

Overview: Japanese Archaeological Research Trends 2008¹

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Introduction

Results of investigations and research in Japanese archaeology in the 2008 FY (Fiscal Year) may be called increasingly varied, broader in scope, and deeper than before. The condition of more information being made available than any single person or institution can grasp has progressed even further. While investigations have indeed declined in number as a reflection of the recent economic downturn, reports and articles were actively published on the enormous amounts of data accumulated from the end of the twentieth century.

The wave of development throughout the archipelago that began in the 1970s resulted in salvage excavations on a vast and unexpected scale. Sites coming to light since then have yielded results beyond measure, and examples rewriting the prehistory and ancient history of Japan are too numerous to mention. But the structural imbalance of overwhelming numbers of salvage versus academic excavations among archaeological investigations has produced a condition of investigations and site preservation being directly affected by economic factors. Cultural properties management personnel who had been posted in every corner of the land have been removed from their proper line of work due to the downsizing or dissolution of investigative organs, and green shoots of archaeology which had taken root locally are in danger of being plucked outright. It must be said that at present, the shape of Japanese archaeology itself is again under question.

An additional problem which emerged in the 2008 FY is that of a licensing system for archaeological excavation. In keeping with the direction of “harnessing the vitality of the private sector” indicated by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, there is considerable reliance at the local level on excavation contractors, and the

¹ [*Trends in Japanese Archaeological Research, 2008*, is a partial translation of “Nihon kōkogaku kenkyū no dōkō” 日本考古学研究の動向, in *Nihon kōkogaku nenpō 61 (2008 nendoban)* 日本考古学年報 61 (2008 年度版) (Archaeologia Japonica 61 [2008 Fiscal Year Issue]) (Nihon Kōkogaku Kyōkai, 2010), pp. 1-67. This essay appears on pp. 1-7, 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 2011. 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.]

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organization comprised of private contractors, the Japan Association for Preservation of Cultural Properties,³ has devised its own licensing system for “buried cultural properties investigators” and “investigative assistants” as a condition for undertaking investigations, and is conducting licensing examinations. Meanwhile, Waseda University has started an “Archaeologist Development Program”⁴ under commission from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. These trends involve issues relating to the very basis of the Japanese system of archaeological investigation, and along with the nation (represented by the Agency for Cultural Affairs), the Japanese Archaeological Association is being pressed for an appropriate response.

In this manner the conditions surrounding Japanese archaeology are starting to undergo drastic change, but in the midst of this situation, has research per se not entered a period of stability instead? As we bring together and analyze the vast amounts of data that have accumulated over the past thirty years, perhaps it is time to examine as well the Japanese system of archaeological investigation and its research environment.

Let me now summarize from my personal viewpoint the research trends of 2008. I wish first to indicate here my gratitude to Shirai Kumiko,⁵ who greatly assisted in the preparation of this manuscript.

1. Paleolithic period

As a trend seen in separate research areas, there was convergence among a number of research themes. One of these is the chronology of the Paleolithic period for the broader East Asia region. For example, the results of a public international seminar conducted at Doshisha University were compiled as a monograph,⁶ representing an attempt on the part of Japanese, Korean, and Chinese researchers in archaeology, geology, physical geography, and scientific dating to devise a Paleolithic chronology for East Asia through analysis of Korean and Chinese Paleolithic sites. This trend was also taken up in issue no. 71 of *Kyūsekki kōkōgaku* (Palaeolithic Archaeology),⁷ and it is hoped that discussion will continue to widen developmentally in the future.

Another item I would like to focus on is lithic material research involving Gero stone.⁸ What is commonly called Gero stone is Yugamine⁹ rhyolite from Gero in Gifu prefecture, a lithic material whose source area has been repeatedly surveyed by the

³ Nihon Bunkazai Hogo Kyōkai 日本文化財保護協会

⁴ Kōko Chōsashi Yōsei Puroguramu 考古調査士養成プログラム

⁵ 白井久美子

⁶ Matsufuji Kazuto 松藤和人, ed., *Higashi Ajia no resu: Kodojō to kyūsekki hennen* 東アジアのレス: 古土壌と旧石器編年 (Loess-paleosol and Paleolithic Chronology in East Asia) (Yūzankaku, 2008).

⁷ *Kyūsekki kōkōgaku* 旧石器考古学 (Palaeolithic Archaeology) is the journal of the Palaeolithic Culture Discussion Group (Kyūsekki Bunka Danwakai 旧石器文化談話会).

⁸ 下呂石

⁹ 湯ヶ峰

Paleolithic Section of the Hida Archaeological Society.¹⁰ The Aichi Gakuin University Lithic Research Group has published a record of the field surveys, bringing to light a number of sites in the vicinity of the source area yielding projectile points and microcores, while showing that Gero stone was used among the projectile points from the Mikoshiba¹¹ site in Nagano prefecture as well.¹² Also, projectile points from the Rokutsū Jinja Minami¹³ site in Chiba prefecture were determined upon analysis to be made of Gero stone, and as they include items that have been reworked, it is envisioned that projectile points were made at the source location and transported outward from there. From this, Gero stone has drawn attention as a research topic relating to the movement of lithic material over a wide region from the end of the Paleolithic to the Incipient Jōmon periods. In addition, from verification of the use of Gero stone in the western part of Shizuoka prefecture as well, appreciation of the significance of the source site has grown. This heightened interest could also be discerned from the holding of the third in a series of symposia on Gero stone in November.¹⁴ These research reports, along with work on the development and utilization of obsidian source sites at Takaharayama¹⁵ in Tochigi prefecture, which has gained attention in recent years, may be regarded as noteworthy examples showcasing the variety of analytic results being disseminated from the regional level.

2. Jōmon period

Publication of *Sōran Jōmon doki* (Jōmon Pottery Compendium),¹⁶ with contributions from 169 persons throughout the country, can surely be called symbolic of the passion for research on the Jōmon period and its ceramics. The contents, which editor Kobayashi described as “a monument of Jōmon ceramic studies,” are filled with a variety of perspectives, not only on typological research, but also research history, treaties of different pottery styles, research on raw materials and implements for applying decoration, considerations of use, the meaning of the

¹⁰ Hida Kōko Gakkai Kyū Sekki Bukai 飛騨考古学会旧石器部会

¹¹ 神子柴

¹² Aichi Gakuin Daigaku Bungakubu Sekki Kenkyū Gurūpu 愛知学院大学文学部石器研究グループ (Aichi Gakuin University Lithic Research Group) and Mochizuki Akihiko 望月明彦, “Gifu-ken Yugamine sanroku kara hakken sareta kyūsekki jidai no sekki to sono iseki” 岐阜県湯ヶ峰山麓から発見された旧石器時代の石器とその遺跡 (Paleolithic Stone Tools and Their Sites Discovered on the Slopes of Yugamine in Gifu Prefecture), *Nagano-ken kōko gakkaiishi* 長野県考古学会誌 (Nagano Archaeological Society Journal), no. 123 (2008): 42-46.

¹³ 六通神社南

¹⁴ “Gero ishi kara manabu mono” 下呂石から学ぶもの (What Can Be Learned from Gero Stone), Dai 3-kai Gero Ishi Shinpojiumu 2008 第3回下呂石シンポジウム2008 (3rd Gero Stone Symposium 2008) (Hida Kōko Gakkai; Gero, Gifu prefecture; 9 November 2008).

¹⁵ 高原山 [Translator’s note: Information on these sites is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/2006/kengamine.htm>]

¹⁶ Kobayashi Tatsuo 小林達雄, ed., *Sōran Jōmon doki: Kobayashi Tatsuo sensei koki kinen kikaku* 総覧縄文土器: 小林達雄先生古稀記念企画 (Jōmon Pottery Compendium: A Festschrift Project for Professor Kobayashi Tatsuo’s Seventieth Year) (UMpromotion, 2008).

designs, and the relation of ceramics to society. It can be called the pinnacle of current Jōmon ceramic research. Also, the series *Jōmon jidai no kōkogaku* (Archaeology of the Jōmon Period)¹⁷ continued to be published, as in the previous year, with the current status and issues of typological research being taken up on the one hand,¹⁸ and research on the Jōmon people and society from the perspective of biological anthropology on the other.¹⁹ Matsumura Hirofumi analyzes Jōmon physical traits, for which regional differences have conventionally been regarded as weak, and shows that for Kyushu there are significant differences, with specific genetic characteristics for each region.²⁰

With regard to settlements and territories, as a reflection of the dramatic increase in data for southern Kyushu in recent years, research presentations and symposia dealing with Kyushu sites came one after another. This trend has also heightened interest in Jōmon settlements and shell middens of western Japan, with the November issue of *Gekkan bunkazai* (Cultural Properties Monthly),²¹ focusing specially on this topic, showing the conditions and significance of sites which have drawn nationwide interest, such as: the Kami Inoharu²² site in Miyazaki prefecture, noteworthy as a settlement of the Incipient Jōmon; the Higashimyō²³ site in Saga prefecture, a wetland shell midden of the late Earliest Jōmon; and the Yokoo²⁴ shell midden in Ōita prefecture, which extends from the Earliest to the Late Jōmon periods. Also, the compilation from a 2004 symposium on Jōmon settlement research²⁵ and its sequel include attempts at reconstructing the formation of regionality and inter-regional relations.²⁶

¹⁷ Kosugi Yasushi 小杉康 et al., series eds., *Jōmon jidai no kōkogaku* 縄文時代の考古学 (Archaeology of the Jōmon Period) (Douseisha).

¹⁸ *Rekishi no monosashi: Jōmon jidai ken'yū no hennen taikai* 歴史のものさし: 縄文時代研究の編年体系 (A Scale for History: Systematic Chronology of Jōmon Period Research), vol. 2 of *Jōmon jidai no kōkogaku*, ed. Kosugi et al. (2008).

¹⁹ *Hito to shakai: Jinkotsu jōhō to shakai soshiki* 人と社会: 人骨情報と社会組織 (Man and Society: Skeletal Information and Social Organization), vol. 10 of *Jōmon jidai no kōkogaku*, ed. Kosugi et al. (2008).

²⁰ Matsumura Hirofumi 松村博文, "Jōmon jinkotsu no jōhō" 縄文人骨の情報 (Jōmon Skeletal Information), in Kosugi et al., *Hito to shakai*. 3-16.

²¹ "Maizō bunkazai kenkyū saizensen: Nishi Nihon Jōmon bunka no saihyōka" 埋蔵文化財最前線: 西日本縄文文化の再評価 (The Front Line of Cultural Properties Research: Reevaluation of Jōmon Culture in Western Japan), November issue of *Gekkan bunkazai* 月刊文化財 (Cultural Properties Monthly), no. 542 (2008).

²² 上猪ノ原 [Translator's note: Information on this site is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/2008/kiyotake.htm>]

²³ 東名 [Translator's note: Information on this site is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/2007/higashimyo.htm>]

²⁴ 横尾

²⁵ "Jōmon shūraku kenkyū no shin chihei" 縄文集落研究の新地平 (New Horizons on Jōmon Settlement Research) (Teikyō Daigaku, 24-25 July 2004).

²⁶ Kobayashi Ken'ichi 小林謙一 et al., eds., *Jōmon kenkyū no shin chihei: Katsusaka kara Sōri e* 縄文研究の新地平: 勝坂から曾利へ (New Horizons on Jōmon Settlement Research: From Katsusaka to Sōri) (Rokuichi Shobō, 2005); Kobayashi Ken'ichi et al., eds., *Jōmon kenkyū no shin chihei (zoku): Tateana jūkyō/shūraku chōsa no resāchi dezain* 縄文研究の新地平(続): 竪穴住居・集落調査のリサーチデザイン (New Horizons on Jōmon Settlement Research [Sequel]: Research Design for Investigating Pit Dwellings/Settlements) (Rokuichi Shobō, 2008).

Meanwhile, for problems concerning the natural environment in the Jōmon period, Tsuji Seiichirō, editor of *Kankyō bunkashi kenkyū* (Environmental Cultural History Research), has compiled an issue on environmental change from the Middle to the beginning of the Late Jōmon, in which he also summarizes the purpose and results of the research.²⁷ In this issue, Kunikita Dai and others review the results of scientific dating, and divide changes in the use of horse chestnuts into three broad periods.²⁸ Yoshikawa Masanobu examines the dates of appearance of horse chestnuts for localities throughout the Tōhoku region, and infers human intervention as background to the increase in utilization from the end of the Middle Jōmon.²⁹ Also, Kobayashi Masaru has calculated the volumes of flask-shaped pits from the Early through Final Jōmon periods, and raises the possibility that with the increase in utilization of horse chestnuts, there was a decrease in dependence on rhizomes, and for this reason the pits show a reduction in size in the Late and Final periods.³⁰ This is of great interest as a history of the Jōmon people's lifestyle developing in response to environmental change.

Also, among treatises and research reports on cultivation, there were noteworthy items on legumes by Obata Hiroki,³¹ and by Nakayama Seiji.³²

3. Yayoi period

Beginning with the series *Yayoi jidai no kōkogaku* (Archaeology of the Yayoi Period),³³ numerous publications relating to the Yayoi period, including monographs and research reports, were produced. Ambitious attempts at questioning conventional theories on the Yayoi period are based on incomparably vast amounts of data in contrast to the time when periodization was first established. And while verification in this area is still not final, it may be said that

²⁷ Tsuji Seiichirō 辻 誠一郎, “Sōsetsu” 総説 (Overview), *Kankyō bunkashi kenkyū* 環境文化史研究 (Environmental Cultural History Research), no. 1 (2008): 1-5.

²⁸ Kunikita Dai 國木田大, Yoshida Kunio 吉田邦夫 and Tsuji Seiichirō, “Tōhoku chihō hokubu ni okeru tochinoki riyō no henshin” 東北地方北部におけるトチノキ利用の変遷 (Changes in Horse Chestnut Utilization in the Northern Tōhoku Region), *Kankyō bunkashi kenkyū*, no. 1 (2008): 7-26.

²⁹ Yoshikawa Masanobu 吉川昌伸, “Tōhoku chihō no Jōmon jidai chūki kara kōki no shokusei to tochinokibayashi no keisei” 東北地方の縄文時代中期から後期の植生とトチノキ林の形成 (Vegetation in the Tōhoku Region from the Middle to Late Jōmon and the Formation of Horse Chestnut Forests), *Kankyō bunkashi kenkyū*, no. 1 (2008): 27-35.

³⁰ Kobayashi Masaru 小林克, “Furasukojō dokō no yōseki henka to shokubutsushitsu shokuryō riyō no henka: Aomori/Akita-ken no jirei kara” フラスコ状土坑の容積変化と植物質食料利用の変化: 青森県・秋田県の事例から (Changes in Flask-shaped Pit Volumes and in the Utilization of Vegetable Foods: From the Cases of Aomori and Akita Prefectures), *Kankyō bunkashi kenkyū*, no. 1 (2008): 61-66.

³¹ Obata Hiroki 小畑弘己, *Kyokutō senshi kodai no kokumotsu* 極東先史古代の穀物 (Ancient Prehistoric Far Eastern Cereals), vol. 3 (Kumamoto Daigaku, 2008).

³² Nakayama Seiji 中山誠二, “Jōmon jidai no mame riyō ni kansuru yosatsu” 縄文時代のマメ利用に関する予察 (Preliminary Observations on Legume Utilization in the Jōmon Period), in *Hakumon kōko rōnsō* 白門考古論叢 (Hakumon Archaeological Anthology), vol. 2, ed. Chūō Daigaku Kōkogaku Kenkyūkai 中央大学考古学研究会 (Chūō University Archaeological Research Society) (Chūō Daigaku, 2008). 51-60.

³³ Shitara Hiromi 設楽博己, Fujio Shin'ichirō 藤尾慎一郎 and Matsugi Takehiko 松木武彦, series eds., *Yayoi jidai no kōkogaku* 弥生時代の考古学 (Archaeology of the Yayoi Period) (Douseisha).

research on dating the Yayoi period has been greatly stimulated by dendrochronology and AMS radiocarbon dating. Although it is true that opinions divide regarding the AMS radiocarbon report by the National Museum of Japanese History³⁴ concerning the start of the Yayoi period, at the very least it has provided a great benefit by prompting the start of verification, on an East Asian scale, of regional chronologies for ceramics, and for bronze and iron implements.

Meanwhile, Shimojō Nobuyuki's research, the basis for the study of Yayoi stone tools, has been published as *Tairikukei masei sekkiron* (Continental Polished Stone Tool Studies).³⁵ In the volume published at the same time, *Chiiki/bunka no kōkōgaku* (Archaeology of Region/Culture),³⁶ discussions unfold over the area of the Genkai Sea and western Japan, focusing on Kyushu and Shikoku.

Also, to commemorate the Japanese Archaeological Association's sixtieth anniversary, a lecture and panel discussion were held, taking up the Toro site in Shizuoka.³⁷ The excavation of Toro began in the summer of 1947, just after the war's end, and continued from 1948 with the Association's establishment that year, as the project of its special committee for investigating the Toro site, making it truly a memorial for the Association itself. At the session, reports and reevaluations from those involved, beginning with Meiji University Professor Emeritus Ōtsuka Hatsushige who participated in the excavation, were conveyed to the general public.

Special note should also be made of the articles and reports produced one after another on Yayoi secondary burials. Shitara Hiromi's *Yayoi saisōbo to shakai* (Yayoi Secondary Burials and Society),³⁸ is a compilation of his research on Yayoi secondary burials, which makes reference to ethnographic materials and social structure as well. Meanwhile, Ishikawa Hideshi's contribution on rites of secondary burial was included in volume 7 of *Yayoi jidai no kōkōgaku*.³⁹ Also, for the Kantō region there was Hayashi Junko's consideration of square-shaped moated burial precincts and jar burials of the Middle Yayoi.⁴⁰ Examples are noted of separate

³⁴ Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan 国立歴史民俗博物館

³⁵ Ehime Daigaku Hōbun Gakubu Kōkōgaku Kenkyūshitsu 愛媛大学法文学部考古学研究室編 (Ehime University Faculty of Law and Letters, Archaeological Research Program), ed., *Tairikukei masei sekkiron: Shimojō Nobuyuki sensei seki ronkōshū* 大陸系磨製石器論：下條信行先生石器論叢集 (Continental Polished Stone Tool Studies: An Anthology of Professor Shimojō Nobuyuki's Stone Tool Writings) (Ehime Daigaku, 2008).

³⁶ Ehime Daigaku Hōbun Gakubu Kōkōgaku Kenkyūshitsu, ed., *Chiiki/bunka no kōkōgaku: Shimojō Nobuyuki sensei tainin kinen ronbunshū* 地域・文化の考古学：下條信行先生退任記念論文集 (Archaeology of Region/Culture: An Anthology Commemorating Professor Shimojō Nobuyuki's Retirement) (Ehime Daigaku, 2008).

³⁷ “Hajimari wa Toro: Yayoi nōson no jitsuzō o motomete” はじまりは登呂：弥生農村の実像を求めて (Toro was the Beginning: Seeking the True Image of a Yayoi Farm Village) (Nihon Kōkōgaku Kyōkai, Shizuoka, 13 September 2008).

³⁸ Shitara Hiromi, *Yayoi saisōbo to shakai* 弥生再葬墓と社会 (Yayoi Secondary Burials and Society) (Hanawashobō, 2008).

³⁹ Ishikawa Hideshi 石川日出志, “Saisō no girei” 再葬の儀礼 (Rites of Secondary Burial), in *Girei to kenryoku* 儀礼と権力 (Rites and Authority), vol. 7 of *Yayoi jidai no kōkōgaku*, ed. Shitara et al. (2008). 85-97.

⁴⁰ Hayashi Junko 林純子, “Yayoi jidai chūki kōhan ni okeru hōkei shūkōbo to dokikanbo no yōsō” 弥生時代中期後半における方形周溝墓と土器棺墓の様相 (Moated Square Graves and Ceramic Coffins: Findings from the Last Half of the Middle Yayoi Era in Chiba Prefecture), *Hōsei kōkōgaku* 法政考古学 (Journal of

areas within a site for burial precincts and jar burials, plus examples where jar burials accompany burial precincts, and focus is placed on the relationship of this difference to traditions of secondary burial.

In research on bronze implements, work focusing on the area from Kyushu to the Chūgoku region continued, but with the discovery of a bronze cache pit yielding 8 bronze halberds (including items from the FY 2007 investigation) and fragments from 5 bronze bells at the Yanagisawa⁴¹ site in Nakano,⁴² Nagano prefecture, issues emerged involving the distributional sphere of ceremonial bronzes, including the central highlands, and their derivation. Also, in Nagano prefecture 9 examples of Kinki type stone halberds have been recovered, and in 2008 the first item recovered from the eastern part of the prefecture was reported for the Kitaura⁴³ site in Saku.⁴⁴ How this will be linked with the distribution of bronze weaponry awaits future analysis.

Previously, examples of horizontal excavations for residential and burial districts in the Kinki region could not be called numerous, but with the increase in such examples from investigations of recent years the analysis of horizontal structure has become feasible, and it should be added that the above-mentioned *Yayoi jidai no kōkogaku* contains many such contributions.

4. Kofun period

The first time an archaeological article graced the front page of newspapers in postwar Japan was on 27 March 1972. It goes without saying that it was on the murals of the Takamatsuzuka⁴⁵ tomb, “awakened from their timeless slumber of 1,300 years.” News of the discovery of highly colorful, gorgeous murals raced through the archipelago in an instant. Thirty years later, the human figures of the murals again shown in the newspapers had deteriorated strikingly, transformed into sad expressions that looked on the verge of disappearing. The deterioration of the Takamatsuzuka murals, a designated National Treasure which everyone had believed to be preserved in the condition in which they were found, was more severe than could have been imagined.

Meanwhile, the murals of the Kitora⁴⁶ tomb, discovered in 1983, were also ascertained in 2003 to be about to collapse, and preservation measures were begun. Many opinions and suggestions were offered regarding the preservation of the

the Hōsei Archaeological Society), no. 34 (2008): 1-29.

⁴¹ 柳沢 [Translator’s note: Information on this site is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/sites2009/04yanagisawa.htm>]

⁴² 中野

⁴³ 北浦

⁴⁴ 佐久

⁴⁵ 高松塚 (Nara prefecture). [Translator’s note: Information on this site is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/2008/takamatsu.htm>]

⁴⁶ キトラ (Nara prefecture). [Translator’s note: Information on this site is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/2005/kitora.htm>]

Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tombs from perspectives such as archaeology, history, art history, and conservation science, and the Association set up a subcommittee in June 2006 to investigate the problem, advocating preservation of both tombs. While discussions and deliberations were held repeatedly, the murals of Kitora were removed from the tomb in succession following excavation in 2003-04. Meanwhile, at Takamatsuzuka it was determined that due to chemical treatments used in the past the murals had fused with the stone and were therefore difficult to remove, so the chamber itself was to be dismantled. The dismantling was conducted from April through August 2007. In this fashion, the only two examples in Japan of murals found in tombs were in both instances removed from the actual sites.

The murals of both tombs were taken to conservation facilities, where conservation and preservation measures were conducted in FY 2008. Public exhibitions of the murals cut from Kitora began in 2006, and a portion of the Takamatsuzuka mural were also exhibited in FY 2008. While there were numerous visitors at the exhibitions held for both, could the true value of a tomb with murals be possibly conveyed? Rather, perhaps more people came away with images in mind of the conservators struggling to remove and preserve the murals.

In the end, *in situ* preservation of Takamatsuzuka called for by the Association and others among those involved was not realized. But we may believe that should a tomb with murals be discovered and the issue of its preservation raised in the future, the proposals made on this occasion will still be viable. It is true that at present, it is no longer unusual for newspaper articles on discoveries of sites and artifacts to be on the front page. But it may be said without doubt that Takamatsuzuka was the occasion through which cultural items, and in particular news of archaeological discoveries, became able to take the lead spot in newspapers, surpassing political or economic articles.

The 2008 FY was also a year of great strides in opening access to imperial mausolea. Together with the Association, a total of 16 historical academic societies such as the Japanese Historical Council⁴⁷ have been grappling with the issue of access to imperial tombs, and in FY 2007 scholars were allowed an on-site inspection of a tomb, the Gosashi⁴⁸ mound, as the first time for such an event, seen as a bright omen for the future. The 2008 FY saw similar on-site inspections of the Saki Misasagi⁴⁹ tomb and Fushimi castle.⁵⁰ Also, a limited open inspection was held of Imperial Household Agency (IHA) excavations at the Mozu Gobyōyama⁵¹ tomb, and scholars were permitted to join inspections prior to construction work at the Kawachi Ōtsukayama tomb,⁵² at the tomb designated as the mausoleum of

⁴⁷ Nihon Rekishigaku Kyōkai 日本歴史学協会

⁴⁸ 五神社 (Nara prefecture; designated as the mausoleum of Empress Jingū 神宮皇后)

⁴⁹ 佐紀陵山 (Nara prefecture; designated as the mausoleum of Hibasuhime 日葉酢媛, consort of Emperor Suinin 垂仁)

⁵⁰ 伏見城 (Kyoto prefecture; locus of the Momoyama mausoleum cemetery 桃山陵墓地)

⁵¹ 百舌鳥御廟山 (Osaka prefecture; under IHA care as possibly a grave related to the imperial line)

⁵² 河内大塚山 (Osaka prefecture; under IHA care as possibly a grave related to the imperial line)

Emperor Kaika,⁵³ at the Saga⁵⁴ local office of the IHA's Archives and Mausolea Department, and at the Kami Ishizu Misanzai⁵⁵ tomb.

The actual work and concrete planning of activities related to issues involving the imperial tombs is done by a working group in which 11 academic associations take part. Facilities treated as imperial tombs are above all burials, and as such are archaeological sites and at the same time historic monuments or historic data. We would like to see understanding deepen regarding the academic associations' vigorous engagement with these issues.

Excavation reports and research papers on ancient tombs are too numerous to mention, and their treatment must be left to regional research presentations,⁵⁶ but just two reports will be mentioned here. One brings together the results of several investigations in the 1990s at the Myōken'yama No. 1 tomb, Ōnishi-cho, Imabari, Ehime prefecture,⁵⁷ and the other is on tomb No. 168, in the Mujigōro unit sub-group of Ōmurodani sub-group, at the Ōmuro tomb group in Nagano prefecture, which Meiji University has been investigating over an extended period.⁵⁸

5. Ancient period

In archaeological research related to the historical Ancient period, reports and articles focusing on capitals, government offices, and fortifications were once again predominant this year. There were also substantial investigations and research on the roads and transportation system linked with these facilities, and examples focusing on river transport and post stations in particular are increasing. To begin with, let us turn our gaze to trends in eastern Japan.

In the Tōhoku region, there was progress in research focusing on the state of palisades and conditions in the northern Tōhoku area which lay outside of the national ritsuryō system, with lively debate concerning topics for future study. In response, special exhibits related to the ancient history of Tōhoku were held by various museums, introducing the latest research results to the public. An exhibit focusing on exchange in ancient Tōhoku and Hokkaido was held at the Niigata

⁵³ 開化 (Nara prefecture)

⁵⁴ 嵯峨 (Kyoto prefecture)

⁵⁵ 上石津ミサンザイ (Osaka prefecture; designated as the mausoleum of Emperor Richū 履中)

⁵⁶ [Translator's note: The reference here is to regional summaries of research trends contained in *Nihon kōkogaku nenpō*, the same volume as this introductory overview.]

⁵⁷ Ehime Daigaku Kōkogaku Kenkyūshitsu, ed., *Ehime-ken Imabari-shi Ōnishi-chō Myōken'yama 1 gōfun: Seibu Setouchi ni okeru shoki zenpōkōenfun no kenkyū* 愛媛県今治市大西町妙見山1号墳: 西部瀬戸内における初期前方後円墳の研究 (Myōken'yama No. 1 tomb, Ōnishi-cho, Imabari, Ehime Prefecture: Research on an Initial Period Round Keyhole Tomb in Western Setouchi) (Kyoto: Shin'yōsha, 2008).

⁵⁸ Kobayashi Saburō 小林三郎 et al., eds., *Ōmurodani shigun, Mujinagōro tan'i shigun dai 168 gōfun no chōsa* 大室谷支群・ムジナゴロ口単位支群第168号墳の調査 (Investigation of tomb No. 168, Mujigōro unit sub-group of Ōmurodani sub-group), vol. 3 of *Shinano Ōmuro tsumi ishizuka kofungun no kenkyū* 信濃大室積石塚古墳群の研究 (Research on the Ōmuro Piled-stone Tomb Group of Shinano) (Rokuichi Shobō, 2008).

Prefectural Museum of History,⁵⁹ the Tohoku History Museum,⁶⁰ and the Historical Museum of Hokkaido.⁶¹ Also, at the Yamagata Prefectural Ukitamu Fudoki no oka Archaeological Museum, an exhibit was held focusing on the first half of the eighth century, when the ancient province of Dewa was established.⁶² In recent years examples of eighth-century “Tōhoku Haji⁶³ ware” discoveries have been increasing in Yamagata, and taking note of this the Kokushikan University Archaeological Society held a research meeting on the topic. The results have been put together as *Kodai shakai to chiikikan kōryū* (Ancient Society and Inter-regional Exchange).⁶⁴

Meanwhile, there were noteworthy reports published on tunnel tombs. For example, there is the report on the Yamoto tunnel tomb group of Higashi Matsushima in Miyagi prefecture,⁶⁵ known for the recovery of ink-inscribed pottery with the characters “*ōtoneri*”⁶⁶ and of Wadō Kaichin⁶⁷ coins. There are many raised-chamber tunnel tombs in the Yamoto group, a style distributed in the eastern Kazusa⁶⁸ region, and Sue⁶⁹ ware produced in Kosai⁷⁰ has been recovered, as well as Kantō style Haji ware. At the nearby Akai⁷¹ site, locus of government offices of the ancient Oshika⁷² region, pottery inscribed with “*toneri*”⁷³ in ink has also been recovered, together with Sue made in Kosai and Kantō style Haji, items reflecting inter-regional maritime exchange or perhaps the central government’s policies for the Tōhoku region. For research related to ancient roads, *Kodai no kōeki to michi kenkyū hōkokusho* (Research Report on Ancient Exchange and Roads)⁷⁴ can be

⁵⁹ “Kodai hoppō sekai ni ikita hitobito: Kōryū to kōeki” 古代北方世界に生きた人びと：交流と交易 (People Who Lived in the Ancient Northern World: Exchange and Trade) (Niigata Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan 新潟県立歴史博物館 [Niigata Prefectural Museum of History], 26 April – 8 June 2008).

⁶⁰ Tōhoku Rekishi Hakubutsukan 東北歴史博物館

⁶¹ Hokkaidō Kaitaku Kinenkan 北海道開拓記念館

⁶² “Dewa no kuni ga dekiru koro” 出羽国ができるころ (The Era When the Ancient Province of Dewa Began) (Yamagata Kenritsu Ukitamu Fudoki no oka Kōko Shiryōkan 山形県立うきたむ風土記の丘考古資料館 [Yamagata Prefectural Ukitamu Fudoki no oka Archaeological Museum], 1 October – 30 November 2008).

⁶³ 土師

⁶⁴ Kokushikan Daigaku Kōkogakkai 国史館大学考古学会 (Kokushikan University Archaeological Society), ed., *Kodai shakai to chiikikan kōryū: Hajiki kara mita Kantō to Tōhoku no yōsō* 古代社会と地域間交流：土師器からみた関東と東北の様相 (Ancient Society and Inter-regional Exchange: Conditions of Kantō and Tōhoku as Seen through Haji Ware) (Rokuichi Shobō, 2008).

⁶⁵ Higashi Matsushima-shi Kyōiku Iinkai 東松島市教育委員会 (Higashi Matsushima Municipal Board of Education), ed., *Yamato yokoanabogun I: Asuka/Nara jidai Oshika chihō no haka* 矢本横穴墓群 I：飛鳥・奈良時代古代牡鹿地方の墓 (Yamato Tunnel Tomb Group I: Graves of the Oshika Region in the Asuka and Nara Periods), vol. 5 of *Higashi Matsushima-shi bunkazai chōsa hōkokusho* 東松島市文化財調査報告書 (Higashi Matsushima Cultural Properties Investigation Reports) (Higashi Matsushima-shi Kyōiku Iinkai, 2008).

⁶⁶ 大舎人 (senior attendant)

⁶⁷ 和同開珎

⁶⁸ 上総 (in Chiba prefecture)

⁶⁹ 須恵

⁷⁰ 湖西 (in Shizuoka prefecture)

⁷¹ 赤井

⁷² 牡鹿

⁷³ 舎人 (attendant) and 牡舎人

⁷⁴ Yamanashi Kenritsu Hakubutsukan 山梨県立博物館 (Yamanashi Prefectural Museum), ed., *Kodai no kōeki to michi kenkyū hōkokusho* 古代の交易と道研究報告書 (Research Report on Ancient Exchange

cited. This attempts to elucidate conditions in the ancient province of Kai,⁷⁵ a point of juncture between the Tōkaidō and Tōsandō⁷⁶ roads.

In the Kinki region, investigations continued at the Asuka, Fujiwara, Naniwa, Nara, Nagaoka, and Heian palaces.⁷⁷ FY 2008 was the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, and a special exhibit held at its museum summarized the results of excavations at the Asuka capital.⁷⁸ This assessed developments from the Asuka through the Fujiwara capitals against the ancient capitals of East Asia, through examination together with the results of investigations from recent years of capitals in China and Korea.

In investigations and research on government roads in the Kinai⁷⁹ district and surrounding regions, the provincial government office of the ancient province of Ōmi⁸⁰ and its environs are receiving attention as the node linking the Kinki region with eastern Japan. At the Chūro⁸¹ site to the southwest of the government office the Tōkaidō road has been detected, and at the Aoe⁸² site a feature consisting of a roadway 20 m in width, extending due south from the government office and crossing the Tōkaidō at a right angle, has been discovered. Features of the Tōkaidō, Tōsandō, and Hokurikudō⁸³ have all been investigated within Shiga prefecture, and the results are drawing attention as strategic sites of transport nearest the starting point of the ancient road system.

As a noteworthy example of ancient mountain fortress investigations, the Ki no jō⁸⁴ site in Sōja,⁸⁵ Okayama prefecture, should probably be mentioned. In terms of scale, it is 2.8 km in circumference with an area of 30.6 ha, and investigations of facilities within the site have been underway since 2006. In addition to a large-scale building of 6 x 2 spans (17.6 x 6.5 m), having pillar base stones on its perimeter and a stone-piled podium of the same dimensions, the existence of a group of storehouses, consisting of buildings with regularly placed internal pillars standing on pillar base stones, came to light. Also, after cessation of its function as a fortress, in the ninth century it appears to have been refurbished and utilized as a mountain temple. Finds have been reported in the vicinity of Sue ware miniature pagodas and lamp dishes, and interestingly, it is envisioned as a place of training for priests of

and Roads), vol. 2 of *Yamanashi Kenritsu Hakubutsukan chōsa/kenkyū hōkoku* 山梨県立博物館調査・研究報告 (Yamanashi Prefectural Museum Research Reports) (Yamanashi Kenritsu Hakubutsukan, 2008).

⁷⁵ 甲斐

⁷⁶ 東海道, 東山道

⁷⁷ 飛鳥宮・藤原宮 (in Nara prefecture), 難波宮 (in Osaka prefecture), 平城宮 (in Nara prefecture), 長岡宮・平安宮 (in Kyoto prefecture)

⁷⁸ “Kyūto Asuka,” 宮都飛鳥 (Asuka capital) (Nara Kenritsu Kashihara Kōkogaku Kenkyūjo Fuzoku Hakubutsukan 奈良県立橿原考古学研究所附属博物館 [The Museum, Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture], 4 October – 30 November 2008)

⁷⁹ 畿内

⁸⁰ 近江

⁸¹ 中路 (Shiga prefecture)

⁸² 青江 (Shiga prefecture)

⁸³ 北陸道

⁸⁴ 鬼ノ城

⁸⁵ 総社

the provincial monastery of ancient Bitchū,⁸⁶ visible directly below.

6. Medieval period

Research sessions on Medieval ceramics are reported to have been held a total of 27 times. As researchers of all specialties gathered in each local research session, rapid advance can be seen in the mutual involvement of archaeological and documentary research in Medieval studies. Historical reconstruction of the Medieval period, for which many documentary materials such as literary records and picture scrolls survive, becomes more concrete with the addition of archaeological data, and a new image emerges of the Medieval world.

The focus of research is understandably the study of fortified residences from the latter part of the Medieval to the Sengoku periods, with symposia and lectures on this subject held throughout the nation. As can be seen from the subject of castles built on level terrain,⁸⁷ discussion is proceeding from a variety of angles.

In research on Medieval cities, the pioneering example of investigation in this area, the Hakata⁸⁸ group of sites in Fukuoka prefecture, saw the thirtieth year since the start of excavation, and the volume *Chūsei toshi Hakata o horu* (Excavating the Medieval City of Hakata)⁸⁹ was published, pulling together the results of investigations to date. To commemorate, the Fukuoka City Museum held a special exhibit and symposium on the subject of excavating Hakata.⁹⁰ It may be said that the form of the medieval international trading city of Hakata is finally coming into full view.

For research results on temples, religious beliefs, and graves, there is *Kyōzutsu ga kataru chūsei no sekai* (The Medieval World as Told by Sutra Containers),⁹¹ published as the first work in a series planned by the Beppu University Cultural Properties Research Institute. Beginning with a history of research by Oda Fujio, the leading figure in the study of sutra containers in Kyushu, the latest research reports are included, with examples from all over Kyushu added, along with reports of scientific analyses of sutra containers. At Fukuoka University, a symposium focusing

⁸⁶ 備中

⁸⁷ “Heichi ni tsukurareta shiro: Hōki chihō ni miru Sengoku jidai no jitsuzō” 平地につくられた城: 伯耆地方にみる戦国時代の実像 (Castles Built on Level Ground: The True Image of the Sengoku Period Seen in the Hōki Region), Dai Yonkai Chūsei Jōkan Shimpojiūmu 第4回中世城館シンポジウム (4th Symposium on Medieval Fortified Residences) (Kotoura, Tottori prefecture; 10 October 2008).

⁸⁸ 博多 [Translator’s note: Information on this group of sites is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/2006/hakata.htm>]

⁸⁹ Ōba Kōji 大庭康時 et al., eds., *Chūsei toshi Hakata o horu* 中世都市・博多を掘る (Excavating the Medieval City of Hakata) (Fukuoka: Kaichōsha, 2008).

⁹⁰ “Hakata o horu” 博多を掘る (Excavating Hakata) (Fukuoka Shiritsu Hakubutsukan 福岡市立博物館 [Fukuoka City Museum], 4 September 2007 – 14 January 2008).

⁹¹ Oda Fujio 小田富士雄, Hirao Yoshimitsu 平尾良光 and Inuma Kenji 飯沼賢司, eds., *Kyōzutsu ga kataru chūsei no sekai* 経筒が語る中世の世界 (The Medieval World as Told by Sutra Containers), vol. 1 of *Beppu Daigaku Bunkazai Kenkyūjo shirūzu* 別府大学文化財研究所企画シリーズ (Beppu University Cultural Properties Research Institute series) (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 2008).

on Medieval Kyushu studies was held in conjunction with the 10th meeting of the Nanakuma Shigaku Kai (The Society of Historical Research).⁹² Its program aimed at rebuilding the study of Medieval Kyushu through interdisciplinary research in fields such as archaeology, documentary history, and anthropology.

In eastern Japan as well, investigations and reports on fortified residences flourished as usual, and in addition to investigations at the Hiraizumi⁹³ site group, the central city of the Tōhoku region at the start of the Medieval period, and at the eastern capital of Kamakura, examples of investigations of towns and villages, such as the settlement adjoining Odawara⁹⁴ castle, were unquestionably on the increase in all quarters.

7. Early Modern period and later

From the Kinki region westwards, anthologies related to castles were overwhelming in number. Among these developments, a moat inferred to be the southern limit of Honnōji⁹⁵ temple, burned in 1582 by Akechi Mitsuhide,⁹⁶ was detected at the Honnōji castle site in Chūkyō⁹⁷ ward of Kyoto, providing a valuable clue for clarifying the precinct of the temple. Also, the results of investigations of features immediately postdating the Honnōji Incident were reported.⁹⁸

In eastern Japan, there were successive examples of interesting investigations on the Bakumatsu and modern periods. The Yamashita⁹⁹ foreign residence site in Yokohama is one such example. European made ceramics, tiles, gin bottles and so forth, artifacts not often seen domestically, were recovered in large quantities. Also, the image of Yokohama as an open port city is reflected in features such as tile-paved floors, piping for gas lights, and foundations of brick buildings, in which the breath of European culture can be felt. Meanwhile, there were ceramics made in the Meiji period for the foreign market, and an exhibit focusing on these was held at the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Cultural History.¹⁰⁰ Showing works made with

⁹² “Kyūshū no chūseigaku: Kōeki, kaihatsu, shinkō” 九州の中世学: 交易・開発・信仰 (Medieval Kyushu studies: Exchange, development, beliefs), Nanakuma Shigaku Kai Dai 10-kai Taikai Kinen Shinpojiumu 七隈史学会第10回大会記念シンポジウム (Nanakuma Shigaku Kai [The Society of Historical Research] 10th Annual Meeting Commemorative Symposium) (Fukuoka, 27-28 September 2008).

⁹³ 平泉 (Iwate prefecture)

⁹⁴ 小田原

⁹⁵ 本能寺

⁹⁶ 明智光秀

⁹⁷ 中京

⁹⁸ Kyōto-shi Maizō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo 京都市埋蔵文化財研究所 (Kyoto City Archaeological Research Institute), ed., *Heiankyō sakyō shijō nibō jūgo-chō ato/Honnōjijō ato* 平安京左京四條二坊十五町跡・本能寺城跡 (Remains of Block 15, East Second Ward on Fourth Street, Heian Capital/Honnōji Castle Remains), *Kyōto-shi Maizō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo hakkutsu chōsa hōkoku*, no. 2007-11 (2008).

⁹⁹ 山下 [Translator’s note: Information on this site is available on the website of the Japanese Archaeological Association. URL: <http://archaeology.jp/sites/sites2009/08yamashita.htm>]

¹⁰⁰ “Yokohama, Tōkyo: Meiji no yushutsu tōjiki” 横浜・東京: 明治の輸出陶磁器 (Yokohama and Tokyo: Meiji Export Ceramics), Yokohama Kaikō 150 Shūnen Kinen 横浜開港150周年記念 (150th Anniversary

sophisticated techniques previously not widely known, it centered on Makuzu¹⁰¹ ware, and provides hints for the interpretation of archaeological materials from the Bakumatsu to Meiji periods.

In the area of cemeteries and burial practices, the results of investigation of the Tokugawa family graveyard at Kan'eiji¹⁰² temple in Ueno,¹⁰³ Tokyo are being awaited. Being investigated are graves, scheduled for reburial, of female members of the shogun's household, who held positions as first wife, daughter, or mother of the shogun. This should provide valuable data on the burial practices of the top class of samurai, and for research on the women's section of the shogun's household.

Finally, one volume should be mentioned treating the "culture of the north," based neither on rice agriculture nor on Buddhism, while still lying within the Japanese archipelago. This is Fujimoto Tsuyoshi's *Kōkogaku de tsuzuru Nihonshi* (Japanese History Spelled Out through Archaeology).¹⁰⁴ It is a discourse on Japanese culture not easily drawn from documentary materials.

of the Opening of Yokohama Commemoration) (Kanagawa Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan 神奈川県立歴史博物館 [Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Cultural History], 26 April – 22 June 2008).

¹⁰¹ 真葛

¹⁰² 寛永寺

¹⁰³ 上野

¹⁰⁴ Fujimoto Tsuyoshi 藤本強, *Kōkogaku de tsuzuru Nihonshi* 考古学でつづる日本史 (Japanese History Spelled Out through Archaeology) (Douseisha, 2008).