Paleolithic

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Many examples of Japanese archaeological study are being dispatched overseas in recent years. Reports and discussions were conducted on archaeological and geological obsidian studies in Japan at the Fifth Arheoinvest Symposium, 'Stories Written in Stone', held in Iasi, Romania. At the Paleoamerican Odyssey, held in New Mexico, U.S.A., it was indicated that pursuit of the origin of Pre-Clovis culture and its diffusion route has already begun in the Americas. In northeast Asia the period before the latest glacial stage is being focused on, so it is necessary to examine how Japanese data can contribute to studies on LGM or incipient phase stemmed points, as they can be connected to such studies. There were publications of: AKAZAWA Takeru, *et al.* (eds.) *Dynamics of learning in Neanderthals and Modern Humans Volume 1: Cultural Perspectives* (2013, Springer); YAMADA Masayoshi and ONO Akira, (eds.) *Lithic Raw Material Exploitation and Circulation in Prehistory* (2014, ERAUL 138), ONO Akira *et al.* (eds.) *Methodological Issues for Characterization and Provenance Studies of Obsidian in Northeast Asia* (2014, BAR S2626).

This fiscal year saw active study on lithic raw material, especially obsidian. At the Nagano Convention of the Japanese Archaeological Association in 2013, examples of provenance studies of obsidian in the central part of the Japanese Islands were collected. In addition to the data in Kanto and Hokkaido that have been accumulated in the past, development of studies utilizing such databases is expected in the future. Japanese Paleolithic Research Association held a symposium, "Radiocarbon Dates and Comparisons of Interregional Chronology of the Japanese Upper Paleolithic," where reports were made on the present states on dating of lithics in various parts of the country. In the discussion, it was pointed out that it is important to accumulate measurement examples in order to grasp correlation with paleo environments rather than just to date each lithic.

This fiscal year continued to see achievements from large study projects based on competitive funds. Achievements of JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas, 'Replacement of Neanderthals by Modern Humans: Testing

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Evolutionary Models of Learning' could be learned on the project homepage (http://www.koutaigeki.org/eng/index.html). In Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (A), "Research on the Formation Process and Transfiguration of the Pleistocene Human Societies in the Northern Circum-Sea of Japan Area through the Obsidian Exploitation and Circulation," results of archaeological obsidian study, mainly on Hokkaido, were announced. MEXT Supported Program for the Strategic Research Foundation at Private Universities, 'Historical Variation in Interactions between Humans and Natural Resources: Towards the Construction of a Prehistoric Anthropography,' indicated the possibility of correlation between change of human behavior and change in paleo environment regarding obsidian sources located at elevations higher than 1,000 meters above sea level in the central part of Japan, based on reconstruction of vertical change in the tree line position in the marginal regions between forest and non-forest area.

Reports on large excavation projects that have been accumulating enormous research results such as Shirataki sites near large stone material sources in northeast Japan, and a series of excavations in southern Central Japan due to construction of Shin-Tomei Expressway are being concluded or about to be concluded. Utilization of these results are expected in the future.