

Torrents of Diversity: the Future of the Past in Riverine Landscapes

KANER, Simon

Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures, Norwich, UK

KANER, Simon is an assistant director at Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures in United Kingdom. He received his PhD. in archaeology from the University of Cambridge (2004). He was a research associate at Kyoto University (1991-1993) and senior Archaeologist at County Archaeology Office, Cambridgeshire County Council (1998-2001). His major publications include: "Tatsuo Kobayashi Jomon Reflections" (Translated, adapted and edited with Oki NAKAMURA); "Long-term innovation: the appearance and spread of pottery in the Japanese archipelago" in Peter Jordan and Marek Zvelebil eds.; and "Ceramics before Farming: the Dispersal of Pottery among Prehistoric Eurasian Hunter-gatherers" (2010). His major field is archaeology in Japanese archipelago, and directed the Shinano River Project (2004-2009, funded by the British Academy). He has led exhibitions for Japanese prehistory in UK involving Japanese, American and European colleagues: *Unearthed: Figure-making and Figure-breaking in Ancient Japan and the Balkans* (Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich, 2010) and *The Power of Dogu: Ceramic Figures from Ancient Japan* (British Museum, London, 2009). s.kaner@sainsbury-institute.org

Abstract

The great majority of Japanese rivers have been canalised, dammed and re-routed or otherwise 'domesticated'. The anthropologist Veronica Strang has studied the ways in which 'water' and 'rivers' are culturally constructed and given meaning by societies around the world. In this presentation I will consider how riverine landscapes are 'managed' in the 21st century, and look back at how meaning may have been given to these critical components of landscape in historic times ('modernisation') and prehistory ('neolithic'). Two comparative case studies will be presented. The first is the Shinano River in central Honshu (which is close to the area studied by the Hokuriku Working Group). I analyse the contents of the journal 'Shinano' to assess the perception of this, the longest river in Japan. The second is drawn from the study area of the European Working Group, the River Ouse in the east of England. Here I look at the work of the Fenland Survey and the study of the inundated landscapes of the North Sea, into which the Ouse debouches. Both rivers and their catchments are expected to undergo very significant changes as a result of climate change, and I will conclude by considering the impact that riverine landscape management strategies in the UK and Japan may have on landscape diversity.

Keywords: landscape domestication; landscape diversity; management impact; River Ouse; riverine landscapes; Shinano River