

Archaeological Administration and Japanese Archaeology

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to provide the audience with a brief introduction of Japanese archaeological administration, focusing on distinctive features in Japan. Since archaeological administration is closely connected to “archaeology” as academic discipline, by overlooking how archaeological administration has contributed to archaeology, we would like to think how archaeology and archaeologists can contribute to archaeological administration. The author approaches to this theme from a viewpoint of an archaeologist working in a prefectural government.

KEYWORDS: administration, law, cultural properties, site protection

1. Introduction

This talk aims to provide the audience brief introduction of Japanese archaeological administration, focusing on distinctive features in Japan. Since archaeological administration is closely connected to “archaeology” as academic discipline, by overlooking how archaeological administration has contributed to archaeology, we would like to think how archaeology and archaeologists can contribute to archaeological administration. I am very happy to talk with this theme from a viewpoint of an archaeologist actually working in a prefectural government.

I use the term “Cultural properties” as the legal term in this talk, as well as “buried cultural properties” for archaeological structures and artefacts buried underground, and to be legally protected. The words may sound a little strange, but I will follow the official use.

2. Outline and brief history of Japanese cultural properties administration

Firstly, I would like to briefly introduce outline of Japanese cultural properties administration. The basis for the protection of cultural properties in Japan is “the

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Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (“the Law” from now onwards.)” In the article three, it is said that making utmost efforts for cultural properties protection is our responsibility, and we, those who work in the local and national governments, must follow this. Moreover, the article four says that it is the citizen’s duty to cooperate cultural properties administration.

The current Law was enacted in 1950 and has been amended many times. In the law, there is the system to protect “buried cultural properties,” that is archaeological administration. It was legally set in 1975 when the Law was amended. Recently, what to be protected, that is what to be valued as cultural properties, seems to be growing more and more diverse. For instance, notion of cultural landscape was introduced in 2004 at the most recent amendment.

Figure 1 is a schematic diagram of cultural properties to be protected by the Law in Japan. Historically and academically significant sites are designated as “Historic Site.”

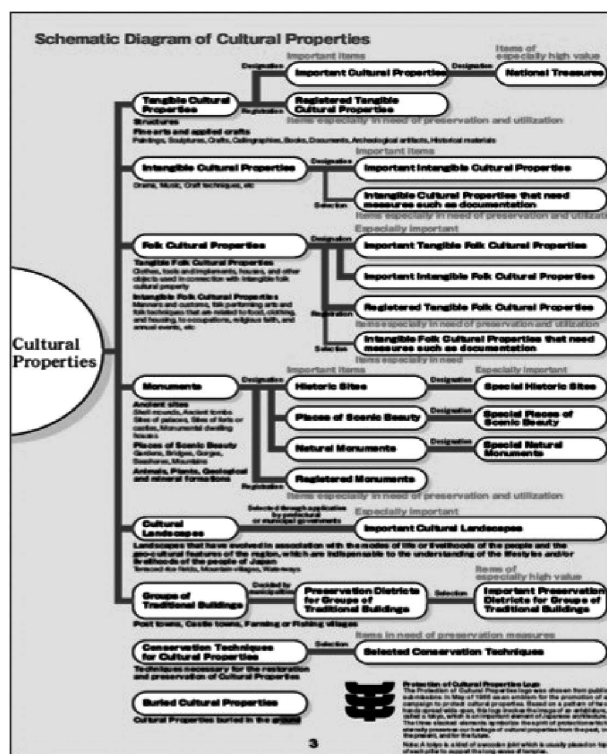


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of Cultural Properties. (Taken from the pamphlet issued by Agency of Cultural Affairs. “Cultural Properties for Future Generations—Outline of the Cultural Administration in Japan.” Downloaded from Agency of Cultural Affairs Website, last accessed 08/06/2016.) (Agency of Cultural Affairs 2016a, p. 3)

Among those, particularly important ones are designated as “Special Historic Site.” Once sites are designated, they have to be generally, in theory, preserved as they are. Any changes need the permission through legal procedure.

Buried Cultural Properties are the cultural properties underground, characteristics of cultural properties are similar to Historic Sites, but not with so distinctive significance as them. That consists of archaeological sites and artefacts, such as shell mounds, ancient tombs, palaces, forts and castles, etc. as well as pottery, stone tools, roof tiles and other findings from archaeological structure (the Law). While notably significant archaeological sites would be designated as Historic Sites, as mentioned before, others are protected under the different system of rescue archaeology as administrative action, which will be discussed in detail, later.

Just for your information, Figure 2 is the number of designated sites in Japan and in Osaka. There are plenty of places to visit nearby.

I would like to introduce some examples of Historic Sites in Osaka. Figure 3 is one of only two Special Historic Sites in Osaka, Osaka Castle Remain Site (Osakajo-ato). The original castle is apparently not this current castle building, but stone walls, some other

	Japan	Osaka		Japan	Osaka
Special Historic Sites	61	2	Historic Sites	1,760	67
Special Places of Scenic Beauty	36	0	Places of Scenic Beauty	398	5
Special Natural Monuments	75	0	Natural Monuments	1,021	5
Total	172(162)	2	Total	3,179 (3,067)	77

Figure 2. Statistics of Designated Cultural Properties in Japan. (Taken from Agency of Cultural Affairs Website, last accessed 08/06/2016. <http://www.>)



Figure 3. Special Historic Site Osaka Castle Remain Site (Osakajo-ato)



Figure 4. Historic Site Imashirozuka Kofun Site

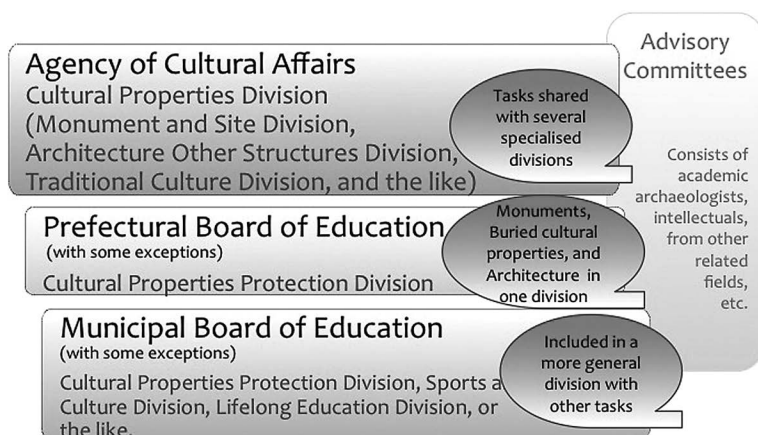


Figure 5. Who deals with archaeological administration in Japan?

buildings and archaeological remains are designated as Special Historic Site.

Another designated Historic Site nearby is Imashirozuka Kofun located in Takatsuki City, which is about a half an hour away from Kyoto by train. The details of the sites are on the poster of archaeological fair, but it is a 6th century massive keyhole-shape tomb. The site is reconstructed and decorated with cute replica of clay horse figures, *haniwa*, where you can even sit on to take pictures.

Now, I would like to summarise the structure of Japanese archaeological administration, that is who deals with archaeological administration in Japan. Different levels of governments respectively have different roles. In Japan, basically, the government can be leveled into three levels: The national, prefectural, and municipal governments. In the national government, cultural properties administration in general, including archaeological administration is under the Agency of Cultural Affairs set up in

1968, which is the special body of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). In the prefectural and municipal governments, with some exceptions, local boards of education are responsible for those.

The national, prefectural and most municipal governments have their advisory committee for cultural properties consists of specialist and academics, for advice and instruction on designation and policies related to cultural properties administration. What is very distinctive in Japan, is that local governments have lots of authorities and play the great role. There are almost 6,000 archaeologists employed in the government, mostly prefectural and municipal levels.

3. Current state of archaeological administration

Next part of the talk focuses on archaeological administration, related to “buried cultural properties.” I would like to start with definition of what are “buried cultural properties.” It is about cultural properties buried underground (the Law, Article 92) that include archaeological sites and artefacts, as I have mentioned. The site officially recognised as with cultural properties are constrained with some legal restrictions as follows:

- 1) Obligation of notifications for any excavations and construction works disturbing the ground, with possibility to influence underground structure. (Nevertheless, it is not asking for permission, but merely submitting notification. (The Law, Articles 93, 94.)
- 2) When necessary, prefectural governments can instruct to undertake rescue excavation before the developments.
- 3) The expense for rescue excavations has to be covered by the initiator of the development, with some exceptions, those who benefit from the developments possibly disturbing cultural properties that are the public properties.

It is the best for the sites to be preserved *in situ*. Therefore, the area to be destroyed have to be minimised though mitigation, as we, archaeological administration side believe that they are the public properties for public good. However, buried cultural properties inevitable to be destroyed are preserved by records through excavations. Buried cultural properties” can only be acknowledged through the excavation as Japanese traditional buildings are wooden, and thus the upper building structures do not remain. Excavations require the highly specialised skill. The local governments who directly deal with administrative actions on buried cultural properties have to be facilitated with the personnel with appropriate abilities and skills. While notably significant sites would be designated as Historic Sites, as mentioned before, others are protected under the different system of rescue archaeology as administrative action. It is an administrative action, and thus unavoidable. Moreover, the excavation is irreversible.

There are four steps for archaeological administration; 1) “comprehension and

dissemination,” 2) “mitigation,” 3) “preservation (*in situ*/by record),” and 4) “utilisation,” which includes both preventive and reactive measures against threats of the development.

Comprehension and dissemination

We can “comprehend” characteristics and value of archaeological structures in certain area, through distributional survey, test excavations, etc. and other researches. We must comprehend to acknowledge what we have to protect. Moreover, we have to disseminate what we comprehend by providing information about value of the sites to the public with various means to raise their notion of protection. By sharing information, and thus sharing the value, negative impact on archaeological structures caused by ignorance can be avoidable. More significantly, we can raise the supporters.

In Osaka prefecture, as well as many other prefectural and municipal governments, we provide the distribution map of officially recognised archaeological sites on the internet. The areas surrounded by the green lines (in Figure 6.) are the archaeological sites, where you must submit legal notification for the development. If you click one of those, it turned to pink, and show information on the site in the small window below.

Mitigation

According to Article 93 and 94 of the Law, it is Legal obligation to report any work disturbing underground in the area of ready-known archaeological sites. The sites should be disseminated to the wide public by “comprehension and dissemination” process. If mitigation is necessary, we negotiate with the developers to change the plan, to minimise the loss as we believe destruction of archaeological sites are the loss of the public.



Figure 6. Archaeological site distribution map in Osaka. (Osaka Prefecture Information Map System. Last accessed <https://www11.cals.pref.osaka.jp/ajaxspatial/ajax/>)

According to the article 57 of the law, the government can give the developers necessary instructions regarding their notifications. For instance, the government can instruct to undertake excavations prior to the construction work when necessary.

Generally, in Osaka, the answers for notifications are sent to the developers in three levels: I) Archaeological excavation (Preservation by records); II) Partial surveillance during construction works; and III) Commence the development carefully (Report when found something)

Those are administrative guidance, but no fines and penal even when the developers offend.

Preservation

As a result of excavations to comprehend the site and the following mitigation, some sites acknowledged with particular significance are “preserved *in situ*.” Some cases are lead to designation of Historic Sites, and then utilised to a certain extent. The picture above is an example. Hinenosho site is a Historic Site located close to Kansai airport where many people must have passed. Archaeological structures are preserved *in situ*, underneath, and the area is to be utilised as archaeological park. In some other cases, the sites are preserved, but buried under the building or the like, without being utilised or disseminated much.

As a result of excavations to comprehend the site and the following mitigation, some



Figure 7. Site preserved *in situ*: The site explanation board is standing where archaeological structures preserved and buried underneath. Historic Site Hinenosho Site, Chofuku-ji Temple Remain Site (Izumisano City)



Figure 8. Reconstructing and recording of the artifacts. (Osaka Prefecture Cultural Properties Research Office)



Figure 9. Excavation reports are published basically after every rescue excavation. (Osaka Prefecture Cultural Properties Research Office)

sites unavoidable to be destroyed are “preserved by record.” Archaeological structures on the ground were recorded by drawings and photos. Artefacts are washed, reconstructed, recorded, and then stored in the storage. Excavation reports are published basically after every rescue excavation, and so, the sites are regarded as “preserved by record” although they are no longer on nor under the ground.

Utilisation

After preservation *in situ* or by records, archaeological sites are to be utilised and valorised. Recorded information on the sites are shared in a form of publication. The artefacts are also stored by the local boards of education, and often available for observation and study by application, as well as for exhibitions and loan.



Figure 10. Exhibition of the excavated objects. (Osaka Prefecture Cultural Properties Research Office)

The development has started to increase since the late 1960s, and came to its peak in the mid 1990s. In whole Japan, it reached 132,100,000,000 JPY, which is about 1,000,000,000 GBP (Agency of Cultural Affairs 2016b, pp. 23–24). As this increased, the local governments started to hire the archaeologists to be ready to undertake rescue excavations. It decreased to less than a half in 2012. The statistics on Figure 13. shows the transition in Osaka Prefecture. Three labels are crucial large-scale developments in Osaka.

4. Distinctive features in Japanese archaeological administration

I believe distinctive features in Japanese archaeological administration can be summarised as such.

- 1) “Buried cultural properties” are protected in the different system from designation, also from protection of upper building structure.
- 2) There are great responsibilities, authorities and contributions of the local governments.

Almost 6,000 archaeologists are employed in local governments (in 2015) (Agency of Cultural Affairs 2016b, pp. 3–5). High level of archaeological data have been accumulated by local rescue excavations. Literally, archaeologists working for rescue archaeology are holding Japanese archaeology.

5. Correlations between archaeological administration and Japanese archaeology

Please see the statistics on Figure 12. Again. I would like to point out how much such



Figure 11. Storage of the excavated objects available for the study by researchers, students, etc. by application. (Osaka Prefecture Cultural Properties Research Office)

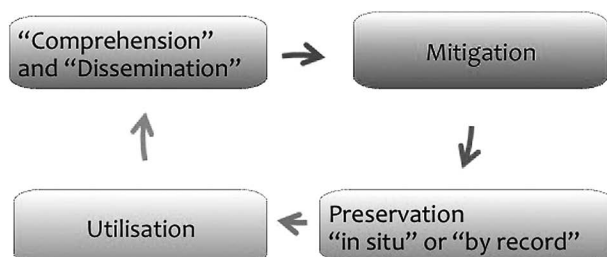


Figure 12. Four steps of archaeological administration

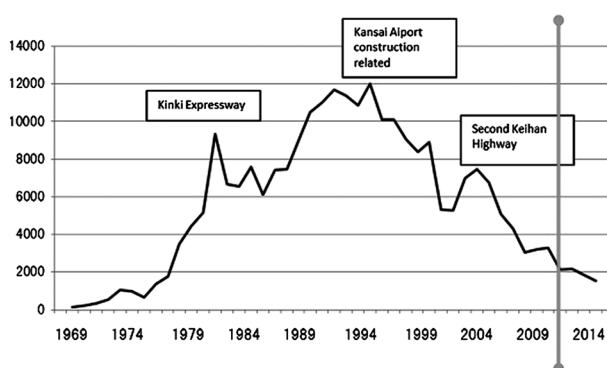


Figure 13. Transition of expenses on rescue excavation in Osaka Prefecture

large-scale developments contribute to accumulation of archaeological information as sources of academic archaeological studies, including some eye-opening discoveries. Here, I want to introduce some crucial examples.

Development of Senboku New Town and excavation on Sue-mura Kiln Group Site (1960s)

Due to the development of New Town in Sakai city, south of Osaka, the hills over 1,500 hectare were excavated. The hills were found out with great concentration of sue-ki (stoneware) kilns, mainly of the 5–9th centuries. A large number of kilns were completely excavated to be preserved by record. Such tremendous amount of information and following high standard of typological investigation provided the detailed chronology in Japanese archaeology, which is still the basic and constantly in use until now.

Hazamiyama Palaeolithic Site of Nashida Point (1986)

Remain of Palaeolithic dwelling was discovered in the rescue excavation at a famous baseball players' house in 1986. Palaeolithic dwelling in Japan is very rare discovery. He modified the structural plan and the sites are preserved *in situ* under the building.



Figure 14. Excavated kiln at Sue-mura Kiln Group Site (TK 66-II). Sakai City Government



Figure 15. Palaeolithic dwelling of Hazamiyama Site. Osaka Prefectural Board of Education

Kinki Expressway Construction and discovery of incipient form of burial mounds (1980s)

Many incipient form of burial mounds dated back to the mid Yayoi Period were discovered in good state during the rescue excavations for Kinki Expressway of 1980s. Great number of burials were found and some with human remains.

6. Towards our future

As archaeologists working in the public sector, we always think what archaeology can do to the public, in a way, how archaeological administration can contribute to our society



Figure 16. Exhibition related to Palaeolithic dwelling of Hazamiyama site. Fujiidera City Board of Education

including initiator of the development who pays for the rescue archaeology, as well as the taxpayers. At the same time, as the person who executes destruction of archaeological sites for mitigation and preservation by record, we feel responsibility and seek for how the best to contribute to archaeology. Now, in the time of decreasing rescue archaeology, as archaeologists, we should think about what archaeology, as an academic discipline can do and contribute to archaeological administration.

While overlooking recent tendency in archaeological administration, I picked up and would like to point out 3 keywords, here: X) Diversity; Y) Integration; and Z) Evaluation.

In recent years, as seen in the amendments of the Law, more and more “diverse” kinds of cultural properties are involved and came to be valued. At the same time, wider variety of methods for protection are to be invented. On the contrary, “integration” are getting more and more required among the different kinds of cultural properties, I mean so far having been protected separately, cultural properties, as well as among the methods and the sections responsible for protection, are integrated to enhance and increase the value of cultural properties. As the third keyword, I believe that “evaluation” process increases its significance. The more “diverse” and “integrated” at the same time cultural properties become, more careful and convincing evaluation comes to be required. That is, I believe, where archaeology can contribute to archaeological administration, and also the reason why we, archaeologists, are employed in the government is here. We need to know precisely about what we want to or have to protect. Therefore, archaeologists ourselves have to make utmost effort to improve our speciality.

How do we do so? It would depends on various aspects, like fields, situations, people, setting, etc., but this conference, which includes many sessions related to cultural heritage issues, with great number of archaeologists participating, would be a great opportunity for every archaeologist to think about it.

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