The Location of the Yakemachi-type Pottery in Gunma Prefecture

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This paper investigates two of the various issues raised by the Yakemachi-type pottery which are the position in terms of time of the Yakemachi-type pottery in Gunma Prefecture and its position among contemporaneous types of pottery.

First, a broad study classifying pottery into one of two stages was undertaken on the basis of aspects of pottery of independent origin that were contemporaneous with the Yakemachi-type pottery inside remains located in Gunma Prefecture. The study found that with regard to the composition of the first stage, the Katsusaka-type and eastern Kanto pottery, Hokuriku pottery and the Atamadai-type pottery were contemporaneous and that the individual characteristics of contemporaneous pottery of varying types and independent origin were reflected in the composition. As for the second stage, there was a pronounced co-existence between the Yakemachi-type pottery and the Katsusaka-type and the Kawarata-type deep bowls. Whereas these local items of pottery exhibited aspects indicating a convergence with the pattern configurations of the Kasori EI-type pottery from the following period, because the Yakemachi-type retains the "Kyokuryusenmon" method of applying patterns and carried on the tradition of the main patterns found on the body, the Yakemachi-type pottery may now be characterized as pottery of an independent origin that had a continued and stable history.

Furthermore, for both stages the Yakemachi-type pottery from Gunma Prefecture exhibits an objective existence with regard to contemporaneous pottery of independent origins and does not exhibit aspects of the main the Yakemachi-type that can be seen in the Miyota-machi Kawarata Site in Nagano Prefecture. It was found that in the case of the Yakemachi-type pottery from Gunma Prefecture covering these two stages there were few different types of pottery and there was a convergence with types of pottery of independent origin in only a small number of items.

Next, in examining the role of the Yakemachi-type pottery the possibility of an exchange of pottery items as an act of reciprocity was examined. It is believed that when pottery was transported to cultural spheres in which pottery of an independent origin existed, the pottery was selected as pottery that linked several types of pottery that belonged to the other party. Furthermore, it is believed that the Yakemachi-type pottery, which had traditional and conspicuous patterning techniques compared to other types of pottery from nearby, fulfilled the role of gift articles on such occasions.