

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Ancient East Asia

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BRONZE AGE MARITIME AND WARRIOR DYNAMICS IN ISLAND EAST ASIA

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of Human History*



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108987318
DOI: 10.1017/9781108982955

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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781108982955

First published 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-98731-8 Paperback
ISSN 2632-7325 (online)
ISSN 2632-7317 (print)

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Bronze Age Maritime and Warrior Dynamics in Island East Asia

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DOI: 10.1017/9781108982955
First published online: March 2022

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Abstract: Recent interdisciplinary studies, combining scientific techniques such as ancient DNA analysis with humanistic re-evaluations of the transcultural value of bronze, have presented archaeologists with a fresh view of the Bronze Age in Europe. The new research emphasises long-distance connectivities and political decentralisation. 'Bronzisation' is discussed as a type of proto-globalisation. In this Element, Mark Hudson examines whether these approaches can also be applied to East Asia. Focusing primarily on Island East Asia, he analyses trade, maritime interactions and warrior culture in a comparative Eurasian framework. He argues that the international division of labour associated with Bronze Age trade provided an important stimulus to the rise of decentralised complexity in regions peripheral to alluvial states. Building on James Scott's work, the concept of the 'barbarian niche' is proposed as a way to model the *longue durée* of premodern Eurasian history. This title is also available as open access on Cambridge Core.

Keywords: Bronze Age, bronzisation, Island East Asia, trade, warfare

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ISBNs: 9781108987318 (PB), 9781108982955 (OC)
ISSNs: 2632-7325 (online), ISSN 2632-7317 (print)

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