water have been found to have large shell-middens, comprising of shells, discarded objects and food remains, preserved especially well in waterlogged sites. Other sites in the more mountainous inland would have relied more on hunting land mammals. There is no evidence for consumption of dog meat (which did exist in the Yayoi period), but we know that these animals have been domesticated and sometimes received careful burial.

Settlements

Jōmon settlements often consist of a few round pit-dwellings that were dug out in the ground, mostly built on river terraces where water was not too far away (Kobayashi 2004a, 100). It is thought that family groups each had their own dwelling and household (Kobayashi 2004a, 103). A settlement is often circular or has a horseshoe shape. For a large part of the Jōmon period, the dead were buried in the center square, which would have been a place for communal activities. In the Final Jōmon, burial traditions shifted to graves around a stone monument somewhere in the landscape outside the village, which was probably used by multiple groups. Around the settlement, trash heaps built up over time. In settlements along the water's edge these often took the form of the aforementioned shell middens. As houses were abandoned, new dwellings were

built in the same area, suggesting a continuity of a village structure (Kobayashi 2004a, 105). East Japan has a higher density of Jōmon sites than the west and as such a larger population, reaching a peak in the Middle Jōmon and then declining through the Late and Final Jōmon (Habu 2004, 49-50).

Ritual

The Jōmon people's ritual life is of course difficult to reconstruct from artifacts and traces in the soil, but several objects have been attributed ritual functions. *Sekibo*, stone phallic rods, are often associated with male sexuality and power. People adorned themselves with jade beads, pendants, shell bangles and slit-stone earrings. From what we know of other societies, this may not have been purely for decoration but gave the wearer spiritual power or status (Kobayashi 2004a, 144).

Tatsuo Kobayashi (2004a, 137-138). has put forth a theory on ritual artifacts, making a division between primary tools like for example arrowheads, whose function can be deduced from their form, and secondary objects, with an indirect relation between form and function like figurines and stone bars. Their function and meaning is specific to a cultural framework and time period, so outsiders will have a difficult time grasping their significance (Kobayashi 2004a, 141). Kobayashi (2004a, 142) describes how he thinks that, looking at these secondary objects, we cannot say that these objects had no practical use, just that their form might be more symbolic in regards to their purpose. One example of the special treatment of certain objects or materials is the evidence for long-distance trade of jade to places far from its source at the Japan Sea coast (Bausch 2004). This means it must have been considered a valuable or at least special material. Graves have very little if any grave goods. Young children were often buried under the entrances of dwellings in special pots, sometimes upside down, with the bottoms pierced or removed. But the most well-known Jōmon ritual objects have to be the clay figurines or dogū. Found throughout the Jōmon period across Japan in many different forms and sometimes intriguing contexts, I will explain them more in depth as they are at the center of this thesis.

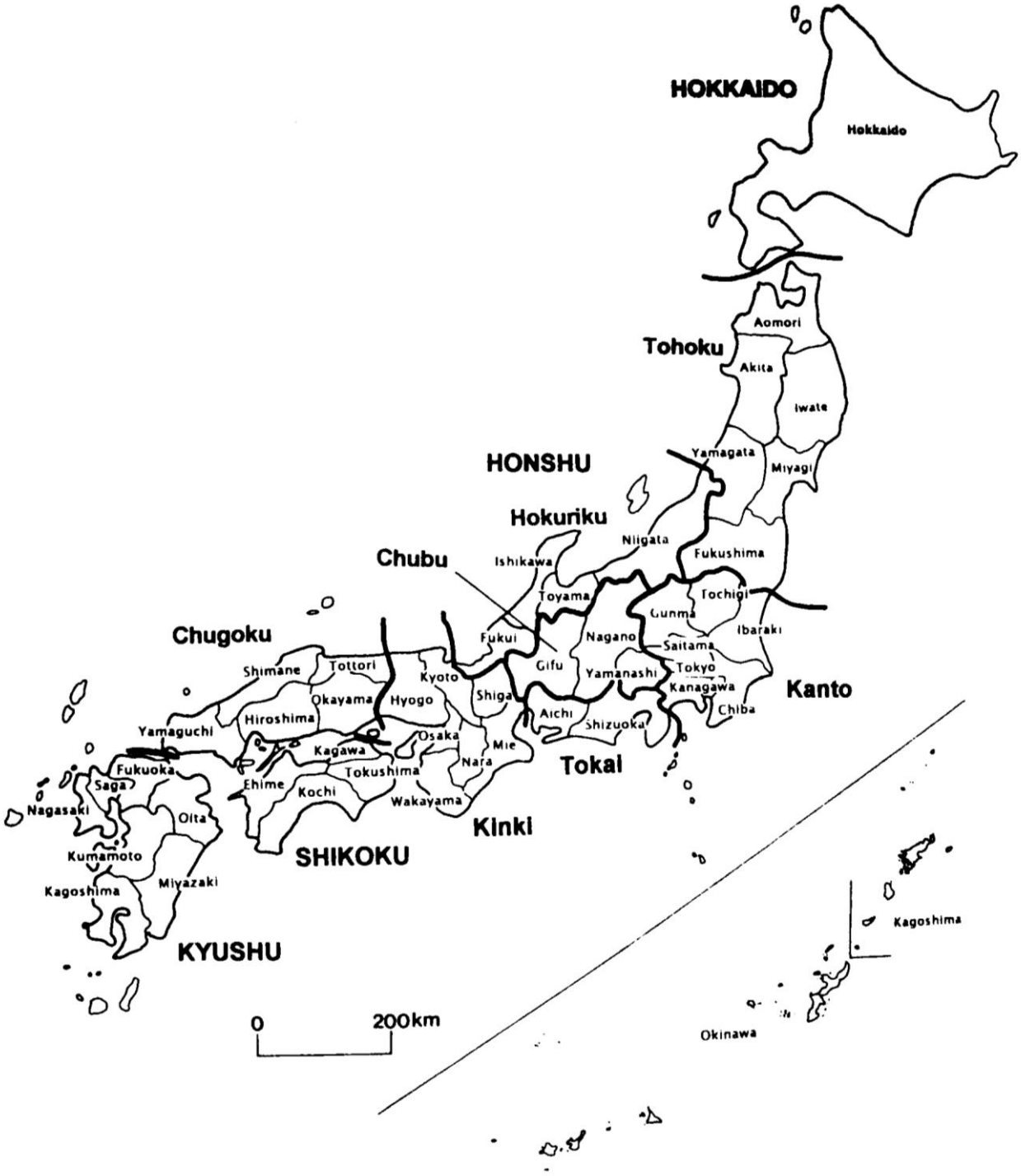


Fig. 2 – Map of Japan and its prefectures (Habu 2004, 6)

Figurines

Japan's prehistoric figurines are found in diverse contexts. In terms of amount, some sites like Shakadō hold as many as 1125 broken pieces (Bausch 2010, 100). In other, more unusual cases they received a more careful individual burial, 'enshrined' in a specific place such as the communal cemetery (Bausch 2010, 99, Harada 2009, 51). However in most instances they are found scattered in midden areas across the habitational area (Harada 2009, 51). They most commonly seem to be humanoid in form, although there are a few exceptions that are more like animals. Many show female features, with an emphasis on the bodily features associated with pregnancy. They were made for the duration of the entire Jōmon period, although many developments and changes took place over time.

Fig. 3 – Two of the oldest ceramic figures. Left: Incipient Jōmon dogu from Kayumi Ijiri site, Mie prefecture. Right: early figurine from Uenohara site, Kagoshima prefecture (Doi 2009, 40)

Fig. 4 – Clay head from Minamihatori Nakano I, Chiba prefecture. Early Jōmon (5000-2500 BC), height 15.5 cm, width 13.5 cm (Kaner (ed) et al. *2009, 156)*

The oldest clay figurines are from the Incipient Jōmon (see fig. 3). The two are little more than lumps of clay in the vague shape of a body, but the presence of breasts suggests it represents a female (Habu 2004, 144). We can say that the first dogū are

quite abstract and have barely any defined facial features, with at most a vague indentation in lieu of the head. They are also small, allowing them to be held in the hand easily. In the Kanto region (see fig. 2) the first potters started using plant fibers to apply decoration to their creations, which was the start of a large variety of decorations and indeed ceramic figures of various forms (Doi 2009, 40).

In the Early Jōmon, slab-shaped dogū appear with more pronounced patterns and sometimes punctures holes. The figurines are starting to include an indication of facial features. This did not mean they could not make realistic faces out of clay, as from this period a clay head with realistic facial features (though different in form than figurines) was also found in Chiba prefecture (see fig. 4) (Doi 2009, 41 and Kaner (ed.) et al. 2009, 156).

In the Middle Jōmon, dogū production reaches a high point, dwarfing the number of figurines from the previous period (Habu 2004, 144). A large variety of styles develops, linked with the local pottery styles. Some sites, like Sannai Maruyama in Aomori prefecture and Shakado in Yamanashi prefecture have been found to contain large amounts of dogū fragments (Kaner 2009a, 34-36). Many dogū are now made to stand upright. Whereas previous dogū are thought to have been used in more personal and private ceremonies while holding them in your hand, the standing type would be more suited for public ceremony, as they may be placed on an altar or shrine (Kobayashi 2004a, 148). The slab-shaped dogū are often cruciform with arms pointing outwards on each side (Nagamine 1986, 257) More figurines display the reproductive features of the body, leading researchers to think the figurines have to do with childbirth and motherhood (Doi 2009, 44). The bodily decorations of the figurines are probably inspired by the clothing and ornaments the Jōmon people wore themselves and were familiar with, giving us a tantalizing clue to their appearance (Kobayashi 2004a, 149).

Late Jōmon dogū continue to show more variation; among the types are heart-shaped, mountain-shaped-head, ‘horned-owl’ and sitting figurines (Habu 2004, 144). However, a rapid decrease in population also takes place, resulting in less production of figurines. Dogū become more abstract again in their depiction

of the human body. Whereas most dogū until then came from Eastern Japan, they now start to appear in larger quantities in West Japan as well (Doi 2009, 45).

Come the Final Jōmon, many dogū are produced in the Tohoku region in northern Japan. The most iconic are the goggle-eyed or slit-goggle dogū from the site of Kamegaoka in the west of Aomori prefecture (see fig. 5). This name comes from the distinctive eyes that are reminiscent of Inuit goggles against snow blindness. The elaborate bodily decorations and strange deviations from normal human features are seen by many as a clue of their identity, depicting a goddess or spirit. In contrast to these elaborate dogū, many smaller figurines, sometimes x-shaped, are made. An increase in production in the west is seen, possibly a reaction of resistance to contact with the new people coming from the mainland. Some new dogū types from the beginning of the Yayoi period exist, such as more seemingly male figurines with beards, perhaps in reaction to this influx of new culture (Kobayashi 2004a, 153). What is certain however, is that dogū eventually disappeared after the adoption of the rice farming Yayoi subsistence strategy that spread across the archipelago around 300 BC. Jōmon communities in the northern island of Hokkaido existed for a while longer, as this area was inhospitable to rice agriculture, until they too eventually disappeared (Kobayashi 2004a, 151 and 153).

Fig. 5 – Goggle-eyed dogu from Kamegaoka, Aomori prefecture. Final Jōmon (1000-300 BC), height 34.8 cm (http://www.asianartnewspaper.com)

Many suggestions have been put forth as to their meaning, such as earth goddesses or fertility symbols (Habu 2004, 144). Their frequent breakage has sometimes been associated with using figurines as 'straw men' to transfer disease or misfortune upon, before shattering them to dispel these bad influences (Habu 2004, 142 and 144, Bausch 2010, 101). Bausch notes how the breaking of dogū could have taken place to share pieces of the figurines with other groups for keeping social and economic relations, based on the refitting of a few pieces found some distance apart at the Shakadō site (Bausch 2010, 100-101). Others see in dogū talismans to ensure safe childbirth or to use in prayer, or according to the somewhat controversial idea of Masayoshi Mizuno they are mediators between life and death (Harada 2009, 53). Nowadays a careful trend towards more gender interpretations is being made. Researcher such as for example Minako Togawa (2004) examined the dogū in the light of the role of women in plant cultivation, and Fumiko Ikawa-Smith (2002) brings gender studies into Jōmon period research in for example her chapter on gender in Japanese Prehistory.

With this knowledge about dogū and the Jōmon period in mind, the next chapter will explain my methodology and framework

3 – Structure and framework

3.1 - Methodology

I have chosen to divide my investigation of dogū in a chapter on their presence, representation and reception through time in Japan, followed by a chapter dealing with these same aspects of dogū in the West. For each chapter, my research consists of two parts: the where and the why of dogū in contemporary society.

For the first part of my research, I investigate the areas of modern society where dogū are increasingly present since about the turn of the century. I will focus on the presence of dogū outside the field of archaeology, as opposed to dogū in scientific research of figurines within archaeological discourse. Looking at dogū outside archaeology, I will examine the different ways in which they appear in three domains: museums, 'high' art and in popular culture/media such as television, games and manga.

In the second part I will go into the reason behind their increased appearance in these domains. As mentioned before, I hypothesize that the modern surge of dogū popularity is a result of recent changes in Japan's dynamic identity and sense of connection with the past, as a result of which the figurines have now been given new roles, focusing on figurines as carriers of values. To investigate the validity of this hypothesis, I will offer a possible explanation as to why dogū are used as they are, first looking at the role of dogū in Japan's changing sense of national identity. I will highlight what new developments may have contributed to the popularization of dogū. The politics behind dogū also explain their increased visibility, as seen by dogū being used to send specific messages across. For the chapter on dogū appearing in the West, I have used two museum exhibitions about dogū as a case study. Finally, they are also used in the ongoing debate on recognition of Jōmon heritage. Here I draw on my own experiences at a Jōmon heritage colloquium I attended in Paris as a case study.

I need to point out that I only use English literature for this research, because of my insufficient level of mastery of Japanese and the difficulty of acquiring Japanese sources as of yet. In the future I hope to be able to expand my knowledge and scope of research using Japanese sources, but for now I remain confined to English publications. Luckily more and more Japanese researchers such as Tatsuo Kobayashi, Junko Habu, Koji Mizoguchi and many others contribute their findings in English western archaeological publications, giving at least a partial representation of Japans own vast amount of work in archaeology. I thus intend to make use of these sources for Japan's view on dogū. When I give Japanese names, I will conform to the Western order of given name then family name, as opposed to the Japanese convention putting family name first.

3.2 - Theoretical framework

There are two fields of theory that help shed light on the rise of dogū, and those are identity and ethnicity. Firstly, the subject of identity is a broad one. I therefore need to define what I mean when I use the term. There are roughly two meanings of the word. One is identity as seen on an individual level, defined by *Collins English Dictionary (*Makins and Grandison 1979) as "the individual characteristics by which a person or a thing is recognized" and "the state of having unique identifying characteristics held by no other person or thing" (Díaz-Andreu 2005, 1). The other one is identity applied to a group of people who share a collective identity (Díaz-Andreu 2005, 1). When I talk about identity in this text, I mean the feeling of a shared group identity. Concepts of personality and individuality are thus not included. I also do not apply the term to any past peoples, but focus on the identity of the Japanese people living in post-war modern day Japan.

Koji Mizoguchi described identity as "the unity of expectations as to how one has to act in certain contexts, how *others* would act in these contexts, and how others would expect one to act in these contexts" (Mizoguchi 2006a, 17-18). He

sees the self as something fragmented, that seeks transcendental entities to connect with others and feel a sense of unity. These transcendental entities have and continue to be connected to ethno-nationalistic ideas (Mizoguchi 2006a, 18).

The subject of identity thus flows over into the topic of archaeology and nationalism, between which according to Kohl and Fawcett (1995, 3) exists an "almost unavoidable or natural relationship". Since the 1860s, nationalism was on the rise, and this influenced archaeological research (Trigger 1995, 268). Trigger (1995, 268) explains that industrialization was causing friction between classes and many demanded better working conditions and equal opportunities, coming together in socialist and communist movements. As a reaction to this, those with more conservative ideals sought to emphasize biological and historical unity and blamed other nations for problems plaguing their society. The archaeological record thus became a history of peoples, a culture-historical archaeology that usually favored the own ethnic group when comparing it to foreign ones and ideas like racial purity or superiority, supported by archaeology, could be and have been used politically (Trigger 1995, 269).

Trigger has noted this influence of nation states on the nature of archaeological research. He divided them into three social contexts producing a certain type of archaeology (Trigger 1984, 356). Apart from the aforementioned nationalistic archaeology, he also describes colonial archaeology. This is practiced in countries where Europeans had settled by archaeologists who had no historical relation to the original inhabitant's past they were studying. These archaeologists systematically devalued any accomplishments of the ancestors of original inhabitants, thus justifying their own control of the country (Trigger 1984, 363). Thirdly, imperialist archaeology or world-oriented archaeology was the result of countries having a large cultural influence on others. They appropriated the cultural history of other regions in the world for the glory of their own society, or dismissed the value in research of certain time periods or cultures deemed not useful for the improvement of society (Trigger 1984, 363-364).

As Trigger (1995, 273) puts it, a nationalistic approach of archaeological remains rests on false assumptions on said record and doesn't take into account

the complexity and subjectivity that would have existed in the past. I therefore think it is important to pay attention to nationalistic trends in my research and try to note when I come across such instances.

This is also where politics come into play. In a chapter on political use of archaeology in East and Southeast Asia, Ian Glover (2006, 17-18) notes that a remarkably similar process takes places all over the world, despite obvious cultural, societal and political differences. I have paraphrased these developments as follows:

1. Pre-state politics struggle to define geographic and ethnic cultural borders. Political power is exerted from a central entity, and relies on a real or imagined vision of the past to support this structure.
2. This puts the spotlight on past dynasties or communities and their remaining heritage.
3. Certain aspects such as ethnic and linguistic groups are emphasized to create a continuity between these past dynasties or communities and the contemporary establishment.
4. The definition of the national identity that is created in this way consists of two parts: differences between the own and the other community and secondly the uniqueness of one's own culture.
5. Not only Western countries have been shown to partake in this, it also happens elsewhere and across history.

This shows us the power that interpretations of the archaeological heritage can have. As keepers of a large amount of cultural heritage, museums play an important role in collecting, studying, preserving, exhibiting and educating this heritage.

In Japan, since the mid-1970's most archaeological material has been stored in new prefectural museums to be curated locally (Barnes 1993, 36). Apart from these public museums exist site museums in areas of clustered

archaeological features or special sites (Barnes 1993, 36). A final possible place for archaeological materials to be held are national and private universities, which often have museums of their own. These come mostly from the academic excavations that universities organize, which make up only a fraction of all archaeological excavations done each year, by far most of them being rescue excavations (Habu 2004, 19). In the 1960s and 1970s these were carried out by civil servants of the prefectural or municipal boards of education or museums, but since then government-based cultural resource management organizations were created on prefectural and municipal levels (Habu 2004, 21). Funded by the government, these rescue excavations would not be possible without support from the general public whose awareness of archaeology is often influenced by media reports (Habu 2004, 23).

On the topic of the role of the state in museum practices Linda Ellis notes the state's desire to "…control existing museums but also to build new "historical" monuments and new museums, in order to, it seems, to select knowledge and revise memory" (Ellis 2004, 468). The role of museums is relevant in this thesis because I intend to scrutinize the way in which dogū are represented there. Museums do not only represent, but also actively construct social 'realities' (Shelton 2009, 480). In particular, "Exhibitions, the clearest expression to the public of a museum's identity, structure objects spatially to reactivate or create memory anew" (Shelton 2009, 484). The interest of the state using past material culture in museum displays will be elaborated in later chapters with regards to the creation of identity.

Another theoretical topic of consideration when discussing the current perception of prehistoric objects is that of heritage. But what exactly makes up the archaeological heritage we are talking about? According to Skeates (2000, 9), archaeological heritage can be defined on two levels. In the first way, it can be a description of the physical material, like artefacts or constructions, as shaped by humans in the past. On a second level the definition goes beyond the material, in that it describes heritage as the expression of the material and the meanings,

values and claims associated with it. I find the latter definition more dynamic, and it incorporates issues of identity as mentioned earlier. But the reason I think the first definition is relevant as well is that it brings to attention that these meanings and values are based on interpretation of physical, material culture. Whether figurines have a spiritual component or not, they undoubtedly have a physical form, meaning they are part of archaeological material culture. I have already given a general introduction to the material aspects of dogū in the previous chapter, but in my research I will examine dogū more on the level of interpretations, values and identity.

My research of dogū here can thus be seen as a case study itself within the larger field of theory about the influence of material culture on society. In my analysis I can use the aforementioned existing theory on identity, nationalistic archaeology, museum studies and archaeological heritage to investigate how the current perception of dogū in society in Japan and the West has come to be, and provide an example of how this current perception plays a role in larger heritage management issues.

4 – Contextualization: A short history of Japanese national identity as influenced by the changing perceptions of Japanese prehistoric archaeology and discoveries of prehistoric material culture

The history of Japanese archaeology goes back to the eighteenth century. It was in the period of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1868) that collectors and amateur archaeologists started to gather old objects and even record archaeological objects and sites. Antiquarianism flourished, possibly influenced by western ideas brought in through the Dutch trading port at Nagasaki. The rationality of Western scientific methods found resonance within Japan, and so Western books were imported (Ikawa-Smith 1982, 297)

Following this, the Meiji period (1886-1912) saw Japan reform and the new government focus on enlightenment and civilization. Western specialists were brought to Japan for their technical skills, among them American zoologist Edward Sylvester Morse (1838-1925), known for the first scientific archaeological excavation in Japan of the Omori shell-midden sites. (Kaner 2009a, 24-25). The results of his studies were not read much at all in Japan however, and his students went on to careers in biology. Other prehistoric archaeologists also had backgrounds outside of archeology, like zoology, geology and medicine, but there was nevertheless an interest in the ethnic questions and issues of identity of Japans prehistoric people. In 1884 the Anthropological Society of Tokyo was formed by Tsuboi Shogoro (1863-1913), one of these first professional archaeologists. He saw anthropology as part of zoology, not archaeology which according to him occupied itself with identifying racial groups. There was a notable lack of evolutionism in archaeology at this time as archaeologists believed that the existence of multiple tribal groups could explain style variety. Research of prehistoric tribal groups led to a better chronology for material culture, subsistence and changes in social organization, based on

stratigraphic relations. This was the foundation for the framework still in use today (Ikawa-Smith 1982, 300). A notable contribution has been the work of Yamanouchi Sugao (1902-1970) on developing a framework of series of Jōmon pottery, alongside which figurine typologies could be constructed (Kaner 2009a, 26).

Pre-war ultra nationalism and imperialism was centered around the leader of the country, the emperor. An ideology had developed with him as the center, connecting the emperor with the divine gods by linear descent. The old mythical stories of the Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters, AD 712) and Nihon Shoki (Chronicle of Japan, written AD 720) told of Japan as a land of divine origin. Because of this imperial ideology, questions of who made the ancient pottery that is now identified as Jōmon ceramics were gradually pushed to the background (Fawcett 1995, 233).

Come the second World War, free thought was restricted by the government, and so research into radical theories and racial issues was subject to political pressure. The pro-Western attitude of the first Meiji period years and the 1920s had turned to strong nationalism. The racial identity of the makers of the Jōmon pottery was a controversial subject. The Ainu people, the original inhabitants of northern Japan, were regarded as a lesser people without culture. As descendants of their prehistoric Jōmon forebears, according to a Dutch source from 1933, the Ainu still lived like they did 2000 years ago, in a primitive way, devoid of written language, religion and art (Westendorp 1933, 8). Similar views from Japanese studying in Germany at the time suggest that the demeaning attitude towards so-called primitive forebears and their descendants may have been brought over to Japan from the West. The idea of cultural superiority has also been widely used as a justification for invading other countries that were seen as inferior. Research now turned to refining chronologies and typologies, avoiding sensitive issues of sociocultural transformation and radical theories with for example Marxist influence. For researchers in archaeology it was a period of no contact with western colleagues. (Ikawa-Smith 1982, 302-304)

The separation continued for a while as not many Western books reached Japanese shores either. After World War II, focus on ceramics in Japan became further evident through the search for the oldest pottery. The discovery of the new *yori'itomon* pottery with cordwrapped dowel impressions eventually led to excavation at the site of Iwajuku, where Paleolithic artefacts were found. Soon after, other Paleolithic sites were also unearthed with stone points as well as pottery. Yamanouchi argued that these were contemporary and proof of an early Jōmon phase, while others saw them as Paleolithic. The arrival of radiocarbon dating in Japan in the 1960s finally brought a way to settle the debates with absolute dates. These proved to be older than expected, going as far back as 9000 years ago at the Natsushima shell-midden site. There was still a lot of skepticism about this way of dating and this led to a division between believers in a 'long chronology', who said the Jōmon period went further back in time, and those in favor of a 'short chronology', envisioning the Jōmon period as being much younger. In the 1970s radiocarbon dating was more accepted though, and a new Incipient phase was added to the Jōmon Period. By this time, the study of Jōmon pottery had changed and had become more diverse, encompassing folklore, experimental and ethnoarchaeology and scientific methods to examine the clay. It also saw new insights from fields like linguistics, aesthetics and communication theory among others (Kobayashi 2004b, 54-57).

The Second World War had a big impact on the imperial ideology, as archaeologists were intent on rewriting history for the people and doing away with the imperial nationalism from before the war. Marxist philosophy became prevalent because it was the only intellectual movement that had never supported the imperial ideology. However, socialism was repressed in the years of Japan's occupation after the war (1945-1952). To create their new history the "people's history movement " (1948-1952) was formed, encouraging scholars, students and local people to work together on a new way of studying the past. As short-lived as this movement was, it laid the beginnings for public involvement in researching the past (Fawcett 1995, 235).

In the sixties and seventies, a lot of data started to come from rescue excavations, and the amount of these excavations continued to grow alongside economic growth and development in Japan. This increase made new research possible like settlement archaeology. A downside is that it also led to a standardization of archaeological procedures that encouraged collecting raw data, not favoring a problem-oriented approach (Habu 2004, 19, 22-23). New excavation techniques enabled plant remains to be salvaged. Finds of early rice led to the question of possible agriculture in the Jōmon period. It is generally agreed now that there was no rice cultivation, but traces of other possibly cultivated edible plants such as Perilla, buckwheat, bottle gourds and others have been found (Kobayashi 2004b, 57). This suggests that some form of horticulture may have been practiced.

Since the seventies international relations flourished, bringing opportunities of exchange for archaeologists and students attending international congresses and meetings. Ikawa-Smith (1982, 305) mentions how Japanese archaeologists are proud of their finely developed frameworks of material culture and technical skill. Research into subsistence and social structure grew more popular. Jōmon society was now considered the result of a sedentary revolution, prompting a new examination of sedentism and mobility and looking to ethnography for explanations (Kobayashi 2004b, 57).

Gender studies emerged as a field within history. Before the seventies, examination of the role of women in prehistoric society had mostly been a part of research into matrilineal descent and postmarital mobility patterns. A matrilineal clan society was seen in a Marxist theoretical framework as one of the stages societies progress through, followed by a patriarchal clan society, slave society, feudalism, capitalism and lastly communism (Barnes 1993, 35). Now, new interest in gender studies was generated by women study groups. Most archaeologists who wrote about gender in archaeology were still men however, even though many women studied archaeology in undergraduate programs (Ikawa-Smith 2002, 327-328).

The discovery of spectacular sites like Yoshinogari and Sannai Maruyama sparked public imagination, in no small part thanks to the media coverage they received. The first was a moated Yayoi-period site with multi-storey buildings discovered in 1989, that was quickly associated with Chinese descriptions of the capital of the ancient kingdom of Yamatai (Fawcett 1996, 71). The second was a large Early to Middle Jōmon site, which by 1994 had yielded a surprisingly large amount of dwellings and other features (Habu and Fawcett 2007, 91). Among these were raised floor buildings, and what has been interpreted as a large tower from six giant postholes in a rectangular layout. Among the finds were large amounts of pottery and figurine fragments. This brings us close to the end of the century. In the next two chapters I will start my analysis of the perception of dogū also in more recent times in both Japan and the West, following from this historical contextualization.

5 – Dogū in Japan

In Japan, dogū are very well represented outside archaeological discourse. In this chapter I look at their appearances in museums, 'high' art and thirdly popular culture and media to see in what way dogū are presented in these contexts. It is in these different and sometimes overlapping contexts that many people can see dogū and interact with them.

5.1.1 – Museums

Starting off with museums, these are the places where dogū are usually displayed in conjunction with information about them. Dogū are indeed ubiquitous in the collections of several Japanese museums, from the Tokyo National Museum to big site museums to university collections and last but not least smaller local museums throughout the country. While in Japan I had the chance to see dogū in the Sannai Maruyama site museum and a few smaller museums. My experience however is limited by the tsunami and subsequent nuclear disaster, forcing me to stay away from Tokyo and the Kanto area for safety reasons. From my observations, dogū in a museum context are usually displayed in one of two ways, either by themselves or as a group of fragments. As dogū tend to be found broken into pieces, a majority of them end up in these group displays. The rare complete (or in some cases reconstructed) dogū are often displayed separately and on some form of stage or pedestal. They are treated more like pieces of art, usually well-lit and in a standalone case so as to be able to look around and appreciate their three-dimensional form. Their cases are usually accompanied by signs with texts detailing their provenance and age, and usually the perceived uses of the figurines in Jōmon society. Displaying artists impressions of the context in which dogū functioned in the Jōmon Period is also not uncommon.

Fig. 6 – Picture of Sanmaru, the dogu mascot of Sannai-Maruyama archaeological site

Fig. 7 – The slab-shaped cruciform dogu from Sannai-Maruyama, inspiring its mascot Sanmaru (telegraph.co.uk)

The other way dogū appear in museums is in marketing. Dogū are often printed on the covers of brochures, posters and books, and history museum stores often sell little replicas of dogū or key chains and the like. Dogū seem very popular in their role as promotional material. This even goes so far as making them the mascot doll, the best example for which is the dogū-inspired character named *Sanmaru* from the Sannai Maruyama site museum (see fig. 6). He is based on the type of slab-shaped cruciform dogū found at the site, the one in figure 7 being the most famous. His role is twofold: he acts as a recognizable mascot doll for the site's museum, but also has an educational function. This is clear from his role as a tour guide, mostly for children, through the Jōmon exhibition as well as his appearance on many a sign explaining objects and aspects of Jōmon life in a child friendly way.

5.1.2 – 'High' art

Dogū can also be found in Japanese 'high' art, which has on occasion featured dogū or used them as a source of inspiration. Viewing prehistoric figurines themselves as pieces of art hasn't always been the case. Rousmaniere (2009, 70) writes that until World War II, the *haniwa* clay sculptures from the Kofun period (AD 258-646) had been regarded as the oldest works of sculptural art in Japan. After the war, the reappraisal of early Japanese history came and ancient history was separated from Japans mythical origin stories in the Nihon Shoki and the Kojiki. They were previously said to have been made by aboriginal peoples, not specifically the Japanese (Rousmaniere 2009, 70-71). After the turning point of WWII they fell in a new category of primitive art, and articles on them appeared in various art-historical magazines over the years. Since then dogū have been put on display as art in museums in Japan, going back to an exhibition in the Kanagawa Museum of Modern Art (Kanagawa Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan) in 1959 titled 'Japanese Primitive Art' (Nihon no genshi bijutsu ten). Their status of 'primitive' art had gradually worn off by 2005, when art historian Tsuji Nobuo explicitly states in 'A History of Japanese Art' (*'Nihon bijutsu shi'*) his definition of art and that Jōmon ceramics fit in this definition (Rousmaniere 2009, 78-79).

Fig. 8 - The famous 'Tower of the Sun' at Suita, Osaka, designed by Tarō Okamoto (http://www.hotel-toyo.jp)

As Rousmaniere (2009, 73-77) points out, some Japanese artists such as Keisuke Serizawa

and Yasunari Kawabata even owned dogū, and other artists such as Tarō Okamoto, Tsunaki Kuwashima and Sahoko Aki also cherish(ed) them as objects of inspiration. Keisuke Serizawa (1895-1984) was a textile artist who eventually donated his exceptional stone figurine to the Mingeikan folk museum. Rousmaniere (2009) writes how novelist Yasunari Kawabata (1899-1971) found much inspiration in his heart-shaped dogū, making him feel the connection with the past lives of the people who made the figurine. He also thought it looked like a piece of contemporary sculpture, only without any contrivances or imperfections. He and his dogū were immortalized in a portrait photo taken of him in 1969 that visually links him to the figurine in front of him, showing their close relationship.

One of the most famous modern artists connected to the dogū is Tarō Okamoto (1911-1996). Especially after the war he became a fervent supporter of the Jōmon; he is even regarded by some as the second discoverer of Jōmon ceramics and figurines. The beauty and spiritual aspects of the ceramics struck him so much that he took it upon himself to use Jōmon style art to challenge contemporary Japanese culture, which he deemed stagnant. One of his most famous pieces, the Tower of the Sun sculpture made for the Expo. '70 in Suita, Osaka indeed faintly resembles a Jōmon figurine (see fig. 8). He wrote about Jōmon art in the art magazine Mizue in 1959, saying that looking at it from a sculptural perspective is a modern way of seeing, but that there is a fourth dimension of spirituality in the work beyond that superficial reality. Not long after this his father passed away, and the grave he made for him is clearly based on a dogū.

In a quite recent example of modern art, photographer Tsunaki Kuwashima has photographed dogū in negative in 2009. He sees in dogū messages from the past, created in an illiterate society which relied on material culture to pass on knowledge. To him that message is the birth of new life and the passing on of knowledge, expressed through the aspects of the female form relating to childbirth. With his photographs he hopes to put the dogū in a new light, challenging the viewer to think about the figurines' narratives and form in new ways (Bailey, Cochrane and Zambelli 2010, 124-125).

Fig. 9 - Using figurine and pottery patterns in a workshop to design Jomon clothing (http://www.tkazu.com)

Another artist who is greatly involved with the Jōmon Period is Sahoko Aki.[1] A professional illustrator of Japanese ancient history and archaeology, she has since 1996 collaborated on many exhibitions and published works concerning

[1] For an impression of her work as a Jōmon illustrator, visit http://www.tkazu.com/saho/e/Jōmontrip/trip03.html

the Jōmon period in museums and galleries. On occasion her art features dogū (see cover illustrations, top frame), but alongside Jōmon fashion they are most prevalent in her museum workshops. The activities in these workshops range from making clay figurines (http://www.tkazu.com/saho/e/work_shop/work04.htm) to creating dogū masks from paper cups (http://www.tkazu.com/saho/e/work_shop /work01.htm) to clothing workshops using dogū decoration patterns (see fig. 9).

Finally I would like to mention is Ifurai, whose style is directly based on ancient Jōmon ceramics. Information about him in English is sparse, but these illustrations (fig .10, fig. 11) clearly show his Jōmon influence. The ones I chose here are also inspired by dogū. Other works for example show the dynamic curves and patterns of the Jōmon flame-rimmed pottery style (http://www.ifurai.jp).

Fig. 10 – Contemporary dogū in bronze by Ifurai, 2005. Niigata Prefectural Museum of History, donated by International Rotary Club. Height 130 cm (http://www.musee-um.co.jp)

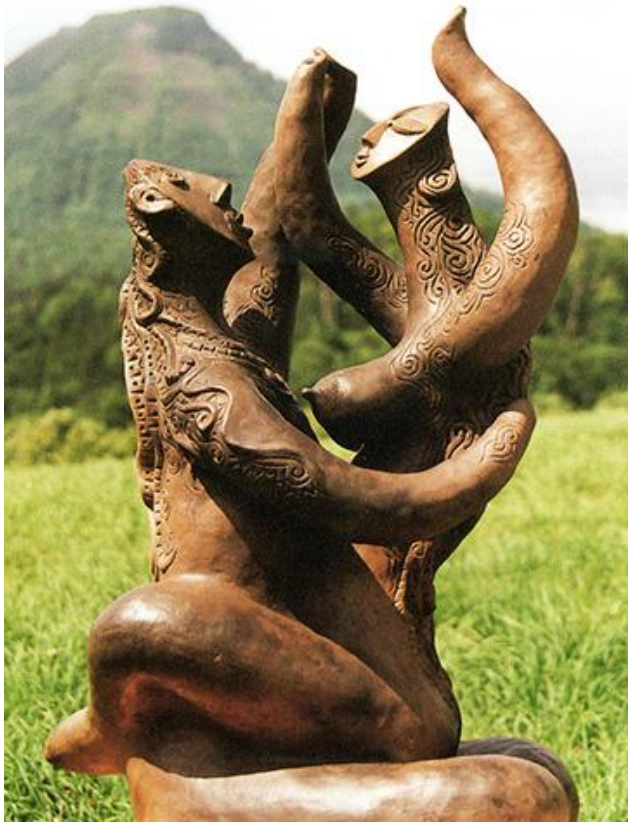


Fig. 11 –性愛 (Sei ai, translated: Sexual Love) by Ifurai (http://www.ifurai.jp)

5.1.3 – Popular culture and media

The last domain I researched in which dogū make an appearance is in popular media and the public domain. The outlandish and mysterious look of the dogū has sparked the imagination of many. They appear in several different media. In videogames and anime, dogū often play the role of enemy. A partial list of dogū appearances in video games, courtesy of several interested individuals at http://forums.selectbutton.net in addition to my own sightings, gives an impression of the proliferation of dogū in games: in no particular order and across a multitude of gaming platforms, they appear in (among others) Megaman ZX: Advent, Okami (see fig. 12), Dokioki, Dogūu Senki: Haou, Startropics, Warriors Orochi 2, Darkstalkers, Chelnov, Dynamite Headdy, the Shin Megami Tensei / Persona series and very recently Project P-100 (working title). They also feature in popular franchises such as Pokémon, Yu-Gi-Oh! and Digimon. This is not a complete list by far but it shows the popularity of dogū in this medium. Many of these games and series were also translated and sold in the West, giving many Western people a first subconscious encounter with Japanese prehistoric figurines.

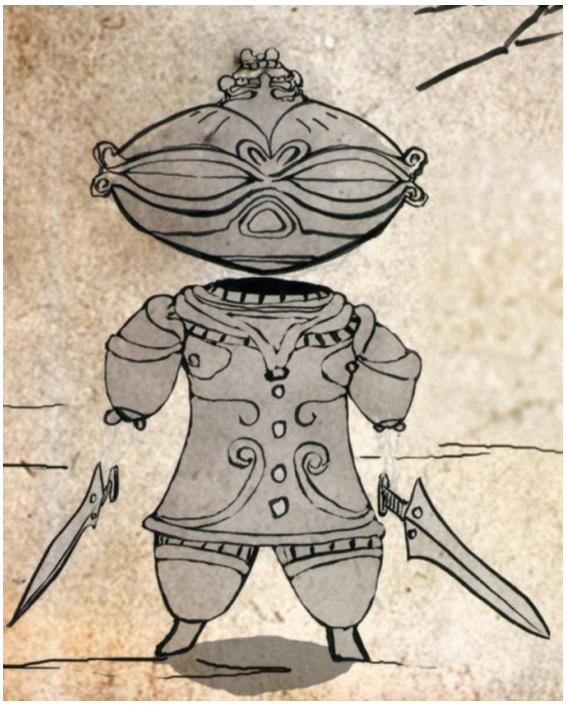


Fig. 12 – Artwork of a dogu enemy with swords from the videogame Okami *(http://images2.wikia.nocookie.net)*

Dogū also appear regularly in the medium of manga. The work of Nicole Rousmaniere, who has published in English about the presence of dogū in media of past and contemporary society (Rousmaniere 2009), has been of great help to me in discovering dogū in the public domain. She also noted their appearance in

video games, but more deeply investigates dogū in manga. The oldest manga she mentions is from the *Doraemon* series by artist duo Fujiko Fujio (a collaboration of Hiroshi Fujimoto and Motō Abiko). It is a classic manga with an educational approach aimed at children. In the volumes of Understanding Japanese History (*'Nihon no rekishi ga wakaru'*), the function of dogū is explained by titular character Doraemon to be related to religion and magic. The same comic panel also mentions that the figurines "look like aliens", a common motif in dogū in popular culture. This is shown in another manga series called 'Dogū family'(*'Dogū famirii'*). It ran in Monthly Shounen Magazine from 1998 to 1993 and centered around a family of dogū trying to lead a normal life in their neighborhood. They have the goggle-eyed characteristic of Final Jōmon dogū from Aomori. They had regular adventures in the past and in outer space, fighting an evil dogū under the control of UFO's. Themes of both magic and manipulation from outer space play a role here. In Daijiro Moroboshi's manga '*Ankoku shinwa'*, ('Myth of Darkness', published in 1988) dogū feature in two stories, having the power to change size and using mystical powers invoked through their decoration. Another artist who has used dogū in his story is Hoshino Yukinobu in the prize-winning 'The Case Records of Professor Munakata'. In the first volume, the story revolves around the professor coming into contact with an *itako* or shaman. The old blind woman tells him that the dogū too are blind shamans, offering an interesting new explanation for the goggle-eyed figurine type (Rousmaniere 2009, 79-82). Artwork from this manga was also on display in a room at the British Museum in 2009 alongside the 'Power of Dogū'-exhibition, giving this traditional archaeological exhibition a hint of how dogū inspire artists today.

Another medium where dogū have now appeared is live-action television. In a first-year class on Japanese archaeology by Ilona Bausch, she mentioned *'Kodai Shoujo Dogū-chan'* ('The Ancient Dogoo Girl', see fig. 13), a Japanese action- adventure show that ran from October 7th 2009 to December 22nd 2010 (http://www.imdb.com). The show is about a shut-in schoolboy who happens to

accidentally awaken a girl from prehistoric times while doing excavation work with his dad. She introduces herself as Dogū-chan, a demon (*'youkai'*) hunter from the Jōmon Period. The two team up, much to the dismay of the boy, but over the course of the show (and many defeated demons later) he learns to come out of his shell. She is assisted by a dogū companion named Dokigoro, who is a sentient goggle-eyed dogū who can fly and identify enemies by scanning them with his goggle-eyes. When called upon, he can turn into armor for Dogū-chan to wear which consequently resembles a goggle-eyed dogū. The breast plate pops open when defeating an enemy, who is then sucked into the vortex of energy in the shape of two goggle eyes behind it. According to an online article by Todd Brown, following the show a movie adaptation was made, which brought the series to a bigger audience (http://twitchfilm.com). The movie made its debut on 20th of February of 2010. After its success, the series continued as a second season called 'Ancient Girl Squad Dogoon 5' was made, adding five new dogū girls to the mix in different colored dogū-style armor.

Fig. 13 – Advertisement for the television series 'Kodai Shoujo Dogu-chan' *('The Ancient Dogoo Girl') (http://1.bp.blogspot.com)*

It is interesting to see dogu in the medium of live-action television. Their function in this series is aesthetic on one hand, evidenced by Dogu-chan's outfit, and on the other hand more plot-related and perhaps easier to market, with a dogū as a side-kick or mascot character alongside the heroine. 'The Ancient Dogu Girl' certainly shows the popularity and marketability of the Jōmon-period.

5.2 – A link to the past: the fascination with figurines

There are two parts to explaining the increased presence of dogū in contemporary society. The first has to do with Japan's sense of identity in regard to the Jōmon period. The second answers the question of why, of all things associated with this period, it is so often dogū that are chosen to represent it.

The role of the Jōmon period in Japan's identity is the first development behind the dogū phenomenon. According to Hidefumi Ogawa (2002, 183), there are several ways to view the Jōmon people in the eyes of the Japanese. One of these is the Jōmon people as savages, without rice cultivation, opposites to what they consider key aspects of Japanese identity.

This way of looking at the Jōmon period has, I find, taken a backseat in favor of the second image of the Jōmon people that Ogawa (2002, 183) identifies, that of the natural conservator. I would like to extend this view to include not only interaction with nature, but also other values that are ascribed to the Jōmon people that are considered good characteristics. The Jōmon people are in this view seen as exhibiting praiseworthy values that are starting to disappear or are now lost to contemporary society in some way. For one, as already mentioned the Jōmon people are seen as a good example of living in harmony with nature. They are supposedly 'ecologically aware', an image the Ainu, the indigenous inhabitants of Japan, were also keen to adopt (Hudson 2003, 269). Whether or not the Jōmon people actually were so in tune with nature can and has been criticized. Junzo Uchiyama (2002) interprets changing faunal remains from the Torihama shell midden site as a sign of Jōmon people causing environmental degradation. Secondly, I have observed in for example the Sannai Maruyama site museum that reconstructions of Jōmon scenes often feature an extended family happily living their daily life. They show us family values of living together closely with relatives that may or may not have actually existed in the past, perhaps in contrast to modern times where people are seen as increasingly individualistic. A third example seems to be a reaction to our modern consumer society. It was brought up in the television series The Ancient Dogoo Girl that the Jōmon people are said

to have carefully handled their tools and possession that they made themselves, only getting rid of them when they ultimately break (Kodai Shoujo Dogū-chan tv-series, season 1 episode 3). This seems to combat a current trend of replacing older models of appliances and technological gadgets with newer versions, which can be seen as a wasteful practice and a cause of waste storage issues and pollution. This way of looking at the Jōmon mostly occurs in educational context, its purpose to instill people with what are regarded as proper values and a good way of life.

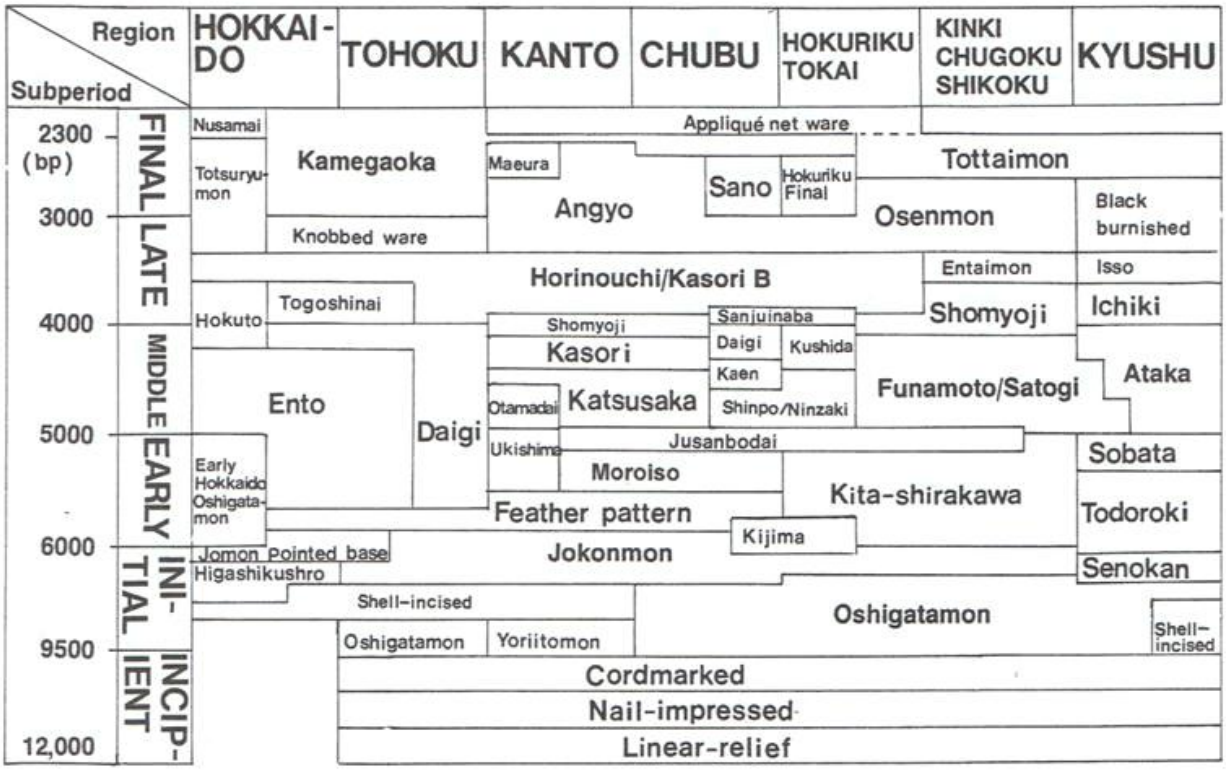
This leads to Ogawa's third view, the Jōmon as founders of Japanese civilization. Stepping aboard this train of thought, the values and norms of the Japanese tradition are said to have originated in the Jōmon Period. By classifying the people living in the Japanese archipelago in this period as a civilization, an attempt is made to connect the Jōmon past to the present by emphasizing continuity and homogeneity (Ogawa 2002, 183).

In trying to find such a continuing ethnic group identity in the Jōmon period, any diversity that might have existed is overwritten by a new story of unity. As Kaner (1996, 47-47) points out, researchers had looked for this identity before the 1930s, but then shifted to cataloguing raw data in the politically sensitive period around the Second World War. Afterwards, interest in the origin issue rose again, now in the context of a reaction to the long period of belief (until WOII) in the 'myth of the emperor', that was based on the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* texts about Japan's mythical origins (Fawcett 1995, 233). The absolute faith they put in their emperor had left the Japanese disillusioned after losing the war. In archaeology thereafter, internal social struggles were ignored and a turn was made from the feeling of a 'national family' under the emperor, to shared roots of the Japanese nation. As a result of this, archaeology became important in cementing their new identity. In the late sixties political interest in an origin story of the Japanese people rose. Archaeology could provide this story, and subsequently became worthy of financing (Fawcett 1995, 245). An emphasis was laid on a shared origin, based in prehistory and continuing until present day.

However, despite many Japanese wanting to see homogeneity, a case can certainly be made for diversity in prehistory. How do we know if the Jōmon people saw themselves as a part of a bigger group occupying the Japanese archipelago? Did they really feel like they shared common values like modern Japan likes to assume the Jōmon people did? Research into this topic is of course outside the scope of this thesis, but I will give two examples as to show how diversity is lost in a focus on unity and homogeneity.

The large variety of pottery styles the Jōmon period is known for more likely suggests a feeling of people distinguishing themselves from others. If pottery styles can be taken as indicators for at least a certain amount of group distinction, looking at just the Middle Jōmon period (5000-4000 BC) for example reveals great creativity in different styles across the Japanese archipelago (see table 1).

Table 1 – Chronological table of Jōmon pottery, showing great stylistic diversity (Habu 2004, 39)



A second clue for diversity in the Jōmon period may be found in dental mutilation practices seen in buried individuals. Even within one village, separate groups have been recognized on the base of tooth ablation or removal. This has been interpreted as a sign of people who married people from the settlement group and moved in. The changes made to teeth would make it instantly recognizable what group a person was from just by opening their mouth (Kobayashi 2004a, 131-132). Information about this practice does not seem to be as prevalent as other Jōmon ritual practices. One of the reasons for its invisibility could be the result of artists impressions and reconstructions of Jōmon individuals. As I've noticed in the Sannai Maruyama museum, Jōmon people don't seem to be depicted as smiling with their teeth exposed, so the practice of dental mutilation is hidden from sight. Perhaps this is because it is nowadays seen as a more harmful and perhaps even barbaric act, which happens to make it further evidence of a selective memory in regards to the past.

Apart from this threat to diversity, something else has also only been selectively recognized when it comes to identity: the consumption of rice is seen as a quintessential aspect of Japanese culture. It has been important not just as food, but also in politics, culture and spirituality (Hudson 1999, 235). However, rice agriculture was not practiced in the Jōmon period, at the very least not in any significant way (Ogawa 2002, 185). This would move the start of a Japanese identity to the Yayoi period, but this view is mostly ignored and doesn't seem to create a problem for identifying with the Jōmon period.

Now that we have observed the emergence of a new national identity, what makes the Jōmon period such an attractive target for the origin of the Japanese nation? One of the major factors stems from one of prehistoric archaeology's biggest handicaps: no written sources are around on what people actually thought (or said they thought), so we have to rely on material culture to distill the values and ideas of their makers from. This leaves a lot of things open to interpretation, making it more possible for us to project our own views on it.

Especially in Japan, public interest in archaeology is very big and many newspapers feature reports on local excavations, that sometimes also make it to national newspapers. School trips to archaeological sites are also common. Often difficult analyses of material are necessary to say one theory is more likely than the other. When archaeologists then report their findings to the public, such nuances are ironed out in favor of more easily comprehensible, romanticized stories. As Mizoguchi (2006b, 57-58) puts it, the Jōmon period has become a 'timeless past', only described by its culture or lifeways. There is a danger in this: as Kaner (1996, 46) and Fawcett (1996, 60) both observe, generalizations of this kind are easier to manipulate by the state, making them reflect the dominant ideologies at the time. Mizoguchi (2006b, 58) goes on to explain that this view came to be as a result of the long span that the Jōmon period occupies, making developments seem that much more gradual. The other reason stems from the place Jōmon archaeology has within the larger discursive sphere of Japanese archaeology, mostly in contrast with the Yayoi period that comes after.

The Jōmon period has become associated with several values that directly oppose the Yayoi period. Mizoguchi (2006b, 59) has observed that the popular vision of the Jōmon period associates it with staticness (timelessness), Japanese prehistory, 'other' and nature. This all directly contrasts they Yayoi period that is seen by Mizoguchi as dynamic, Japanese history, 'same' and culture. This dichotomy is further deepened by other examples: the Jōmon is female, figurines, domestic/shamanistic and embodied knowledge, while the Yayoi is male-centered, weapon-shaped ritual items, political, and strategic knowledge (Mizoguchi 2006b, 60). In this light it is strange how dogū often appear as enemies in videogames and other fiction. The type of dogū seen there is most often of the goggle-eyed variety however. Those may look a bit less humanoid and more extraterrestrial to most people, which could explain their hostile nature in these instances. Looking at this distinction though, it becomes clear that the Jōmon is associated with things that are now regarded as positive, while the Yayoi exhibits traits with a negative feel. This negative edge has especially followed from the Japan's dramatic loss in World War II, that can be

associated exactly with things such as male-centeredness, weapons, politics and strategic knowledge. Building on this, Mizoguchi (2006b, 63) eventually boils the two periods down to the Jōmon as a remedy for modernity, as opposed to a period of Yayoi and onwards that shows the ills of modernity. These associations with the Jōmon period show why the Jōmon has been embraced in modern times, as a paragon of virtues and values of the kind I described earlier. I find that this theory explains a lot about the view of Japanese prehistory and agree that these implicit associations behind the Jōmon and Yayoi can be seen in writings about and depictions of the Jōmon Period. Mizoguchi's theory is probably not recognized by many Japanese themselves, but this could be the result of them subconsciously accepting these 'traditional' Jōmon associations as only natural while living in Japan.

Another thing that makes the Jōmon period a prime candidate for being a part of Japanese identity is its uniqueness and its pureness. Archaeological evidence from the Jōmon period is often emphasized as being uniquely Japanese, in an effort to help the Japanese form a cultural identity (Fawcett 1996, 74). The idealization of the Jōmon period has had consequences for its image. It can be used to support different ideals. Some people see Japan as an almost ideally Marxist egalitarian state, but how can this be explained? The Jōmon period comes to the rescue as it exhibits round settlements, and hunter-gatherers like the *matagi* of Tohoku, said to have been derived from the Jōmon, equally divide their spoils and do not accumulate wealth (Umehara in Hudson 2003, 265). They also show little to no differentiation of class in grave goods.

This Japanese uniqueness harks back to a perceived pureness, a pure Japaneseness existing as early as the Jōmon era, a period that was untainted by any foreign influences. The phenomenon of showing Japanese uniqueness has been dubbed *Nihonjinron* (literally 'theories about the Japanese'). Fawcett (1996, 74-75) remarks that this is a reaction to increased contact with Western countries, based on a group model. This attitude tends to benefit mostly the higher classes of society, as it enforces a certain obedience of the common people to a higher authority for their own good.

This brings us back to the dogū, and their place in Japan's identity. They carry the 'pure' Japaneseness, because in the time they were made there was no influence from people outside Japan. In fact, there is a theory about dogū that shows this idea really well. At the end of the Final Jōmon, when a migration of people from the mainland came and pushed into Jōmon territory, the production of dogū seems to increase on the border of their respective territories. Kobayashi (2004a, 151) identifies this immigration as 'a major threat to their traditional ways of life'. He says dogū are a direct product of the Jōmon conceptualization of the world. In the face of the danger of the invading rice farmers, more dogū were made as a representation of these Jōmon ways of life.

Another reason that they are attractive targets to represent these Jōmon 'ideals' is their human-like appearance, in particular their faces. In an interesting study by Naoko Matsumoto and Hideaki Kawabata, they gauged the reactions of native Japanese and non-native Japanese speakers to facial expressions of figurines. They refer their results to the existence of a universal human cognition, making it possible to objectively study the reaction to figurines (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 91). They showed the group of test subjects (30 native Japanese speakers and 17 non-native Japanese speakers) 30 pictures of figurine faces, which they were asked to individually grade on several aspects. These were the six basic emotions of happiness, sadness, anger, disgust, surprise and fear, and general dualities of smooth/rough, masculine/feminine, human/non-human, well-made/badly-made and approachable/ unapproachable (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 93). The results, though based on a small sample size, confirm in part a universal human cognition, mostly in regard to recognizing a particular gender in figurine faces. The more subtle differences in facial expressions showed a greater variety (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 93). Remarkably, most faces were not seen as being very feminine, despite a large amount of figurines showing bodily characteristics that can be regarded feminine (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 95). In regards to what is seen as attractive, there seems to be a preference in modern times for woman's faces that have baby-like characteristics, like large eyes under a wide forehead (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 95).

This ideal of cuteness has a somewhat darker side to it. Brian McVeigh has analyzed cuteness in contemporary Japanese society, and shows that it constitutes power relations by combining weakness and submissiveness with benevolence and sympathy (McVeigh 1996, 291). Those with any form of authority can employ cute things to associate themselves with a 'cheerful' image and thus enforce obedience and empathy, strengthening their place in sociopolitical hierarchy (McVeigh 1996, 299-300). It struck me that this 'cutification' is something that can also be seen in regard to the Jōmon period, for example the mascot Sanmaru (see fig. 6) and many trinkets found in (museum) shops. To me this means a domestication of the Jōmon past, making it non-threatening and light-hearted which helped make it possible to in a sense 'appropriate' the Jōmon period, in the feeling of it being the earliest instance of traditional Japanese culture.

If any aspect of Jōmon archaeological material is fit to be made cute, I think it would firstly be dogū because their looks (especially ones with big eyes) and nature are easiest to adapt to this image. Matsumoto and Kawabata note that: "If a society has a gender stereotype regarding a woman as pretty and frail like a child, it may produce anthropomorphic figurines which represent or accentuate that image" (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 95) In particular the dogū from the Late Jōmon and Final Jōmon have a less feminine and even human-like appearance (Matsumoto and Kawabata 2010, 97). These though seem to be the ones most prevalent in popular imagery, and the ones most often 'cutified' to appeal to a broad audience. Although the figurines are from the Jōmon era and not from modern times, the production of their image therefore seems to come from a modern viewpoint of what is regarded as attractive to a broad audience, changing the appearance of the dogū in imagery as deemed necessary.

This way of presenting dogū is evidently a modern construction, superposed on the archaeological material. But beyond that, it is remarkable to see how the image of supposed pureness and untainted Japanese core values is not only a modern view, but is apparently also projected on the Jōmon people

themselves following from archaeological evidence, saying they shared similar cultural values. It seems therefore that dogū have come to be recognized as excellent carriers of these Japanese values. This has led to their increased appearance abroad, the subject of the next chapter.

6 – Dogū in the West

6.1.1 – Academic perception

In this chapter, let us first look at dogū coming into view of Western academics, as for a long time dogū were relatively unknown in the West.

One of the first introductions to dogū in Europe was an article by Jiujiro Nakaya (1902-1936). He had come to Paris to study archaeology, and wrote an article on dogū in the surrealist magazine '*Documents*', edited by George Bataille and running 15 issues from 1929 to 1930. It featured articles on a wide range of subjects, from the fields of numismatics, art, photography, anthropology to archaeology. Nakaya proposed new typologies of dogū and wanted to set a new standard for their research. Because of his untimely death this would have to wait, but through his interaction there with people like the previously mentioned artist Tarō Okamoto (studying in Paris) and sociologist Marcel Mauss he left a mark nonetheless (Coolidge Rousmaniere 2009, 72-73). His article in *Documents* was not so much a feat of archaeological innovation, but stood out because of its context in the surrealist magazine of juxtaposed articles (Bailey, Cochrane and Zambelli 2010, 116).

One of the other contexts in which dogū appeared in the west, is in research by those who believe in past visits from extraterrestrial beings. According to them, these beings left marks of their presence on earth. The outlandish look of the dogū had been noticed by ancient astronaut theorists like Vaughn M. Greene, who wrote about them in his 1978 book *Astronauts of Ancient Japan*. According to him, certain dogū appear to wear suits that were modeled after working spacesuits (Greene 1978, 56). This fantastical and hard to prove interpretation is still supported by some, as seen for example in the television series *Ancient Aliens*, season 2 episode 3 'Underwater Worlds' (first air date 11-11-2010). Giorgio A. Tsoukalos and Erich von Däniken, who in this show frequently speak about alien interventions in humanities past, here talk about dogū

resembling modern day space suits. Tsoukalos says that to him the dogū replica he is holding is "a likeness of a possible extraterrestrial that visited earth thousands of years ago." [2] Although low on direct evidence and high in speculation, this interpretation continues to speak to audiences who believe there was more going on in the human past than archaeologists and historians are willing to recognize.

Since the Second World War much information about the Jomōn that came to the west was as part of broader encyclopedia or books on the (pre)history or art of Japan. Examples are *Ancient Peoples and Places: Japan before Buddhism* by J. E. Kidder Jr. (1959), *Art of the World: Japan* by Peter C. Swann (1966), *The Ancient Civilization of Japan* by Vadime Elisseeff (1974), *Kunstschatten van Japan* (Dutch, meaning 'Treasured Art of Japan') by Henri Stierlin (1980) and *Arts du Japon: Les temps d'avant l'histoire* (French, 'Art of Japan: The time before history') by François Berthier (1984).

I find this is the place to give credit to several people whose research has also in more recent years been instrumental in bringing the subject of dogū on an academic level to a Western audience and without whom any exhibition on dogū in the West would likely not have existed. It is an exception for Japanese research to be published in English, and the writings and translations of several key figures have made the subject more accessible. It is no coincidence then that these researchers are often those whom I reference as sources in this paper.

Firstly, responsible for many publications in English is Tatsuo Kobayashi, who has among others written the accessible introduction book to Jōmon archaeology 'Jōmon Reflections' (Kobayashi 2004a). His efforts to place Jōmon archaeology within the larger subject of world prehistory have often led him abroad to discuss the subject and engage in debate with an international audience (Kobayashi 2004a, iii-iv).

A second figure of importance for a Western view of Japanese and Jōmon archaeology is Simon Kaner, who has worked on several exhibitions featuring dogū organized by the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and

[2] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlZ6ZqcVE4k for the part of Ancient Aliens season 2 episode 3 'Underwater Worlds' concerning dogu astronauts (from time mark 10:00 to approximately 12:08)

Cultures in Norwich, two of which are the subject of my following case study. In this way he has assisted in making it possible to bring real dogū to the west to be seen and interacted with in exhibitions.

On the subject of figurines, Douglass Bailey from San Fransisco State University is specialized on the prehistoric figurines from the Balkan area. However, in his studies of how figurines work and how people and figurines mutually interact with each other, he connects figurines from around the world (Bailey 1994, 1996, 2005). He was also one of the main people behind the Unearthed exhibition, which did just that: connecting dogū and Balkan figurines and have people engage with them.

The Japanese researcher and professor based in Berkeley University, Junko Habu has published extensively in English about Jōmon archaeology as well as organized field schools for students to participate in Jōmon excavation. The importance of world archaeology speaks from her work, as put into words in the dedication at the beginning of her Jōmon archaeology overview book 'Ancient Jōmon of Japan' (2004). According to her book, she tries to bridge the gap between the academic traditions of Japanese and Anglo-American archaeology (Habu 2004, 5). Thus she is placing Japanese prehistory within a larger frame of prehistoric archaeology, much like Tatsuo Kobayashi.

Though I only have space to mention a handful of people and do not wish to do those I did not mention a disservice, I want to say it is through the work of researchers such as these that people in the West have a chance to learn more about dogū.

6.1.2 – 'High' art

I can be very brief about dogū in Western art as their presence is very small. A rare example of a western artist picturing dogū is performance and graphic artist Shaun Caton. He has made a series of drawings of dogū by letting his pencil move over the paper while looking at the figurines (see fig. 14). Through this he

captures his response to them, and tries to give them new life on paper (Bailey, Cochrane and Zambelli 2010, 148-149).

Fig. 14 – Shaun Caton, 'Drawing what you can't see' (2010). Pen and ink on paper, 14,6 cm x 20cm. In the left half of the picture, a goggle-eyed dogu can be seen (Bailey, Cochrane and Zambelli 2010, 153)

Then there is Sarah Beare, an artist who designed the animation 'Playing in Time' for the 'Unearthed' exhibition.[3] It was also shown in Akita, Japan in their 'Jōmon Renaissance' exhibition (http://www.sarahbeare.com/page10.htm). It has clay models of several dogū dancing to music with a drum beat, flute and wind chimes with a decorative pattern inspired by Jōmon ceramics in the background. Apart from the animation and model-making in the video, she also does illustration, sculpture, book binding, photography and poetry (http://www.sarahbeare.com/). 'Playing in Time' seems to be her only Jōmon-related work however, created on invitation by the exhibition makers.

[3] It can be viewed here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpAGt9_rhmI.

6.1.3 – Popular culture and media

The impact of dogū in the Western modern media is of course smaller than in Japan itself. Manga and live action television series like those mentioned before often heavily feature Japanese history and culture. Because of this they seem to leave Japan less often. In some cases however they are still accessible to non-Japanese speakers through translations, official or unofficial. To a younger Western audience, the introduction of dogū would be through these more indirect-natured translated popular media such as manga, anime and videogames.
While scouring the internet, I came across forum threads and discussions about their sightings in videogames. People seem to be intrigued by their recurring appearance, and online they have found a place to share their findings.

6.1.4 – Museums

On the subject of museums, a few of them possess early Japanese material in their collections, such as the British museum, the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich and the Edinburgh Royal Museum (Irvine 2004, 79, 107, 182). In Holland, the Museum Volkenkunde (Museum of Ethnography) in Leiden also has several fragments of dogū in storage which were donated by collector J. Langewis in the 1960s (Ilona Bausch, pers. com.). These have never been on display however. Was there just not enough room, not enough objects to put on display or was it a conscious decision to not include this early Japanese material? The reasons are not clear at this time.

What is clear however, is that the figurines seem to be featured in special exhibitions, perhaps allowing them to function better in a context with other Jōmon material. Since around the turn of the century there has been an increasing amount of exhibitions featuring dogū. In 1998 the *Maison de la culture du Japon* in Paris hosted '*Jōmon. L'art du Japon des origines*' featuring pottery and dogū

(http://www.universalis.fr). From the end 2004 to the beginning of 2005, *Zeit der Morgenröte* was exhibited in the Martin Gropius building in Berlin, featuring an array of objects (including dōgu, Ilona Bausch pers. com.), from the Jōmon period to the Asuka and Nara period (http://www.smb.museum).

In 2009 the British Museum devoted an exhibition solely to dogū called 'The Power of Dogū'. It was so successful even that on occasion of its return to Japan it was shown to the public once more in the Tokyo National Museum. Moreover, in 2010 the Sainsbury Center for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures hosted what could be called 'Power of Dogū's sister exhibition 'Unearthed' in Norwich. It featured Japanese prehistoric figurines as well as figurines from the Balkan area.

Also in 2010, in an exhibition titled "5000 Years of Japanese Art" at the Topkapi Palace Museum in Istanbul, Turkey, Jōmon Period art was included. Because of an absence of sources I cannot be certain, but Jōmon pottery and probably also dogū would have been shown there.

With most information available about the London and Norwich exhibitions, and having visited 'The Power of Dogū' myself, I will take a closer look at these exhibitions in the form of a case study below and see how they featured dogū. In a second case study I will examine the role of dogū in a world heritage colloquium I attended.

6.2 – The dogū foreign agenda: two case studies

Case study 1: 'The Power of Dogū' and 'Unearthed' exhibitions

'The Power of Dogū' (see fig. 15), running from 10th of September to 22nd of November 2009 in the British Museum in London, was a project organized between the British Museum and Japan's Agency of Cultural Affairs, in collaboration with Tokyo National Museum and curated by Simon Kaner. Its highlight were three dogū that have been designated as National Treasures, two of them as recent as 2009 and 2007, the other in 1995 (http://www. uk.emb-japan.go.jp). The dogū were shown in a long room divided into several parts. The figurines themselves were put safely behind glass, along the walls of the room as well as in individual cases spread across the room. This allowed visitors to view them from all sides. The information shown to visitors painted a picture of the people behind the figurines, relying heavily on archaeological data. A few examples of other Jōmon material culture were shown, such as pottery, but it was clear that dogū were the focus. I would describe the design of the exhibition as very traditional. With dogū in glass cases spread out in the open space, they seemed to be treated by the exhibition designers as pieces of art.

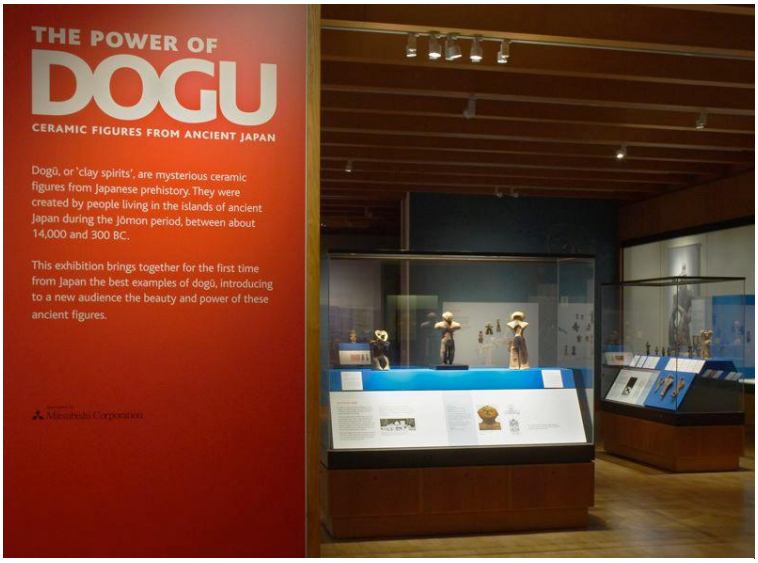


Fig. 15 – Photo of the Power of Dogū exhibition in the British Museum (http://images.suite101.com)

'Unearthed' (see fig. 16), curated by Douglass Bailey, Andrew Cochraneand again Simon Kaner, exhibited dogū with a very different approach.[4] I think juxtaposition was the key word here, with the dogū sharing the same space as clay figurines from the Balkans and, surprisingly, modern pieces of art. In doing so, they wanted to trigger an active response in visitors, making them think about what the figurines mean, their supposed uses and how we should study them (Bailey, Cochrane, Zambelli 2010, back cover). This at first seemingly strange combination consisted of objects relating to figurine studies, or that could be related to figurines in one way or another. The pieces often showed new ways in which one can look at small figures or objects, what they do to viewers and also more traditional theories on figurines using archaeological data.

Fig. 16 – Photo of the Unearthed exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (http://traumwerk.stanford.edu)

Looking at the two exhibitions, it seems that when dogū are showcased in the West, it is with two purposes. The first is to promote a cultural understanding of Japan and its history. Dogū have thus become 'cultural ambassadors' in a sense, tasked with the educational purpose of teaching others about Japan and its culture. According to what Tamotsu Aoki from the Agency for Cultural Affairs has written in the foreword of the exhibition catalogue for the Power of Dogū, "Each

[4] For interesting insights by the makers of 'Unearthed', take a look at the vodcast released with the exhibit here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGabPlNfCeg .

year the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan sends an exhibition of traditional Japanese cultural treasures to a different foreign country." (Kaner (ed.) *et al*. 2009, 9). This means dogū are considered by the Agency as a an integral part of Japanese traditional culture, and well able to represent Japan's Jōmon past abroad. The associations that the Japanese have with the Jōmon period and their identity, as described in the last chapter, seem to be carried by the dogū, making them a kind of physical manifestation of Japan's identity. The image they want to export is a positive one, with the positive associations Japan has with the Jōmon people. Japan associates itself with good characteristics like living in balance with nature, creativity and peacefulness, and tries to show it through dogū.

A second goal that is accomplished by sending dogū abroad is building a relationship with foreign countries. There is a good deal of trust involved from both parties involving the making of an exhibition, as dogū are not only pieces of art but also precious and irreplaceable sources of information for archaeology. On another level, having sponsors such as Mitsubishi Corporation for the Power of Dogū (Kaner (ed.) *et al*. 2009, 11) involved would undoubtedly serve a more business-oriented goal of keeping global (trade) relations, which is interesting for Western countries (in this case the UK) who might not necessarily feel that they benefit as much from just the cultural exchange.

I would also like to investigate the other side of the coin by taking a look at the Western audiences' reception of the figurines. What struck them about the dogu, and how did people experience the Power of Dogū and Unearthed? What follows are a few slices of the reports, reviews and opinions I found about the two exhibitions.

Starting with the Power of Dogū, Benjamin Secher of the UK newspaper the Telegraph in his report notes the similarity of dogū to modern art pieces by the likes of Picasso and Max Ernst and praises them as having the 'ring of great art'. [5]

[5] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-reviews/6138007/The-Power-of-Dogu-at-the-British-Museum.html (retrieved 17-04-2012)

Victoria James reviews the exhibition in the Japan Times and writes: "Whatever their ritual or workaday function, the dogu are also, irresistibly, art. Their whimsical forms enchant, and their craftsmanship — some dogu are large and hollow, many are perfectly balanced and freestanding — is undoubted." She also writes that "Japans Jōmon sculptures are a mystery to be enjoyed." [6]

Murray Lee Eiland (2009, 24), writing for Ceramics Montly, comments on their 'disturbing nature'. "It is not hard to see why they could — with imagination — represent aliens wearing space-suits." He writes about the uncertainty of their original meaning, and ends by saying that "…one thing is certain: Dogū can be appreciated as an (*sic*) and should be valued as the common heritage of humanity" (Eiland 2009, 25).

Blogger Jordan Harper mentions that he is glad he went to see the exhibition, even seeing it a second time. "The photos on the website and in the exhibition catalogue really do very little to impart the strange, silent, brooding nature of these remarkable objects: without eerie light and shadows playing off the patterned surfaces and unnaturally proportioned features, you just can't get a feel for the magical nature of these prehistoric lumps of clay." He strongly recommends a visit to anyone who want an excuse to visit London.[7]

Reviews for Unearthed are a bit different. According to Ivan Stoyanov who reviewed the exhibition for www. culture 24.org.uk, "Unearthed has an edgy feel which challenges its audience to think about figurines in new ways and reflect on what makes us human." Summing up his review, he writes: "An exciting, fresh approach to antiquity, Unearthed bursts with ideas about some of the most remarkable survivals from prehistory."[8]

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[6] http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/fa20091002a1.html (retrieved 17-04-2012)

[7] http://www.jordanharper.co.uk/post/205736067/the-power-of-dogu-british-museum (retrieved 17-04-2012)

[8] http://www.culture24.org.uk/history %26 heritage/archaeology/megaliths and prehistoric archaeology/art82427 (retrieved 17-04-2012)

Susan Meehan from the Japan Society says it "elicited far more questions than it answered, making for an extraordinarily thought-provoking and rewarding experience."[9]

In an online interview with a past student from the 13th of March 2012, Kat Andrews calls the Unearthed exhibition one of her favorites of those in the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, because "it was something unusual."[10]

Other positive feedback can be found in comments on the aforementioned vodcast that the Sainsbury Centre has posted online, with people calling the exhibition fantastic, fascinating, as well as child friendly.[11]

An interesting review which compares both exhibitions comes from N. James and Juliet Chippendale (2010). Their article in Antiquity speaks more fondly of the Power of Dogu than of Unearthed. They analyzed both exhibitions as sources for learning about prehistory, and found that the Power of Dogu taught them more whereas Unearthed remained confusing due to lack of context of the figurines (James and Juliet 2010, 1173). They find however that both exhibitions approached the dogū more as pieces of art to be appreciated in and of themselves, with less regard to context and 'hard' archaeological evidence (James and Juliet 2010, 1175). I agree that when a visitor is to view the archaeological material more like pieces of art that solicit a personal response, that response shouldn't wholly take the place any theories based on factual evidence. I can understand therefore that people still come out of the exhibition fascinated and puzzled by dogu, and while in this way appreciating them as objects, they are not much wiser on the hard data and body of knowledge about the figurines that has been collected. In this sense I feel that the exhibitions' creators have dropped the 'educational' ball.

[9] http://www.japansociety.org.uk/16697/unearthed-exhibition-at-the-sainsbury-centre-for-visual-arts/

[10] http://thisiswas.tumblr.com/

[11] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGabPlNfCeg

Case study 2: The Paris 'Jōmon sites for world heritage' colloquium

My second case study looks at the way dogu appear in the West in a different context: the field of heritage. Although an initiative of Japan, it brings dogū into the debate of world heritage and abroad, where there is another role for dogū to play. Japan is trying to gain recognition for their Jōmon past. Within the country, multiple archaeological sites have been designated as Important Cultural Properties. Jōmon artifacts have also been recognized, with three dogū (Kaner (ed.) *et al*. 2009, 87-93) and the Sasayama site flame-rimmed pottery designated as National Treasures. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend a colloquium in Paris the 18th of January 2010, in which a group of Jōmon archaeological sites in the prefecture of Aomori was discussed. The event was an effort to register these sites on the World Heritage List of UNESCO. Getting the sites on this list would assure international aid and protection to preserve them for the human race (Aomori City Board of Education *et al*. 2009, 42). Of course the recognition can also help promote the sites for tourists. In Aomori, where whaling is a well-established part of the region's economy (Morikawa 2009, 21-22), such alternative sources of income could shift employment away from this internationally frowned-upon practice and help preserve nature, perhaps making it more attractive for tourists this way.

The promotional material for the event in Paris, I noticed, heavily featured images of dogū. There was the 'Group of Jōmon archaeological sites in Aomori Prefecture for World Heritage Listing' information booklet with two famous dogū from Kamegaoka and Sannai Maruyama sites on the cover (Aomori City Board of Education *et al*. 2009, cover) and a brochure (see fig. 17). There were also stickers and buttons saying 'Jōmon Revolution' with dogū on them, some carrying wineglasses in a sophisticated fashion (see fig. 18).

How were the dogū used to promote the Aomori sites for World Heritage? To find out, let us take a look at the requirements for their inclusion on this list. Before entry on the World Heritage list, they must fulfill at least one of these criteria:

1. Represents a masterpiece of human creative genius
2. Exhibits an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design
3. Bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or has disappeared
4. Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history
5. Be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change
6. Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literacy work of outstanding universal significance

(Aomori City Board of Education *et al*. 2009, 43 and Skeates 2000, 11)

Apart from this, the heritage has to conform to standards of integrity and/or authenticity and it must be able to be protected to a sufficient degree (Aomori City Board of Education *et al*. 2009, 43).

Fig. 17 – Two covers of promotional material for the event. On the left is the cover of the booklet by various contributors 2009, on the right a brochure also about the Jōmon sites for world heritage

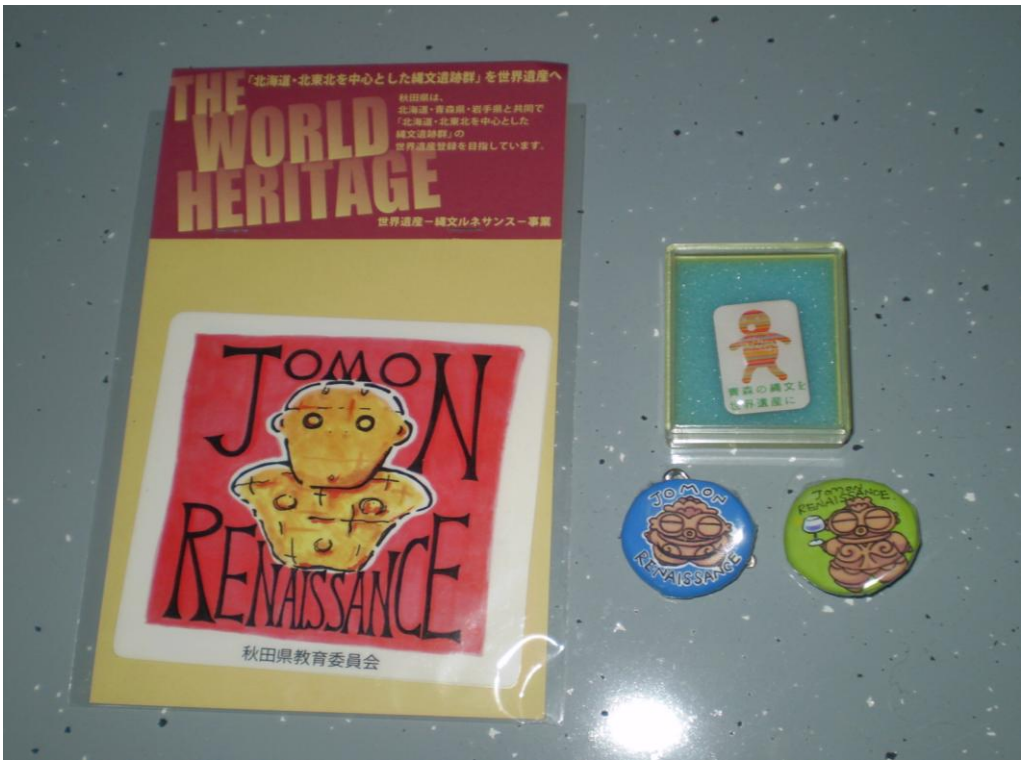

Fig. 18 – Left: Jōmon world heritage promotional stickers. Right-top: the official Jōmon Aomori heritage badge. Right-bottom: two badges with goggle-eyed dogu saying 'Jōmon Renaissance'

From the descriptions of the Jōmon period and the Aomori sites given in the event booklet, it seems the Aomori Jōmon archaeological sites bank on all six requirements (various contributors 2009). Despite the event being about the sites and not about dogū, the figurines were being used there as recognizable images of the Jōmon period. At the same time they emphasized the level of sophistication of the Jōmon people. They also spoke for the creativity of the Jōmon people (requirement 1) and were reflective of the rich spiritual life they are thought to have had (requirement 3) in a material way (requirement 6). Though not directly connected to the Aomori sites, having dogū there to show these aspects of the Jōmon period is clearly an argument in favor of inclusion of the Aomori archaeological sites on the World Heritage List.

7 – Conclusion

In this paper, I have sought to give a possible explanation for the rediscovery and new popularity of dogū. I have asked two questions about these figurines, firstly: where are they present, and secondly: how can this be explained? I divided my research into two parts, one to answer these questions in the present context of dogū in Japan, and another part in that of dogū in the West. My hypothesis was that the rise of the figurines' popularity follows from Japan's sense of identity and connection with the past. This would have lead to the figurines having new roles, making the figurines into carriers of values. My answers to these questions are as follows.

Looking at where dogū appear in Japan, I have noted their presence in several spehers of discourse: museums, 'high' art and popular culture/media. In the first area of museums, the public can interact with the original artefacts, and also hear the original explanations as theorized by archaeologists. A second way they appear in museums is in marketing, most visually represented by a mascot such as Sannai Maruyama's Sanmaru, the little dogū mascot, but also in museum shop trinkets and promotional material. This ties in with the popular culture and media. Dogū appear in popular media such as anime, manga, videogames and television shows, but also 'high' art sees dogū used as a source inspiration.

The most important explanation for their popularity is in my eyes found in the way Japan regards its Jōmon past. The Jōmon people have been ascribed good characteristics, that are worth to pursue in our modern times as well. In this way Japan connects its prehistoric past with its modern society, promoting a generalizing, selective story of continuity and homogeneity at the cost of the diversity that existed in the past. It is possible to use the Jōmon period to tell this story because a large part of prehistory life is still more speculation than fact. It was also a time without much interaction from other countries, leading people to believe that is was a time when Japan was still pure and untainted by foreign

influences, things that came to an end in the following Yayoi period. The phenomenon of dogū is tied specifically to the Jōmon period, making them excellent symbols for this era and carriers for the values associated with it. This way of seeing the Jōmon period can be seen as a reaction to the pre-war beliefs of emperor worship and stories of the divine origin of Japan.

Meanwhile, in the West, the presence of dogū is much smaller which makes it easier to trace directly their appearances. Making their first real debut in a paper by Nakaya Jiujiro, a Japanese researcher studying abroad in Paris, this academic cross-pollination was long confined to that same academic circle. The dogū lay in slumber for a long time, until an increase in dogū depictions in a different medium than text came as a result of imported Japanese media: videogames and the (translated) manga. With the rise of the internet, this really took off and made this Japanese entertainment easier accessible, and the presence of dogū in various places has been noticed by a small but intrigued online audience. On rare occasions Western artists used dogū as inspiration for their work. Japanese and western researchers have brought the subject of prehistoric figurines and dogū back to the table. Archaeologists such as Tatsuo Kobayashi and Junko Habu discuss Jōmon archaeology abroad, and other researchers such as Simon Kaner, Douglass Bailey have successfully brought dogū to a larger audience by incorporating them into museum exhibits such as my case studies 'The 'Power of Dogū' and 'Unearthed'. Dogū have also shown up in the debate surrounding Japanese heritage and in educational exhibitions abroad organized by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs. This increased presence of dogū in the West from the start of the new century is composed of these different elements.

I have found several reasons that might explain the increase of dogū in the West. As Japan is reaching out to countries to promote their cultural heritage, they are utilizing their history with this specific goal. The Jōmon period has come to be accepted as an integral part of Japanese culture and dogū represent some of the important values that are ascribed to it, meaning they are fit to represent Japan abroad. In this way good relations are maintained with foreign countries. In the world heritage debate, this is made even more clear as it is here that dogū seem to

excel at their role of promoting. In my Paris heritage colloquium case study, dogū are used to represent the ideas and values of sophistication, artistic skill, creativity and spiritual richness in the Jōmon age to vouch for the inclusion of a group of Jōmon archaeological sites in the World Heritage Listing.

Moving away from my specific research questions and the regional division I made in this paper, my conclusions seem to point to two different areas of research: Japan's identity and the workings of figurines.

First there is the state of Japan's contemporary identity, in relation to its Jōmon past. The fascination that has emerged for the Jōmon period since the turn of the century can be partially explained by Japans international position, as well as the struggle with its own past.

As seen in chapter three, on an international scale Japan is proud of its archaeological skill and detailed frameworks. It also emphasizes the country's uniqueness, and the pureness of a Japanese identity, untainted by foreign influence, that is supposed to have developed in the Jōmon period. The tribulations of World War II have had a big impact on the public conscience, leading to a move away from imperial archaeology and towards Marxism. Since then, the Yayoi period has shown to be the start of some bad practices associated with war, such as male-centeredness, politics, weapons and strategic knowledge. This reveals a contrast with the previous Jōmon period, associated with more innocent terms such as nature, femininity, domesticity and embodied knowledge.

The second area is of course the figurines themselves. Dogū seem to excel at representing the Jōmon period through their ability to connect with and appeal to people. This can be concluded from their frequent appearances in Japanese media seen in chapter three, whether promotional, educational or for entertainment. In the public mind they sometimes evoke not just archaeological artifacts but even sentient creatures, often extraterrestrial, a popular view in the realm of fiction and even beyond. Their acceptance as pieces of art has also become evident. The London and Norwich exhibition case studies have shown them to be excellent

carriers for what are seen as good Jōmon values: nature conservation, family values and a clean and economical lifestyle. These are mostly modern values, but attempts are made to trace these back to ancient times to support Japan's unique position and status. Without written sources, a lot of the Jōmon period, and thus dogū, is more open to interpretation than later periods. This makes them a suitable target to project these values on. It leads to lending dogū for exhibitions to foreign countries in order to broaden understanding of Japanese culture internationally. The Paris colloquium case study has shown that because of the positive values they are instilled with, dogū are now playing an important role in underlining the special position of Jōmon heritage within the world heritage debate. I propose that it is this positive perception of dogū, with these new roles, that is at least in part responsible for the public rediscovery and proliferation of dogū.

What does this mean for the future of dogū? As mentioned before, the broad space left for interpretation of Jōmon ways of life, as well as simplification to better connect with the public, makes this period vulnerable to assimilation by the dominant ideologies of the time. Dogū likely meant different things to different people in the Jōmon period, in a geographical but also a chronological sense. If the current roles of dogū continue to paint a picture of a homogenous Jōmon Japan, diversity is in danger of being overlooked or ignored. If we really want to come closer to understanding dogū and what their original functions may have been, I think it is necessary to keep in mind the diversity of meanings they would also have had in Jōmon times. Therefore great care must be taken to find a right balance between presenting a generalizing and a nuanced image of Jōmon life to the public. Dogū will continue to speak, but on a scientific level it is up to archaeologists and others specialists to translate what they say into meaningful and carefully researched information for the public to hear. On a different level, due to their mysterious nature, they will most likely always appeal to human imagination and inspire more fantastical stories and presentations.

ABSTRACT

Since the turn of the century, there has been a notable increase in the popularity of depictions and exhibitions featuring Japanese prehistoric figurines, better known as dogū. These artefacts from the Jōmon Period (about 15.600 to 3200 years BP) with a supposed ritual purpose increasingly show up in and outside of archaeology.

In this paper I look for a possible explanation for this recently heightened interest. This is done by asking two questions: 1. Where are dogū present, and 2. how can this be explained? Going from Japan's identity and the nature of their connection with the past, in this paper I look for the ulterior motives and goals behind the presence of dogū where they are most often seen: museums, art, popular culture/media.

The first part, an analysis of dogū in Japan, shows that Japan's view of its Jōmon past has changed since World War II. Out of nationalism a link is created with a past in which Japan was supposedly still unique and pure. Dogū reflect this and have thus come to represent Jōmon heritage. Good characteristics and aspects are selectively emphasized. In this way a generalizing story is created, that unfortunately negatively impacts the diversity that existed in the past. On the other hand, the mysticism and mysterious nature of dogū are a source of inspiration for artists and popular media such as anime, manga and videogames.

The second half investigates the presence of dogū in the West, which can be largely attributed to several researchers who publicize across country borders and have brought dogū to Western museums. A case study of the 'Power of Dogū' and 'Unearthed' exhibitions offers insight into the goals behind this kind of exhibition. The Jōmon period and its dogū are used to represent the cultural traditions of Japan. In the debate on world heritage too dogū are used to promote the Jōmon period, as evidenced by my case study of a debate on Jōmon heritage in Paris.

SAMENVATTING (DUTCH ABSTRACT)

Sinds de eeuwwisseling is er een merkbare toename te zien in populariteit van weergaven en tentoonstellingen van Japanse prehistorische figurines, beter bekend als *dogū*. Deze artefacten uit de Jōmon periode (ong. 15.600 tot 3200 jaar BP) met een verondersteld ritueel doeleinde duiken steeds vaker op binnen en buiten de archeologie.

In dit onderzoek wordt een mogelijke verklaring gezocht voor deze recente toename in belangstelling. Dit gebeurt op basis van twee deelvragen: 1. waar zijn dogū aanwezig, en 2. hoe kan dit verklaard worden? Vanuit het oogpunt van de Japanse identiteit en de aard van hun band met het verleden ga ik in dit stuk op zoek naar de achterliggende motivaties en doeleinden van de aanwezigheid van dogū daar waar ze het vaakst te zien zijn: musea, kunst en popcultuur/media.

Het eerste deel, een analyse van de aanwezigheid van dogū in Japan, laat zien dat de kijk van Japan op haar Jōmon verleden sinds de Tweede Wereldoorlog is veranderd. Er wordt als uiting van nationalisme een link gecreëerd met een verleden waarin Japan nog uniek en puur zou zijn. Dogū zouden dit weerspiegelen en worden zo representatief voor het Jōmon erfgoed. Goede eigenschappen en kenmerken worden selectief belicht. Er wordt op deze manier een generaliserend verhaal gecreëerd, dat helaas afbreuk doet aan de diversiteit die in het verleden bestaan heeft. Aan de andere kant zijn de mystiek en het geheimzinnige uiterlijk van dogū een bron van inspiratie voor kunstenaars en populaire media zoals anime, manga en videogames.

De tweede helft belicht de aanwezigheid van dogū in het Westen, vooral te danken aan onderzoekers die grensoverschrijdend publiceren en dogū naar Westerse musea hebben gebracht. Een case study van de ‘Power of Dogū’ en ‘Unearthed’ tentoonstellingen levert inzicht in de doelen achter dit soort tentoonstellingen. De Jōmon periode en haar dogū worden gebruikt om de culturele tradities van Japan te vertegenwoordigen. Ook in het debat rondom werelderfgoed worden dogū gebruikt om de Jōmon periode op de kaart te zetten, zoals blijkt uit mijn case study van een debat over Jōmon erfgoed in Parijs.

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