

Overview

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From January to March of fiscal 2019, many study meetings and activities of academic societies were unfortunately canceled or postponed due to spread of the novel corona virus. The Japanese Archaeological Association faced the difficult task of how to conduct research activities under COVID-19. Research trends of each period are discussed below.

As for the Paleolithic study, the time of human arrival on to the Japanese archipelago was discussed, 20 years after the fabrication problem of the Paleolithic sites was revealed. On the other hand, transformation to the Jomon period was also discussed. As for the Jomon period, studies on graves, settlements, and artifacts were conducted, as well as chronological study. As for settlement study, discussions were held on circled settlements, changes in location of settlements, and regional study. Impression replica method was widely adopted and achieved new results. As for the Yayoi period study, calendar dates were discussed, and a proposal was made to divide the period into Neolithic and early Metal Age. As for the Kofun period study, discussions were made from various viewpoints on interest in the community of chiefs, military organizations, rituals on mounded tombs, and so on. Also, there were discussions to interpret enlargement of mounded tombs in the Middle Kofun from new viewpoints such as instability of sovereignty and distribution of wealth. As for Ancient study, excavation research continued for castle towns, government offices, and temples. Excavation research was also conducted on road features and related facilities, production sites, and large settlements. As for the Medieval, Early Modern, and Modern periods, research results on urban cities were published. Also, there was a publication of research results at Hiraizumi that have been accumulated for many years. As for ceramic study, symposiums and study conferences were held from various viewpoints.

There seems to be a heightened interest on transitional periods in recent years, including fiscal 2019. Typical examples are the emergence of humanity on the archipelago, the relationship between the Paleolithic and Jomon period, and the beginning of the Yayoi period. Behind such discussions, there seems to exist questions such as real states of each period or how to classify each period. How to answer these questions is the big task of Japanese archaeology.

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