

# Review

*Northeast Asia in Prehistory*. Chester S. Chard. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974. xvi + 214 pp., figures, maps, bibliography, index. \$12.50.

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Archaeologically, Northeast Eurasia remains one of the areas least known to the outside world, mainly due to language barriers, yet its archaeology is important for many reasons. This is a vast territory not only in area but also in its ecological diversity, and man's past adaptations here must have been varied in response to various environments.

*Northeast Asia in Prehistory*, by Emeritus Professor Chester S. Chard, is an outcome of his long experience in research and teaching on the area's prehistory, and is based on original source materials. The book consists of five chapters: (1) Northeast Asia in the Pleistocene; (2) Neolithic Siberia and its near neighbors; (3) Jōmon Japan; (4) The steppes of Inner Asia; (5) Japanese: Yayoi and Kofun. His emphases are on long-range trends and important problems in man's culture history and ecological adaptations in this part of the world. Details of individual cultural periods and research activities, however, are intentionally kept to the minimum since this book is written for the nonspecialist. A bibliography at the end of each chapter helpfully lists some substantial works related to the topics under discussion.

To point out a few important problems, the first chapter deals with the relationships between paleoecological conditions and cultural manifestations during the Upper Pleistocene. Those problems discussed here are also relevant to an understanding of the cultural origins and the peopling of the New World, one of Professor Chard's lifelong themes. Clearly described along

this line are tundra conditions prevailing during the late Upper Pleistocene in most of Siberia, conditions which probably were also encountered in Alaska during the same period. This is an important indication, suggesting that man's migration from Eurasia into Alaska under the same biota encountered no serious difficulties. The migration routes that have previously been hypothesized for man (Chard 1958 and 1960) now incorporate some new aspects.

In the remaining chapters, Holocene cultural developments in Siberia, Manchuria, Mongolia, Inner Asia, Korea, and Japan are discussed, and many forms of ecological adaptations, maritime, riverine, or terrestrial, are briefly traced. Characteristic of later cultural developments are influences of the Chinese civilization on neighboring cultures, which are felt, directly or indirectly, on the Neolithic and Bronze Age levels and afterward. But time depth for such influences is variable from region to region. This seeming difference in contact situations is valuable for clarifying cultural processes in each region as well as the nature of each receiving culture.

In short, this book presents to us many problems rather than solutions to problems. An example is the possible case of an area co-tradition regarded as also applicable to the Jōmon manifestations in eastern Japan (pp. 119-120), the applicability of which still remains to be seriously tested. I look forward to seeing further developments regarding these problems in the near future.

## REFERENCES

CHARD, CHESTER S.

- 1958 New world migration routes. *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska* 7(1): 23-26.

- 1960 Routes to the Bering Strait. *American Antiquity* 26: 283-285.