

Overview: Japanese Archaeological Research Trends 2012¹

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The tremendous three-fold damage from the massive earthquake, gigantic tidal wave, plus radioactive contamination brought by the Great East Japan Earthquake continued to cast a severe shadow over Japanese society in 2012. With recovery projects still not proceeding smoothly, the progress of relief for the disaster region and victims remained insufficient. In particular there appeared to be no solution regarding the nuclear power plant explosion and radioactive contamination, and it was under these circumstances that the Japanese Archaeological Association conducted its activities in the year 2012.³

The Special Response Committee to the Great East Japan Earthquake⁴ (hereafter, the Special Response Committee) continued its work, and a “Resolution Regarding the Preservation of Cultural Properties Located in the Region of Damage from the Nuclear Power Plant Accident in Fukushima Prefecture”⁵ was adopted at the 2012 General Meeting of the Association, with the text of the resolution sent to various related agencies. A session was also held during the meeting in which presentations were made regarding the current conditions and issues concerning damage to cultural properties and prospects for reconstruction in the three affected prefectures.⁶ Cultural properties investigations accompanying reconstruction from

¹ [*Trends in Japanese Archaeological Research, 2012*, is a partial translation of “Nihon kōkogaku kenkyū no dōkō” 日本考古学研究の動向, in *Nihon kōkogaku nenpō 65 (2012 nendoban)* 日本考古学年報 65(2012年度版) (Archaeologia Japonica 65 [2012 Fiscal Year Issue]) (Nihon Kōkogaku Kyōkai, 2014), pp. 1-68. This essay appears on pp. 1-3, under the Japanese title “Sōsetsu” 総説. It was translated by Walter Edwards, and published by the Japanese Archaeological Association (Nihon Kōkogaku Kyōkai 日本考古学協会) online in 2014. To streamline the text, characters for Japanese names and terms, and bibliographic information have been placed in footnotes. When an English translation of the name of an organization or publication (or symposium, etc.) is supplied by the party responsible, this is used with minimum changes in capitalization etc. to conform to the style followed by *Trends in Japanese Archaeological Research*. Romanized names of individuals are given with the surname followed by the personal name.]

² 田中良之

³ [Translator’s note: The reference here is to the 2012 Fiscal Year, which began 1 April 2012.]

⁴ Higashi Nihon Daishinsai Taisaku Tokubetsu Iinkai 東日本大震災対策特別委員会

⁵ “Fukushima-ken no genpatsu jiko higai kuiki ni shozai suru bunkazai no hozon ni kansuru ketsugi” 福島県の原発事故被害区域に所在する文化財の保全に関する決議. The text of this resolution is available in Japanese on the Association’s website (<http://archaeology.jp/maibun/nikokyo2012-15.htm>).

⁶ Higashi Nihon Daishinsai Taisaku Tokubetsu Iinkai, “Higashi Nihon Daishinsai kara 1 nen: Bunkazai no hisai to fukkō ni mukete” 東日本大震災から1年—文化財の被災と復興に向けて (One Year since the Great East Japan Earthquake: Damage to Cultural Properties and Prospects for Reconstruction), session held at the Nihon Kōkogaku Kyōkai 2012 Nendo Sōkai 日本考古学協会 2012 年度総会 (Japanese Archaeological Association 2012 General Meeting) (Rissho University, 27 May 2012).

the disaster are to be conducted in earnest from the next fiscal year, but there have been some reports of excavations as the cause of obstructing reconstruction projects such as the building of housing, which is not entirely consistent with the facts. Those in charge are doing their best to devise plans for reconstruction that avoid archaeological sites as much as possible, but among how many of the nation's citizens is it well known that these efforts are producing appreciable results? We feel painfully aware of the need to keep up these activities in steady fashion in the future.

The Japanese Archaeological Association has six standing committees, the Research Conditions Investigative Committee, Committee on Policy for the Preservation of Buried Cultural Properties, Committee to Investigate Social Studies and History Texts, International Exchange Committee, Editorial Committee, and Public Relations Committee,⁷ each of which is conducting its separate activities. I refer readers to later descriptions for the details of these activities.⁸ In addition to these standing committees there are two special committees currently active, one of which is the above-mentioned Special Response Committee to the earthquake, while the other is the Special Committee Concerned with the Association's Library.⁹ While the establishment of this committee and the attending circumstances are detailed in last year's "Overview,"¹⁰ in response to the rejection at a special General Meeting of the proposal to donate the holdings elsewhere, this committee has been conducting a careful examination of the problem with the participation of intellectuals from outside the Association. Comprised of members having a variety of perspectives, the committee has considered every possibility. The outcome is scheduled for proposal at the 2013 General Meeting, and the extremely vexing problem of the Association's library may be heading for a resolution.

In the 2012 Fiscal Year as well, in addition to the above there were two investigative committees established within the Board of Directors. One of these is the Investigative Committee for Revising the Articles of Incorporation/Rules and Regulations.¹¹ It was set up because in conjunction with revisions made to the General Incorporated Associations and General Incorporated Foundations Law,¹² the Japanese Archaeological Association, which is legally a general incorporated association, has to revise its Articles of Incorporation. The main area for revision

⁷ Respectively: Kenkyū Kankyō Kentō Inikai 研究環境検討委員会, Maizō Bunkazai Hogo Taisaku Inikai 埋蔵文化財保護対策委員会, Shakaika/Rekishi Kyōkashotō Kentō Inikai 社会科・歴史教科書等検討委員会, Kokusai Kōryū Inikai 国際交流委員会, Kikanshi Henshū Inikai 機関誌編集委員会, Kōhō Inikai 広報委員会

⁸ [Translator's note: The reference here is to the section titled "Nihon Kōkōgaku Kyōkai no kiroku" 日本考古学協会の記録 (Chronicle of the Japanese Archaeological Association) found on pp. 90-115 of *Nihon kōkōgaku nenpō*, the same annual volume as this introductory overview, which includes reports on the activities of various committees in the preceding fiscal year.]

⁹ Kyōkai Toshō ni Kakawaru Tokubetsu Inikai 協会図書に係わる特別委員会

¹⁰ The English translation is available on the Association's website (<http://archaeology.jp/publication/trends/Overview-2011.pdf>).

¹¹ Teikan/Kisoku Minaoshi Kentō Inikai 定款・規則見直し検討委員会

¹² Ippan Shadan Hōjin oyobi Ippan Zaidan Hōjin ni kansuru Hōritsu 一般社団法人及び一般財団法人に関する法律

concerns the processing of accounts, and while the changes could have been handled mechanically and in limited fashion, because the current Articles of Incorporation are a continuation from the time when the Association was a limited liability intermediary corporation¹³ and some of the clauses are unduly complicated, it was decided to use this revision as an opportunity to reexamine the Articles of Incorporation in their entirety and put them in order, along with the Rules and Regulations which have grown as one addition piled on top of the next. Examination of the clauses of the Articles was conducted in 2012, and the considerations will continue in turn with consultation likely sought at the 2014 General Meeting.

The second was the Investigative Committee Concerning an Electronic English Journal. The Board of Directors had been considering the publication of an English language journal since 2009. This is because the importance of transmitting the results of archaeological research in Japan to the rest of the world goes without saying, and providing a medium through which members and especially the young generations to come can participate actively in the world at large can be regarded as the Association's mission. But due to budgetary and other difficulties it was not possible to start publication right away, so the matter has been treated cautiously. However, as the funding category for scientific journals under the Grant-in-Aid for Publication of Scientific Research Results program will become "Strengthening International Dissemination of Information" from the coming fiscal year,¹⁴ a great change was made to having an English language electronic journal be the only object for this funding. That was the instigation for setting up the Investigative Committee Concerning an Electronic English Journal within the Board of Directors, to examine the issue.

As the Association's journal *Nihon kōkōgaku*¹⁵ had been produced with funds received under this program until now,¹⁶ this change posed a serious challenge. Among scholarly associations which like the Association would be seeking to continue their funding, it appeared that a number already had plans for converting their journals to an English electronic basis. But the conclusion reached by the Investigative Committee was that the Japanese language *Nihon kōkōgaku* should be continued unchanged because it is a vital medium for the Association, and that a new English electronic journal should be published with application made for its funding with a Grant-in-Aid, though publication should proceed even if such funding could not be secured. The Board of Directors approved this policy, and the title of *Japanese Journal of Archaeology* was chosen. This is to be an open access,

¹³ Yūgen sekinin chūkan hōjin 有限責任中間法人

¹⁴ [Translator's note: From the 2013 Fiscal Year, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai 日本学術振興会) which administers Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (Kagaku kenkyūhi josei jigyō 科学研究費助成事業) stopped taking applications under the category of "Scientific Periodicals" (Gakujutsu teiki kankōbutsu 学術定期刊行物) and instituted instead the new category of "Strengthening International Dissemination of Information" (Kokusai jōhō hasshin kyōka 国際情報発信強化)] under its program of Grant-in-Aid for Publication of Scientific Research Results (Kenkyū seika kōkai sokushinhi 研究成果公開促進費).]

¹⁵ 日本考古学 (Journal of the Japanese Archaeological Association)

¹⁶ [Translator's note: The funding was under the now discontinued category of Scientific Periodicals.]

online English journal published by the Association available to archaeologists throughout the world.¹⁷ While this represents an addition to the publications produced by the Association, as it would create an excessive burden for the committee already editing the Japanese language journal, it was decided to form a new editorial committee for the English journal.

The *Japanese Journal of Archaeology* will not be specialized in the archaeology of Japan, but will take archaeology throughout the world as its object. But because it will be published by the Association and as can be seen from the title, there is no doubt that Japanese archaeology will account for a certain portion. Accordingly, due to the publication of this English electronic journal, it will not be introductions or general outlines, but rather empirical research that will be transmitted, based on a background of a high degree of investigation and a rich accumulation of reported cases. In other words, the actual conditions of archaeological research in Japan will be conveyed in concrete fashion, and we may hope that eventually “Japanese archaeology” will be acknowledged as an appealing genre by archaeologists throughout the world. Thereby a true internationalization will be realized for Japanese archaeology, which will thus make its contribution to the archaeology of the world.

This kind of movement towards internationalization is found not only in Japan but in various Asian countries in similar fashion, and in China and South Korea in particular it would appear to be more advanced. The wave of internationalization presses upon us whether we like it or not, and we have no choice but to adapt. In media coverage of the Association’s library problem during 2010, some headlines and commentaries were seen which made it appear as if the proposed donation was defeated out of anti-foreign sentiment, but this is definitely not the case, and the Association has until now maintained an International Exchange Committee while continuing to transmit information abroad on a regular basis and conduct exchanges with archaeological researchers from overseas. The publication of this English electronic journal can be said to strengthen these ongoing efforts at internationalization.

It is not always the case, however, that internationalization brings only benefits. With regard to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, while it is largely reported and commented on as an integral part of internationalization, there is no guarantee that its influence will not affect archaeology and cultural properties. Rather, it is a proposal which has raised concerns in the civil engineering and construction industries, so it is rife with possible relations to investigations of buried cultural properties as well. Due to such a sense of danger, the Association is having the Research Conditions Investigative Committee take up an examination of the matter.

Important discoveries and research were also seen in the realm of archaeology in 2012. As trends for every period and region are detailed in subsequent sections of this volume,¹⁸ I ask the reader to examine these but also note that many

¹⁷ <http://www.jjarchaeology.jp/>

¹⁸ [Translator’s note: The reference here is to summaries, by period and region, of research trends

presentations and reports were given at the Association's General and Autumn Meetings. On the first day of the 2012 General Meeting, held at Rissho University, Sakazume Hideichi, a professor emeritus of that institution, gave an open lecture on archaeological investigations in the homeland of the historical Buddha,¹⁹ after which there were research presentations at six different lecture halls plus a poster session, all of which were well attended. In addition to individual oral presentations, there were seven sessions on the following topics: the latest in research on Buddhist steles, archaeological site data repositories, mortuary systems around the Chinese maritime region in the age of metal, site research based on collaboration between archaeology and anthropology, the osteoarchaeology of children, damage to cultural properties and steps toward reconstruction one year after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and the geographic distribution of human activity in relation to obsidian from the Chūbu highlands.²⁰ The poster session was also a great success.

The Autumn Meeting was held at Seinan Gakuin University in the city of Fukuoka. The first day saw open lectures by Kim Moo Joong of the Jungbu Institute for Archaeology in South Korea on the production and circulation of iron implements in the Proto-Three Kingdoms period of the Korean peninsula, and by Professor Takakura Hiroaki of Seinan Gakuin University on paper *fumi-e*,²¹ after which there was much activity including, in addition to a poster session, four

contained in *Nihon kōkōgaku nenpō*, the same volume as this introductory overview.]

¹⁹ Sakazume Hideichi 坂詰秀一, "Shaka no kokyō o horu" 釈迦の故郷を掘る (Digging the Birthplace of Gautama Buddha), open lecture given at the Japanese Archaeological Association 2012 General Meeting (Rissho University, 26 May 2012).

²⁰ All of the following sessions were held at the Japanese Archaeological Association 2012 General Meeting (Rissho University, the first item on 26 May and the remaining six on 27 May 2012): "Itabi kenkyū no saizensen" 板碑研究の最前線 (The Front Line of Research on Buddhist Steles); "Iseki shiryō ripojitori o megutte" 遺跡資料リポジトリをめぐって (Concerning Archaeological Site Data Repositories); "Chūgoku kaiiki o meguru kinzokuki jidai no sōsei: Tōnan Ajia kara Taiwan, Okinawa, Amami, Satsunan shotō e" 中国海域をめぐる金属器時代の葬制: 東南アジアから台湾、沖縄、奄美、薩南諸島へ (Mortuary Systems around the Chinese Maritime Region in the Age of Metal: From Southeast Asia to Taiwan, Okinawa, Amami, and the Satsunan Islands); "Kōkōgaku to jinruigaku no koraborēshon ni yoru iseki kenkyū no kokoromi: Aichiken Hobi kaizuka o jirei to shite" 考古学と人類学のコラボレーションによる遺跡研究の試み: 愛知県保美貝塚を事例として (An Experiment in Site Research based on Collaboration between Archaeology and Anthropology: The Hobi Shell Midden of Aichi Prefecture as Case Study); "Kodomo no kotsukōkōgaku: Chiisana hone ga kataru rekishi" 子供の骨考古学: 小さな骨が語る歴史 (The Osteoarchaeology of Children: History Told by Little Bones); "Higashi Nihon Daishinsai kara 1 nen: Bunkazai no hisai to fukkō ni mukete" 東日本大震災から1年: 文化財の被災と復興に向けて (One Year after the Great East Japan Earthquake: Damage to Cultural Properties and Steps toward Reconstruction); "Hito-shigen kankyōkei no jinruishi: Chūbu kōchi no kokuyōseki to jinrui katsudō" ヒト・資源環境系の人類誌: 中部高地の黒曜石と人類活動 (The Anthropography of Human-Natural Resource Environmental System: Obsidian from the Chūbu Highlands and Human Activity).

²¹ Both of the following open lectures were given on 20 October 2012 at the Association's annual Autumn Meeting (Nihon Kōkōgaku Kyōkai 2012 Nendo Shūki Taikai 日本考古学協会 2012 年度秋季大会) held in Fukuoka: Kim Moo Joong 金武重, "Gen Sangoku jidai no tekki seisan to ryūtsū" 原三国時代の鉄器生産と流通 (The Production and Circulation of Iron Implements in the Proto-Three Kingdoms Period), Takakura Hiroaki 高倉洋彰, "Fumie no ichi keitai: Kami fumie no shōkai to kentō" 踏絵の形態: 紙踏絵の紹介と検討 (One Form of *Fumie*: An Introduction to and Consideration of Paper *Fumie*). [Translator's note: *Fumie* were pictures (*e*) of Christian figures, typically Jesus or Mary and often made of wood or brass, used for identifying Christians during the period when the religion was banned (seventeenth to nineteenth centuries), as believers were presumed to refuse or hesitate to carry out an order to step on (*fumu*) an image they held as sacred.]

symposia on the topics of Yayoi period iron tool production, the establishment of the institutions of *miyake* and *kuni no miyatsuko* in the sixth century, international tensions of the seventh and eighth centuries as reflected in sites seen in documentary and archaeological materials, and the possibilities offered by archaeology for clarifying the image of early Christianity in Japan.²² The results of the above investigations and research will likely be published in various academic journals, beginning with the Association's *Nihon kōkogaku*.

The Japanese Archaeological Association's annual awards program has now been conducted for the second time. In the previous fiscal year there was a Special Award, but this time saw just two items, the Grand and Monetary Awards. The second Japanese Archaeological Association Grand Award was made to member Funahashi Kyōko for a monograph on the practice of ritual tooth extraction as related to social group membership,²³ and the Monetary Award to member Higami Noboru for a volume on wooden implements with regard to regional society.²⁴ Whereas there were not many applicants for the first selection as the program was perhaps not well known, this time saw 10 applications. The two works selected from among these are thought to be monographs worthy of the Association's awards. While praising the honor of these two members, we hope that the Association's membership will apply actively for these awards in order to enrich the program in the future, as well as contribute to the development of archaeology in Japan.

As is clear from this brief overview, with its background of an enormous number of investigations and an accumulation of reports and prior research, the volume and variety of archaeology in Japan may be regarded as among the foremost in the world. In addition, within this great volume lies much research that can be described as international, interdisciplinary, and integrated with other fields, keywords currently in great demand in Japanese academics. In that regard, Japanese archaeology has certainly been undergoing transformation. For the future it is vital that this not end as merely a domestic dialog, but that the results of archaeological developments in Japan be broadcast to the world to partake in mutual evaluation. From this perspective, the Association's publication of the *Japanese Journal of Archaeology* as an online English journal can be regarded as a

²² The titles of the four symposia, held along with the poster session on 21 October 2012, are "Yayoi jidai kōhanki no tekki seisan to ryūtsū" 弥生時代後半期の鉄器生産と流通 (Production and Circulation of Iron Implements in the Latter Half of the Yayoi Period), "Miyakesei/kuni no miyatsukosei no seiritsu: Iwai no ran to 6 seikidai no shohenkaku" ミヤケ制・国造制の成立：磐井の乱と6世紀代の諸変革 (Establishment of the *Miyake* and *Kuni no miyatsuko* Systems: The Iwai Rebellion and Reformations of the Sixth Century), "Hakusonkō kara Itojō made: 7-8 seiki no kokusai kinchō kankei to sono iseki" 白村江から怡土城まで：7・8世紀の国際緊張関係とその遺跡 (From Hakusonkō to Ito Castle: Tense International Relations of the Seventh-Eighth Centuries and Their Sites), "Kaimei sarete kita Kirishitan no jitsuzō: Kirishitan kōkogaku no kanōsei" 解明されてきたキリシタンの実像：キリシタン考古学の可能性 (The Emerging True Image of Early Japanese Christianity: The Possibilities of a Christian Archaeology).

²³ Funahashi Kyōko 舟橋京子, *Basshi fūshū to shakai shūdan* 抜歯風習と社会集団 (Ritual Tooth Extraction and Social Groupings) (Suirensa, 2010).

²⁴ 樋上昇 Higami Noboru, *Mokuseihin kara kangaeru chiiki shakai: Yayoi kara Kofun e* 木製品から考える地域社会：弥生から古墳へ (Regional Society Considered from Wooden Implements: From the Yayoi to the Kofun) (Yūzankaku, 2010).

tremendous step. When its contents have come to accumulate, not as introductions or outlines but rather in the form of articles published as the regular results of research, and when what has developed until now in our country—with its research methodology based on total excavation of sites, its standards for site report formats, and its variety of research techniques—is universally recognized and understood, then the genre of “Japanese archaeology” will have become established within archaeology on a worldwide scale.