

China

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In the main article, fiscal 2014 study trends of Chinese archaeology were introduced mainly from academic societies and symposiums, study reports on joint research and theses, as well as movements of Japanese scholars and related exhibitions.

On the Paleolithic, an overview was given on recent study trends and research results of the Lower and Middle Paleolithic in China, as they are important in order to consider Japanese Paleolithic culture. Also, lineages of denticulate tools mainly from northern China were discussed. As for the Neolithic, there were studies on pottery dynamics from the upper and middle Yellow River, and a study on stone tool functions by verification of experimental archaeology. Other than theses, progress was seen on the study of transitions in time and local characteristics based on compilation of animal-shaped artifacts excavated from the lower Yellow River region, and study on the meaning of figures inscribed on jade objects around the Yangtze River Basin.

On the Yin and Zhou dynasties, studies to understand social structures and historical movements from bronze objects were popular, and are developing theories on multiple uses of inscriptions, icons, and inscribed artifacts in addition to typological study. Also, there were ambitious works to draw new historical pictures based on on-site animal archaeology, isotope chemistry and fluorescent X-ray analysis.

For the Qin and Han dynasties, central focuses were stone reliefs and mirrors, integral study of inscriptions and documents. Natural scientific analysis is becoming more prominent, as opposed to studies in the past that only emphasized design and icon analysis.

For Wei, Jin, and the Southern and Northern dynasties, new historical pictures are being drawn with documentary records, not only on archaeological data such as tiles and terracotta figurines but also the transition of tomb systems including mausoleums, from the period when many dynasties were defending their authority from the confusion at the end of Later Han to unification by the Sui dynasty. Overlooking the Sui and Tang dynasties, significant progress was seen on verification of Buddhist statues and paintings at Buddhist sites such as Longmeng and Dunhuang, and systematic study on the

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chronology of celadon manufactured at government kilns and lineages of manufacturing techniques. Other than the above mentioned, there was a study that tried to grasp the transition of imperial tombs or cities with its historical background, and a study that overviewed formation processes of “Chinese civilization” that played a central role in the East Asian world, by organizing archaeological results beginning from the Neolithic.

On the trends of academic societies and symposia, there were many positive presentations of research results conducted in China mainly by young scholars, suggesting collaborative research is more active than in the past. This is also apparent from reports of Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research. On excavation research and reports, there was publication of joint research results including world heritage sites, and excavation reports that were conducted during the war. Also many exhibitions related to Chinese archaeology were held in various places in Japan.

This fiscal year saw many research results related to the historical period after the Han dynasty, handing quite an extensive area. It reflects the background that joint research with China is ever more active, and studied periods and regions are quite varied. Taking a look at research contents, interdisciplinary joint research that crosses archaeology and natural science is deepening further, and development in the future is awaited. On the other hand, development of interdisciplinary research between art and science is quite remarkable in Chinese archaeology, and it already has surpassed Japanese archaeology in some fields. As foreign researchers, we are standing at a crossroad to reconsider once more, how to handle continental China data in the future, naturally drawing a historic picture on the East Asian viewpoint but also with new research visions.