

North America

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Japanese and American archaeologists currently share similar methodological and theoretical perspectives in archaeological research. However, because of different developmental trajectories, archaeology belongs to the discipline of anthropology in the U.S. and is generally its own academic discipline in Japan, scholars from each make different inferences related to discoveries using fundamental distinct methodologies and theoretical frameworks. To better understand similarities and differences in archaeological research between the two countries, this paper highlights and documents trends in archaeological theories, methods, and new discoveries in North American prehistory from 2014 to 2018. By discussing several trends in American archaeology, Japanese archaeologists and scholars in other disciplines can identify other “best-practices” and how it may relate to their own archaeological research and interpretations. In addition, this paper promotes an idea that the comparison of archaeological research in the U.S. and Japan would open the door to future collaborative research projects.

This study uses peer-reviewed journal articles published from *American Antiquity* from January 2014 to April 2018 to evaluate recent trends in American archaeology, an approach also used by Robert Kelly in his synthesis of trends of North American prehistory. *American Antiquity* is considered to be one of the hallmark peer-reviewed journals in North American and disseminates the results of cutting-edge archaeological research to an international archaeological community. More than 170 articles were published in *American Antiquity* from 2014 to 2018; as a result, it is difficult to provide detailed information about recent trends in the North American prehistory. To overcome this issue, this paper focuses on topics related to: 1) trends in theoretical frameworks in American archaeology, 2) new archaeological discoveries in North America, and 3) new archaeological techniques related to on artifact interpretation.

These three themes allow Japanese archaeologists to identify similarities and differences between archaeological research done in the U.S. and that done in Japan. By recognizing the similarities and differences, Japanese and American archaeologists will be able to strengthen and complement the pros and cons of archaeological methods and theories in both countries. (written by the author)

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