The Jomon period (c14,000 – c1,000 BC) refers to a chronological interval of over 10,000 years in which one of the most remarkable and best-studied tradition of complex hunter-gatherers developed within the Japanese islands. While its pottery tradition is known to many, the Jomon culture was also characterised by other remarkable features, such as the use of lacquer, the management of anthropogenic forests, large settlements with defined spatial organisation, and even incipient forms of social complexity. The Jomon culture was however far from uniform; some of these features were present only in certain regions, others only during specific periods, still others vanished and reappeared multiple times, almost in a cyclical fashion. This paper will review some of the most recent lines of evidence offered by Jomon archaeology, focusing in particular on the extent of its diversity in space and time.

Enrico Crema is a university lecture in Computational Analysis of Long-Term Human Cultural and Biological Dynamics and Fellow of Fitzwilliam College. His research interests include computational and quantitative methods in archaeology, prehistoric settlement and demographic analysis, and the application of evolutionary models to understand patterns of cultural transmission. Enrico’s has long been interested in study of Jomon culture; his PhD investigated long-term settlement change in the Kanto region between 5000 and 3000 BC, whilst he recently collaborated with the Small Scale Economy Project at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature in Kyoto, where he worked on the reconstruction of Jomon population dynamics in northern Japan.

All are welcome // Monday 13 November 2017 // 5-7pm

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