

Overview

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The Japanese Archaeological Association (the Association) was founded in 1948, and had its 70th anniversary in 2018. The Association that was born soon after WWII, carried out its role and accumulated activities through some historical turning points in the post-war society. At its 70th anniversary, the Association implemented a commemorative project; “Japanese Archaeology and the Japanese Archaeological Association at the Turning-point.” As fiscal 2018 research trends of each period and region are discussed in each article, the author would like to discuss some issues here.

While versatile cultures that developed in Japan are becoming clear as you can see in research trends of the Paleolithic, Jomon, and Yayoi periods, it seems to be time to reevaluate each culture’s concept itself. As for research trends of regions surrounding the Japanese archipelago, there is a direction to consider Japanese culture within Asia, and it seems to be connected to clarifying diversity of Japanese culture. Along with that, there is a direction to investigate viewpoints of comparative archaeology by locating the Japanese islands within the world. Also, research trends of each period are showing interest in the transitional phase of each period, in other words, the concept of each period is being questioned again. Important tasks to be achieved in the future are how to relate archaeological research/study results of each region to archaeology of the whole archipelago, and how to locate it within the world.

Also, Japanese archaeology is currently in the large stream of diversity of methodology and time/space expansion of study subjects. In addition to ordinary analysis methods, natural scientific analysis is affirmatively being introduced, and research/study of modern/contemporary sites that were rarely handled by archaeology before, are being conducted. Within such trends of Japanese archaeology, the large issue is how to handle research/education in the future.

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