

Jomon Period

AONO Tomoya¹

For Jomon period burial system study, outstanding discussions were on fundamental study of stone lined graves (*haisekibo*) mainly in the Kanto and Chubu regions, and the relationship between features/artifacts other than graves and villages.

For subsistence study, progress was seen in an environmental reconstruction based on animal remains excavated from a shell midden, and empirical research on salt making using seaweed based on examination of micro spiral shells excavated from an archaeological site.

For artifact study, the largest number of theses were on pottery chronology and distribution in various parts of the country, as in other years.

For ritual study, many studies were on clay figurines, as well as stone rods and stone paved settlements related to Midorikawahigashi site in Kunitachi City, Tokyo. As for clay figurines, there were a study on the excavated situation of conic and hollow clay figurines (*chuku-ensui-gata dogu*) within an earthen pit, and a study on the background of change and disappearance of clay figurines in the Yayoi period in the Tohoku region. Also, in relation to publication of many general books on the interpretation of clay figurines in recent years, there was a thesis that poses a question on archaeological method in interpretation of use and function of clay figurines. There seems to be an extreme view that interpretation itself should not be attempted among book reviews and academic trends related to clay figurines, but the author feels that discussion should be made on establishment of archaeological methods, or methods for referring to research results of other fields.

For stone-paved settlements including four large stone rods excavated from Midorikawahigashi site, many discussions were held on theses and symposiums on stone rods themselves or their relation to stone paved settlements since the site was excavated in 2012. As for related theses, one discussed the life cycle of keyhole-shaped (*ekagami-gata*) stone-paved settlements. The large stone rods of Midorikawahigashi site were designated as important cultural properties in 2017.

As for study on Jomon society, many tended to discuss stratified society. There

¹ c/o Date City Institute of Funkawan Culture, 21-5 Tateyama, Date City, Hokkaido 052-0031, Japan
(tomoya.aono@icloud.com)

were a case study on structural analysis of Jomon village in Shizuoka Prefecture, and an evaluation of settlements compounding in Late/Final Jomon based on the size and number of settlements and a multi-body burial grave system in the Chiba area. At the present, a strong view is that Late/Final Jomon society did not reach a chiefdom stage, while the existence of a leader integrating societies is admitted since some integration and compounding are recognized. There is a suggestion that the current argument on Jomon stratified society should be viewed objectively, since it can be learned that “trends” of archaeological study in Japan are linked to trend of modern society by looking back at the research history of Jomon social theory.

Fiscal 2016 Hirosaki convention of the Japanese Archaeological Association had a sectional meeting on “Jomon culture around Tsugaru Strait.” A data collection book was published that compiled clay and stone objects excavated from southern Hokkaido and northern Tohoku, and it contains artifacts worth new research. The existence of such a large number of clay and stone objects around Tsugaru Strait itself may be worth a focus of study.

The 8th World Archaeology Congress was held at Doshisha University, and it was attended by 1,600 people from 80 countries. Also, various events took place at the same time, such as symposium and lecture sessions at museums in Kyoto, as well as an exhibition of collaborated work with archaeology and art. Sessions and individual presentations related to the Jomon period were held on these events.