

Medieval

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Although medieval archaeology is a relatively new field in Japanese archaeology, the number of excavations has been large in recent years, and studies are being actively conducted on cities, castles, stone structures, and pottery/ceramics.

Firstly, the convention of Chusei Toshi Kenkyukai, ‘Kamakura Kenkyu no Mirai (Future of Kamakura Study)’ should be mentioned for city/castle study. NAGATA Fumiko pointed out problems of archaeological study in Kamakura. Inefficient excavation research systems and storage facilities that have been mentioned from the 1970’s, and lack of guidance facilities like a museum are leading to an inadequate ability to send information. The author hopes the true value of Kamakura will be revealed by solving these problems. NIKI Hiroshi started ‘Chusei/Kinsei Ikoki ni Okeru Shugoshō/Jokamachino Sogoteki Kenkyū (Synthetic Study on Shugo/Jokamachi in the Transitional Period of Medieval and Early Modern).’ The study is a five-year plan to reveal space structure, social structure, regional characteristics and transition of shugoshō (governor’s office) and Shokuho period castle towns nationwide that were bases of local control in the 15th to 17th centuries. As preparation groups were organized in various regions, deepening of regional city/castle study is expected. An outstanding excavation result on castle study is a Sengoku period garden at Odawara Castle Goyomaikuruwa. The garden had a large pond of 45 meters circumference, and its surrounding was pasted with materials for stone stupa like tiles for bank protection. A path and a well were paved with cut stones in different colors processed irregularly like a mosaic, resembling ancient Roman sites. There is no other example of this type of garden in Japan, showing the uniqueness of the Sengoku period feudal lord, Hojo Clan.

As for religion, study on stone monuments was outstanding. Wariya mining site in Ogawa Town, Saitama Prefecture was confirmed as a quarry of materials for steles (itabi). Unfinished products with guide lines were found from the site, evidence that materials were processed to a pre-finishing state at the quarry. This was an important discovery to understand production and distribution of itabi. A masonry study group led by Takao Ichimura compared masonry styles in Kinki and other regions, and analyzed stone

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TRENDS IN ARCHAEOLOGY IN JAPAN

materials in Japan and China, revealing diffusion of masonry technique, distribution and transportation. As for research on production sites, Ehime University conducted research on Miyanna site in Kamishima Town, Ehime Prefecture, and discovered features for a 12th to 14th century CE Agehama style salt evaporation pond. The extremely hardened floor of a salt evaporation pond was excavated. This is a significant discovery and an important source of data which will lead to understanding of the history of medieval salt-making. As for pottery/ceramic study, the movement to reconstruct chronology is remarkable. Toban-line Sue wares and Atsumiyaki ceramics that were distributed nationally will be used as standards for the chronology and based on that chronology reconstruction of local pottery chronologies and reconsideration of dating views will be conducted, making a large contribution to the progress of medieval archaeology. Furthermore, deepening of study is remarkable for the study of imported ceramics that were distributed nationally, such as examination of chronology and dating by comparing data from production sites and consumption sites conducted by Akinori Kamei, as well as a controversy between Yasunobu Yoshioka and Tetsuya Seto over artifacts excavated from Ryukyu. Thus, Japanese medieval archaeology is making steady progress, but settlement study seems lowkeyed. Although settlements and villages are not splendid, they are the foundation that supports mansions and castles, and are thus an important study field.