

South Asia

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This review of research on South Asian archaeology carried out by Japanese scholars during 2016–2020 includes work in the fields of architecture, iconography, numismatics and epigraphy, which are mostly concerned with Buddhist remains and images. Since the beginnings of South Asian archaeology in the nineteenth century under British colonial rule, these fields have been regarded as part and parcel of the academic discipline of archaeology. Many publications and articles have come out in respective fields with new insights. Field surveys and excavations, as well as work such as collection of data from artifacts kept in museums, were extensively carried out.

Among field surveys in Paleolithic studies, the project “Cultural History of Paleo Asia” supported by the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Principal investigator: NISHIAKI Yoshihiro) has made great contribution; NOGUCHI Atsushi led the team for South Asia and conducted surveys in Sind, Punjab and Kashmir Valley, and other areas. The surveys on Indus civilization and South Indian “Megalithic” culture carried out by UESUGI Akinori and his colleagues also increased our knowledge of these cultures and periods.

Great numbers of books and articles on archaeology of the Palaeolithic age, Indus civilization, Buddhism, and the Islamic periods have been published presenting new information and findings. Many papers were read at various meetings of academic societies of the respective fields as well as at international symposiums and seminars such as the Conference of the European Association for South Asian Archaeology and Art (held in Europe), International Conference on Studies on Indus Script (held at the Mohenjodaro site), Current Research on Indus Archaeology (held at Kansai University), Iron Age in South Asia (also at Kansai University) and Historical and Archaeological Heritage Management and Cultural Tourism in India and Japan: Issues and Prospects for Development (held in Thanjavur).

(written by the author)

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