

Ancient

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This article discussed trends of ancient period study, thorough review of publication of books, theses, and reports of archaeological excavations, as well as symposia that took place in 2012. The discussion concentrated especially on fields that involved excavation examples, and they were divided into four major themes.

The first theme is titled “Walled Cities (tojou)/Provincial Centers (kokufu)/County Seats (gunga)/Stations (umaya): Government Offices (kanga).” Traditionally these fields were often studied by document history; however there are now works based on document history which contain archaeological results or are based on archaeology using results of document history. Also, there were articles featured on site surveys. This is an effective measure for protection and organization of historical sites. Examination from various fields is now possible.

The second theme is titled “Regional History and Regional Exchanges: Study of Regional History.” Among local and regional history studies, discussions were active on regional exchanges or on specific regions. While regional history study in the past was typically on Tougoku (eastern country) or Tohoku histories, this fiscal year saw publication of compiled theses on ancient Ikinoshima Island. It probably is the first publication on the ancient Ikinoshima Island, and future study is awaited. Also, this year saw publication of memorandums of past symposia.

The third theme is “Inscribed Wooden Tablets and Pottery: Study on Excavated Writings.” The importance of excavated writings is being recognized as a connection between archaeology and ancient history/document history, and various theses and compilations of these were published for both general readers and researchers. Also a book on historical materials was published. Continued discussion will be expected not only by archaeologists and document historians, but from various fields such as Japanese language study.

The fourth theme is “Regional Disasters: Disaster History Study,” and handled disasters. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, there were many studies on the 11th year of Teikan contained in *Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku (The True History of Three Regions*

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of Japan), the research results of which were published in succession. Also, there was a publication of theses under a new keyword, “environment,” that regarded natural disaster as an environmental change, and how to face and overcome the natural environment. The discussion was not based on the viewpoint of nature versus people, but rather humankind living in nature.

While an enormous amount of excavation is being conducted in Japanese archaeology, there are many people engaging in their job trying to convey the results to the public and contribute to the community. Archaeological site briefing sessions, exhibitions, and symposia are some of such opportunities. This year saw many of such presentations of research results.