

# **Protection and Utilization of Historical Heritage in Japan**

Assoc. Prof. Naofumi Kishimoto

Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences,

Osaka City University, Japan

This paper introduces outline of protection systems and actual activities for archaeological sites in Japan. And some examples of preservation and restoration of historical sites are shown. In Japan, results of excavation investigation so far are widely returned to general public, and it has been a big subject how to utilize them in modern social activities.

## **1. Law of the protection of cultural properties and budget in Japan**

In Japan, law of the protection of cultural properties was enacted in 1950, and it provides that valuable historical heritage should be designated and protected by the central or local governments. Table1 shows various cultural properties under national protection. For example, tangible properties cover from building structures to art objects such as paintings, sculptures, crafts, ancient documents, and so on. Intangible properties cover dramas, music, and industrial arts. A number of archaeological sites are about 1,500. Along with groups of traditional monuments, cultural landscapes are added to the cultural properties under national protection. They include traditional farming villages unique to the respective regions.

Besides the central government, prefectural and municipal governments also designate and protect local historical heritage according to their own ordinances to protect their cultural properties.

Next we show budget amount related to Japanese culture. The Japanese central government allocates 0.07% of the national budgets, which is about sixty billion yen a year, for the culture-related programs. The prefectural and municipal governments also allocate about thirty billion yen and sixty billion yen respectively.

Fig.1 Culture-related Budget of Governments in Japan

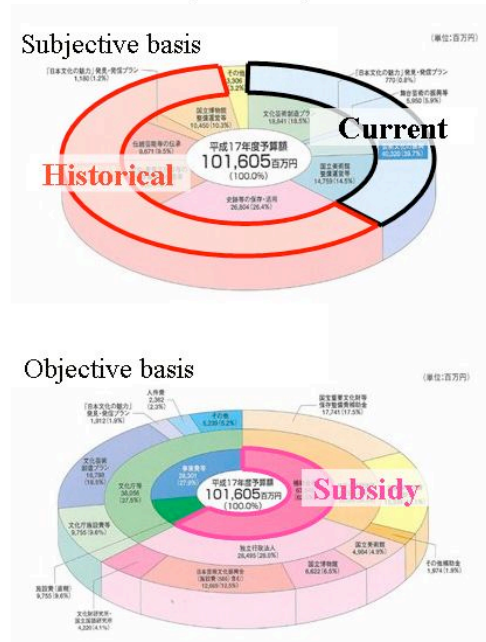
Culture-related Budget (Subjective basis)

	For Current Culture	For Historical Heritage
Central	403	580
Prefectural	879	292
Municipal	3,226	624
Sum	4,508	1,496

(hundred million yen : fiscal 2005)

<http://www.bunka.go.jp>

Budget for Cultural Affairs Agency  
(fiscal 2005)



However, the budget of the central government includes subsidy for many programs operated by local governments. Compared with proportion of the budget for historical heritage to the budget for current culture, the latter is much allocated by local governments than the former. In the case of the central government high proportion of budget for historical heritage is mainly due to huge costs for purchase of protected lands and for maintenance of protected buildings and art works.

Clearly, the central government serves many purpose the protection and utilization of historical heritage in Japan.

## 2. Protection of historical heritage

In Japan, the central and local governments designate various cultural properties as historic sites. Table2 shows outline of Japanese history and number of designated historic sites by the central government. They cover from prehistoric to contemporary sites before 1945. Number of historic sites reaches about 1500.

This number seems to be much less than that of European nations. However, as mentioned before, there are about 16,000 historic sites are designated by local governments besides designated sites shown here.

Since changing the current conditions of designated sites is strongly restricted, an agreement of a landowner is needed before designation. In many cases, governments ultimately buy up designated historic sites because of this strong restriction of land usage. The central government sets an upper limit on grant rate for local governments' purchase of historic sites: 80%.

According to the importance of historic heritage, the central, prefectural and municipal governments divide the responsibility for protection of cultural properties.

### 3. Excavation Researches

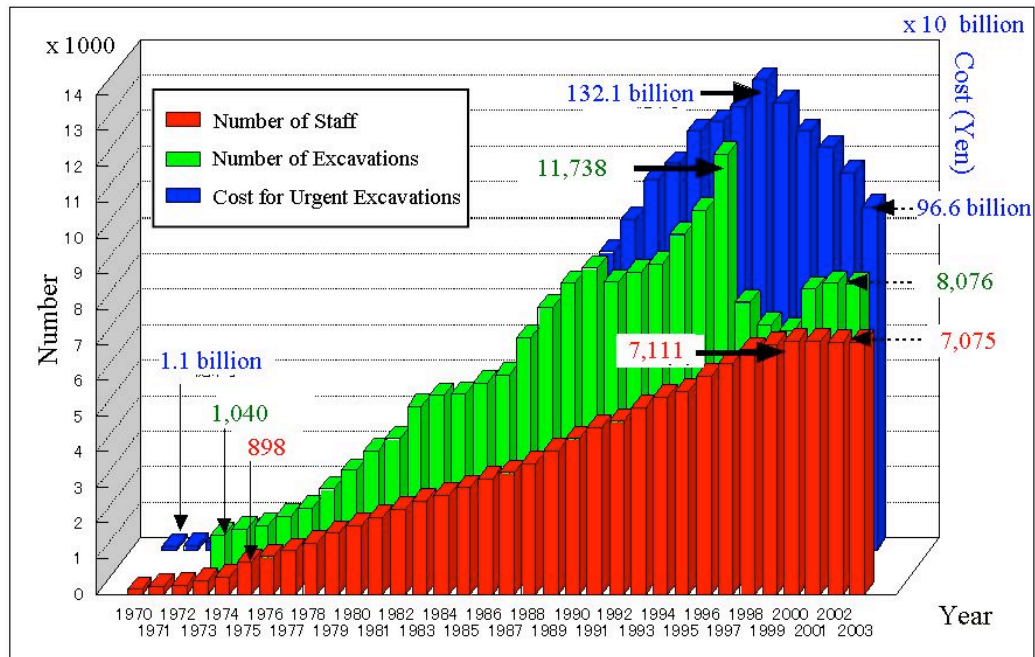
Number of historical sites designated both the central and local governments is 17,419, which is about 4 percent of about a half million archaeological sites.

It is important agenda to balance protection of archaeological sites with regional development of the area. Japanese law of the protection of cultural properties requires prior notification to develop historical sites, and obliges excavation research with records when the development is evaluated to break down the historical sites inescapably. Number of notification in fiscal 2005 is thirty-thousand, and 8,000 cases of them were required excavation researches.

In many cases, after excavations development projects start again and break down the historical sites, with a few exceptions that they are identified as very important historical sites.

The graph in fig.2 shows changes in the numbers of excavations and staff from 1970 to 2003. The cost for urgent excavations is also shown. From 1960, some local governments needed expert staffs for excavation researches due to increasing national land developments of high economic growth period including developments of housing land and traffic network.

Fig.2 Number of Excavations and Staff of Each Fiscal Year



Statistical material concerning buried cultural property.2003

Now there are 7,000 staffs concerning protection of historical sites, and 3000 of them are exclusive researchers all over Japan. Total cost for the urgent excavations before developments reaches ten billion yen. 80% of the cost belongs to public projects, and the rest belongs to private ones.

In the latter cases, corresponding developer is essentially required cost for excavation researches. However, this general rule is customary not established by law, it is commonly accepted in these days.

Amount of excavation researches had declined from 2000 resulting from the decrease of public projects. Lately activities of staffs concerning historical sites turn away from only excavation researches by utilizing the sites and outcome of the researches.

#### 4. Public interests for historical heritage

New findings from archaeological excavations have attracted enormous public interests. Excavation researches receive a high degree of media coverage, and hundreds or thousands peoples attend to briefing session of highly publicized historic sites. Many books concerning historical sites are published. Moreover popular classes and visitors' centers of famous historical sites have

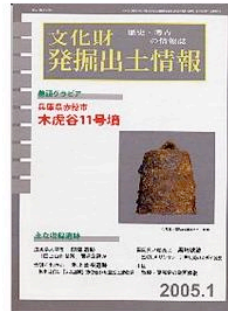
been booming in recent years.

Fig.3 Rising Interests in Historical and Archaeological Activities



Field Briefing Session

<http://www.occpa.or.jp>



Monthly Publication of  
Excavation Researches

<http://www.j-tsushin.co.jp>



Archaeological  
Quarterly Publication

<http://www.yuzankaku.co.jp>



Annual Exhibition of Archaeology

<http://www.bunka.go.jp>



Historical Classes of Culture Center

Environments of public historical sites bought by governments are improved to assist visitors' understandings. Since most buildings are wooden in the case of Japan, holes of their foundation or parts of pillars remain in the earth. In the past, it was important to leave archaeological sites themselves and we had not positively restored historical buildings and suchlike. However, historical sites are considered as learning places to learn regional history from about 1989. They are also utilized as history parks of regional areas.

It is going to prepare positively the institution which makes a once figure imagine, and the guidance institution in order to attract tourists.

## 5. Current utilization of historical heritage

### (1) San'nai-Maruyama 6000 ~ 4500 years ago (Jomon Period)



**Fig.4 San'nai-Maruyama**

<http://sannaimaruyama.pref.aomori.jp>

On this place, a baseball stadium was planned to be constructed initially, but very large and important Jomon settlements were found so that initial plan was discarded. Aomori prefecture succeeds in utilization of this historical site as a tourist site by restoring ancient dwellings and huge wooden buildings, and constructing a visitors' center.

(2)Yoshinogari B.C. 500~A.D. 200(Yayoi Period)





Fig.5 Yoshinogari

<http://www.pref.saga.lg.jp>

Evidence of settlements with reinforced defense were found, which shows frequent regional conflicts before construction of a unified nation. However an industrial park was planned initially at this area, archaeological discovery of large Yayoi settlements and the media attention change the plan to a historical park. Now this park plays an important role in attracting tourists, so to say a Yayoi theme park.

(3) Hotoda-Hachimanduka burial mound A.D.450~500 (Kohun Period)



Fig.6 Hotoda-Hachimanduka burial mound

Keyhole-shaped huge burial mounds, which are called “Zen-pou Kou-en Fun”, were constructed in formative period of nations. This figure shows a large keyhole-shaped tomb mound built in Kofun Period. Its stone masonry was restored, and visitors can produce clay figures, Haniwa, arranged on the rebuilt tomb mound.

(4) Nara Palace Site A.D.710 ~ 784 (Nara Period)





Fig.7 Nara Palace Site

<http://www.nabunken.go.jp>

It was one of royal palaces in 8th century. It places in the north of the Heijyo capital modeled on then Chinese capital. From 1954, the national institute has researched this area, and about 30% of total area was already excavated. The excavations and utilization of the Nara Palace site is a good reference to the following excavation researches and improvements of nation-wide historical sites.

(5) Ichijyo-Dani Castle Town A.D.1471 ~1574(Muromachi Period)

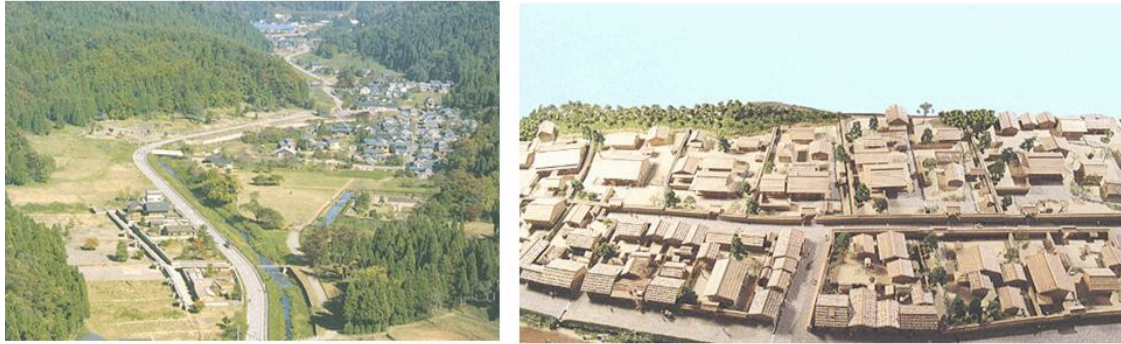


Fig.8 Ichijyo-Dani Castle Town <http://kouryu.pref.fukui.jp>

Ichijyo-Dani was a castle town of the Age of Civil War in 16th century. It includes habitation sites of the rulers and subjects. However a population of this town is estimated as 10,000 people, this town was burn away and buried in the earth. Now we are restoring house and lot by inches.

#### 6. Future utilization of historical heritage

We show some examples of unitization of historical heritage with a focus on archaeological sites in Japan

The excavations over the past 40 years provide rich regional history and various valuable historical heritage, however, they sometimes broke down irreplaceable historical sites. And recently there is a very much of an interest in historical heritage and excavation researches. In order to respond to such public interests, utilization of historical heritage is very important.

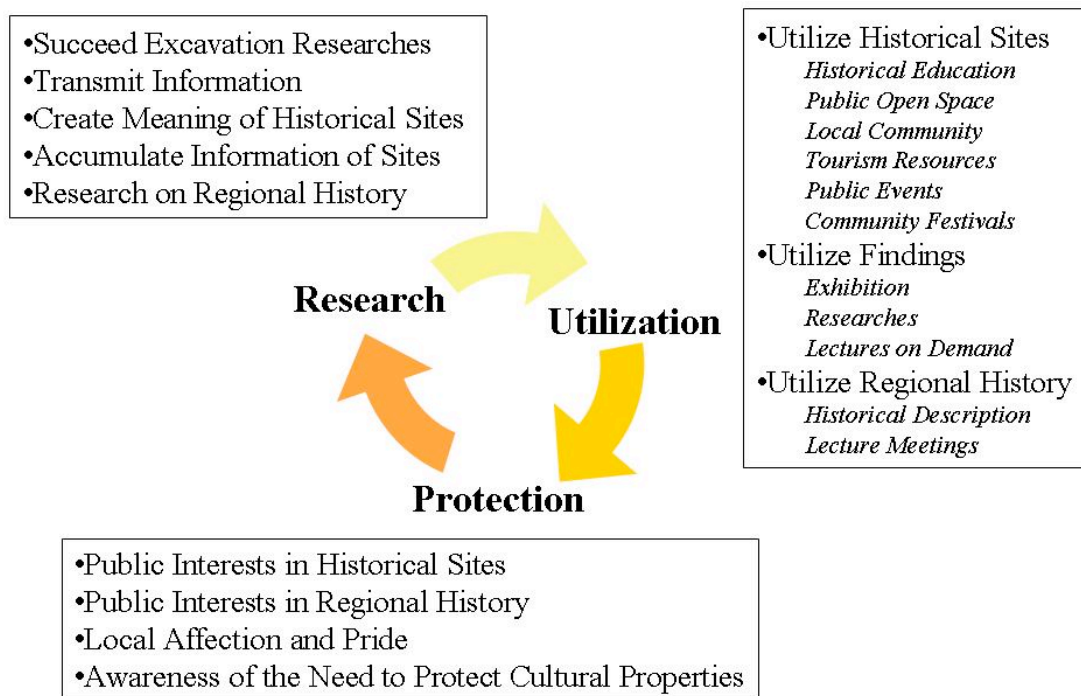
The historical heritage includes not only excavated sites and findings but also revealed regional history. Excavation experiences and programs on demand already become widespread for example of community renovation related to historical heritage. In the future, we need to find ways of utilization more widely.

It will provide regional affection and awareness of the need to protect cultural properties.

The local governments and residents should coordinate on management of historical heritage such as the organization of various events and volunteer projects.

In conclusion, it is very important for long-range protection of historical heritage to initiate public interests and relationship with historical heritage through various utilization activities stated here.

Fig.9 Protection and Utilization of Historical Heritage



Tab.2 Japanese History and Number of Designated Historic Sites

Prehistory(30,000 years ago ~ 6 th Century) -----				633
Paleolithic	(30,000 ~ 14,000 years ago)	Foraging Society in Glacial Age		
Jomon	(14,000~2,700 years ago)	Foraging Society in Postglacial Age		
Yayoi	(2,700 years ago ~ 2nd Century)	Food Production Society due to Wet-Rice		
Kofun	(3rd ~ 6th Century)	Formation Stage of State, Huge Burial Mounds <i>Kofun</i>		
Ancient(7th ~11th Century) -----				350
Asuka	(7th Century) Asuka	Formation of Centralized Government, Buddhist Temples		
Nara	(8th Century) Nara	Hei-jyo Capital, Local Branch of Central Government		
Hei-an	(9th Century) Kyoto	Hei-an Capital, Aristocratic Culture		
Middle(12th ~ 16th Century) -----				257
Kamakura	(12th Century~) Kamakura	Warrior Society, Manorial Sites		
Muromachi	(14th Century~) Kyoto	The Age of Provincial Wars, Castle ruins		
Modern(16th ~ 19th Century) -----				307
Edo	(17th ~)	Tokyo	Castles	
Contemporary(19th Century~ 1945) -----				20
				<a href="http://www.bunka.go.jp">http://www.bunka.go.jp</a>

Tab.1 Japanese Cultural Properties Under National Protection

#### Tangible Cultural Properties

Building Structures	2,277
Art Objects	10,209 (Paintings 1,946 Sculptures 2,606, Crafts 2,400, Calligraphy 1,851, Ancient Documents 713, Archaeological Evidences 552, Historical Documents 141)

#### Intangible Cultural Properties

Dramas・Music	50 (Japanese lyrical Noh drama・Bunraku puppet show・Kabuki etc.)
Industrial Arts	59 (Ceramic・Dyeing・Lacquer・Metal Arts etc.)

#### Folklore Cultural Properties

Tangible : Clothes, Tools, Furniture, etc.	202
Intangible : Manners and Customs, Folkloric Performances, etc.	237

#### Monuments and Sites

Sites	1,540
Aesthetic Landscapes	295
Animals and Plants・Mineral Substances	933

#### Group of Traditional Monuments 69

Cultural Landscapes (2005~)	1	<a href="http://www.bunka.go.jp">http://www.bunka.go.jp</a>
-----------------------------	---	---