

# Hokkaido Jomon Culture

北海道の縄文文化



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Kita 3-jo, Nishi 6-chome, Chuo-ku, Sapporo 060-8588 Japan TEL:+81-11-231-4111

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## Preface

The Jomon culture is an ancient culture that developed across the Japanese archipelago over the more than 10,000 years between 13,000BC and 500BC. The Jomon people lived rich lives centered on hunting, fishing and gathering in modest harmony with the harsh but abundant nature based on their philosophies of coexistence and the circle of life.

In Hokkaido especially, even after most of the Japanese archipelago had gone on to adopt the rice-farming Yayoi culture, agriculture was never fully integrated, and a unique history flourished, giving birth to the Zoku-Jomon (post-Jomon), Okhotsk, Satsumon and Ainu cultures. For this reason, philosophies that place importance on coexistence with nature and respect towards all living things are rooted deeply in Ainu culture even today.

The spirit of "coexistence with nature" that was so important in the Jomon culture has universal value when considering not only today's society but also future societies. This booklet has been designed to help deepen people's understanding of the Jomon culture as well as explore and convey the unique characteristics of Hokkaido's history and beauty.

## Contents

Preface	
Hokkaido's Geography	2
The End of the Paleolithic Age	4
Rise in Temperature and the Birth of Jomon Culture	5
The Positioning and Unique Characteristics of Jomon Culture	6
Hokkaido's Jomon Culture	8
The distinctive character and value of Jomon culture seen from world prehistory(Simon Kaner)	14
Steps toward Recognition as World Heritage	16

Photos p. 1  
Above: Clay mask, Mámachi Site (Chitose City)  
Important Cultural Property  
Left: Clay figure, Chobonaino Site (Hakodate City)  
National Treasure  
Right: Clay figure, Bibi Site No. 4 (Chitose City)  
Bottom center: Clay animal figure Bibi Site No. 4 (Chitose City)  
Important Cultural Property

## Hokkaido Jomon Culture



# Hokkaido's Geography

## Present-day Hokkaido

Hokkaido is located in the north of the Japanese archipelago which stretches east of the Asian continent. It is surrounded by the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean, and faces Sakhalin Island to the north across the Soya Strait and Honshu to the south across the Tsugaru Strait, a mere 19km in width. Here in the Tsugaru Strait, the Tsugaru Warm Current, a warm current that branches off from the Tsushima Current, runs from the Sea of Japan to the Pacific Ocean at 3 knots and is locally known as the "Shoppa Kawa (Salty River)."

Apart from the main island, Hokkaido is made up of many small islands such as Rishiri Island, Rebun Island and Okushiri Island. The main island has an expansive area of 77,984.41km<sup>2</sup> and a look at the current distribution of vegetation reveals that the island is roughly split along the central mountain ranges, including the Hidaka Mountains, into deciduous broad-leaved forests in the southwest region and conifer/broadleaf mixed forests in the northeast region.



This map utilizes a digital map issued by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan.

Hokkaido and surrounding areas

## Pre-Jomon Hokkaido

Humans first started to inhabit Hokkaido around 30,000 years ago in the Paleolithic Age. It was the last glacial stage of the late Pleistocene, and the sea level was 100m lower than it is today. Thus, the Japanese archipelago was a different shape than the one we now know. Honshu was connected by land to Shikoku and Kyushu, and this comprised the "Paleo-Honshu Island". Hokkaido was connected to Sakhalin, which was connected to the Asian continent, and therefore comprised part of the peninsula that protruded from the northeast of the continent. In the glacial period around 20,000 years ago, the average temperature dropped by 7 to 8 degrees Celsius and the sea level was 130m lower than it is today. However, as even the shallowest part of the Tsugaru Strait had a depth of 140m, Hokkaido was always separated from Paleo-Honshu Island by the sea. Consequently, even today the fauna and flora of Hokkaido more closely resemble that of the Amur River basin than that of Honshu. The Tsushima Strait was also closed up, and the Sea of Japan was more like a large lake.

As the temperature was lower than it is today, it is thought that the distribution of the vegetation differed, with evergreen forests in the southwest region and deciduous conifers in the northeast region.



This map utilizes a digital map issued by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan.

The geographical form of Hokkaido around 20,000 years ago

## The End of the Paleolithic Age

The people of the Paleolithic Age migrated in pursuit of mammoths, moose and other large animals. The oldest relics in Hokkaido date back 30,000 years to the late Paleolithic Age. As mentioned earlier, this period was also known as the last glacial stage, but from the beginning of the coldest period around 20,000 years ago, a stone tool known as a "microlith" suddenly started appearing and came into more frequent use between 13,000BC and 10,000BC. The microliths, which were long, thin stone chips that measured 3 to 5cm in length, were attached to wooden or bone handles to be used as tools such as spears for hunting. These were very useful tools as they could be created from a small amount of stone and were easy to replace with sharper blades. As many microliths have been found in Siberia dating back to an older period than that of the tools found in Hokkaido, it is thought that humans migrated from the Asian continent down through Sakhalin Island and into Hokkaido which formed part of the peninsula in pursuit of large animals.

On the other hand, apart from this northern route, microliths were also introduced into the west side of the archipelago a little later, approximately 15,000 years ago. With the sudden rise in temperature and environmental changes that were to come, the Jomon culture was born in the Japanese archipelago, on the base of precedent microlithic industry.



Microliths (top) and microcores  
Akatsuki Site (Obihiro City)  
Photo: Masahiko Sato



Osseous projectile point with microliths  
(Sakhalin)

Photo source: Ivalievskii Alexander 2008, Максимов Александр и другие участники экспедиции на Сахалин. Human Ecosystem Changes in the Northern Orogen-Japan Sea Area in the Late Pleistocene. The University of Tokyo, P164-67. (Bakurovskii A.A., Булкин М.С. 2012, Саватин и Купченко: острова. История и доисторическое время до-Историческая-Самарская область. Южно-Сахалинск: изд-во «ИФБС», 220).

## Rise in Temperature and the Birth of Jomon Culture

A look into the earth's history reveals that we are visited by cold "glacial periods" and warmer "interglacial periods" in cycles of 10,000 years or so, and approximately 15,000 years ago saw a sudden rise in temperature known as Bolling-Allerod.

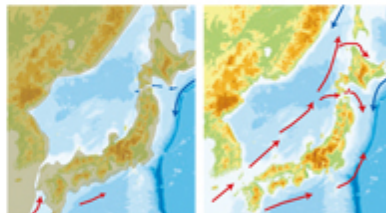
This climatic warming caused the sea level to suddenly rise by 130m, separating Hokkaido and Sakhalin from the Asian continent. The Tsushima Strait, which was closed for most of the glacial period, opened up and the Tsushima Current (Kuroshio Current) began to flow in great volumes into the once lake-like Sea of Japan. Furthermore, as there were so many sea currents running into the Sea of Japan, overflowing warm currents began to flow through the Tsugaru Strait that separates Hokkaido and Honshu, and into the Pacific Ocean. One current began to flow south off the east coast of northern Honshu, and another flowed north of the southeast region of Oshima Peninsula. The rise in sea level caused by the increase in temperature and the change in the flow of the currents are important elements when considering the formation of the natural environment of the Japanese archipelago and the prosperity of the Jomon culture. The steam rising from the warm currents on the surface of the water turned into rain or snow, and the warm weather and humidity brought about four distinct seasons. Green forests and rivers started to form in the mountains, the currents became more active with the rising of the sea level, and the seas became inhabited with various forms of marine life. The Jomon culture, a hunting, gathering and fishing society, was born together with the diversifying natural environment.

On a global scale, another freeze known as the Younger Dryas occurred in the North American and European continents (from 10,900BC to 9,500BC), however, perhaps due to the fact that it was surrounded by warm currents, it is thought that the Japanese archipelago was not as severely affected by this as other areas in the northern hemisphere. The warm currents surrounding the archipelago helped sustain a stable environment, which turned out

to be a very fortunate thing for the birth of Jomon culture.



A graph predicting the changes in climate from icicle cores in north Greenland



This map utilizes a digital map issued by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan.

The currents 20,000 years ago (left) and after the Jomon Period (right)  
\*Red: Warm currents (Tsushima Current), Blue: Cold currents (Oyashio Current)

# The Positioning and Unique Characteristics of Jomon Culture

## Jomon Culture's Place in the World

"Jomon" originates from the word "cord" in Japanese, as the pottery from this period was covered in cord patterns. The artistry behind the shapes and patterns of Jomon pottery is widely recognized, and differs from region to region.

The start of the Jomon culture is defined as the time when the pottery came into use and people settled on the land. Today, some of the oldest pottery from the period includes the relics found in Aomori Prefecture's Odai Yamamoto. The results of carbon dating show that this pottery dates back to 13,000BC. The culture is thought to have met its demise around 2,500 years ago when it was replaced with the Yayoi culture which was centered on the cultivation of grain.

If one were to position the Jomon Culture in world history, it would be equivalent to an extremely long period that would span over part of the European Paleolithic Age, the Neolithic Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The cultural elements of the Jomon Period, such as the use of pottery and polished stoneware and land settlement, are also comparable to the Neolithic Period in Eurasia.



Patterns made from rolling a piece of cord on the clay

	BC.13,000	BC.9,000	BC.5,000	BC.3,000	BC.2,000	BC.1,000	BC.300	AD.300	AD.600	AD.800	AD.1,200
Land	Jomon Period						Yayoi Period	Tumulus Period	Asuka Nara	Heian Period	Kamakura Period
Sea	Jomon Period						Zoku-Jomon culture		Satsumon culture		Ainu culture period
	Jomon Period						Okhotsk culture		Tohoku culture		
Water	Paleolithic Age	Mesolithic Age	Neolithic Age	Bronze Age		Iron Age		The Roman Empire			

## The Unique Characteristics of Jomon Culture

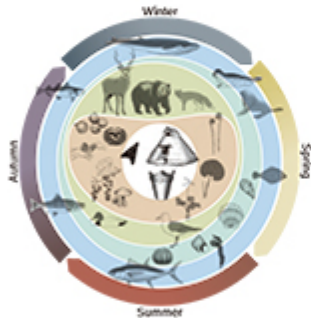
One of the biggest characteristics of Jomon culture is the fact that not only did it span across a long period of time, people were able to "settle on the land while living in harmony with nature for over 10,000 years."

In the Neolithic period of western Eurasia, settlement generally occurred with the beginning of agriculture and farming. While this usually signaled the beginning of deforestation in many cultures, the Jomon culture did not extensively change the natural environment and for a long period people led stable lives based on hunting, gathering and fishing. Over the 10,000 years that the Jomon culture flourished, there were several large-scale changes in climate as well as natural disasters such as volcano eruptions and earthquakes, but the Jomon people adapted to their environment and the Jomon culture's traditions were preserved.

Many cultural traditions unique to the Jomon culture were born out of this relationship with nature. For example, the weaving techniques used to make baskets from plant fiber and the lacquering techniques for harvesting, refining and processing sap from the sumac tree are all highly developed techniques that require a strong knowledge of the characteristics of each plant. In addition to practical tools, earthen figurines "dogu" were fashioned out of clay. These clay figurine are thought to have been used to pray for rebirth and the circle of life and suggest a high level of spirituality.



Deep bowl from the middle of Jomon



Jomon calendar (with additions made to Tatsuo Kobayashi's original calendar) showing the seasonal hunting-gathering cycle



Chestnuts



Deer



Sea urchin



Whale



Tuna and flounder

Food in the Jomon Period uncovered from the ruins

## Hokkaido's Jomon Culture

### The Oldest Pottery and Settlements

The oldest pottery found in Hokkaido was excavated from the Taisho No. 3 Site (Obihiro City) in the East and dates back to 12,000BC according to the results of carbon dating. This pottery has a round bottom with a breast-like protrusion, and is decorated not with a rope

pattern but with fingernail impressions. The fact that the characteristic shape and patterns resemble those of the pottery found in Honshu shows that there is a possibility that the cultural elements that spread in Hokkaido during the Incipient Jomon period were virtually the same as those of Honshu until they reached eastern Hokkaido. No dwelling remains have been found so far in Hokkaido from this stage in history, but it is well known that pit-dwellings had started to appear in various areas of the archipelago.

### The Formation of Villages and Shell Middens

Approximately 9,000 years ago, as the Younger Dryas cold event ended, villages consisting of pit-dwellings began to appear in various areas. Many pit-dwellings were excavated together from places such as the Yachiyo A Site in the East (Obihiro City) and Nakano B Site in the Southwest (Hakodate City), and it is common knowledge that permanent settlements already existed in this period.

After that, when the increase in temperature reached its peak between 5,000BC and



The oldest pots in Hokkaido, Taisho Site No. 3 (Obihiro City)



The remains of a village from 9,000 years ago, Nakano Site B (Hakodate City)



Layers of shells, Kitakogane Shell Midden (Date City)

4,000BC, fishing developed with the rise of the sea level and expansion of the sea area. Villages containing shell middens became more apparent, such as the Higashikushiro Shell Midden (Kushiro City) in the East, and Kitakogane Shell Midden (Date City) and Irie Shell Midden (Toyako Town) in the South. Furthermore, large-scale villages containing large pit-dwellings, such as the Ofune Site (Hakodate City) started to form around 5,500 years ago.

A shell midden is an area containing shells and animal bones that acts as a sort of time capsule reflecting the resources and natural environment of the time. Shell middens also functioned as graveyards, providing a valuable source of information about the Jomon society and spirituality.

### The Development of Local Culture

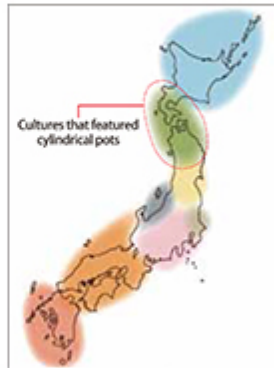
The Jomon Culture expanded around the Japanese archipelago from Hokkaido to Okinawa. However, it was not uniform and branched into seven or eight different cultural spheres, within a certain scope as the shape and decorations used in Jomon pottery.

A closer look at Hokkaido's geography reveals that the Northeast connects with the far northern lands through Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, and the Southwest faces Honshu over the Tsugaru Strait. From this, we can say that Hokkaido acted as the stage on which northern and southern cultures came together.

The differences in vegetation also affected how the Jomon culture developed. The southwest of Hokkaido, with its expanses of deciduous broad-leaved forests, developed around the Tohoku Region (in Honshu) which grew similar plants. The "cylindrical pottery culture" reached Hokkaido 6,000 years ago with the introduction of chestnut cultivation and expanded an enormous 500km north and south of the Tsugaru Strait. Compared to other local cultures that developed in the Jomon Period, this culture was stable and spread over a large area, and is gaining attention as an important example that shows the exchange of values in a particular cultural sphere in the prehistoric age.



The remains of a large pit dwelling, Ofune Site (Hakodate City)



The cultural sphere of the Jomon Period

### The Appearance of Enormous Monuments

Around 4,000 years ago, large-scale monuments started appearing in the southwest of Hokkaido. A stone circle with a circumference of 37m has also been found in the Washinoki Site (Mori Town) and is recognized as a valuable monument proving Hokkaido's connection to the culture of northern Tohoku. On the other hand, grave sites with large circular embankments began to appear around 3,500 years ago in central Hokkaido. The embankments were created by piling the dirt left over from digging out the circular burial yard, the largest one measuring 75m in circumference. These types of mass graves have been found across the Ishikari Depression and extended up to eastern Hokkaido (Shuen Burial Circles of Shari Town), but have not been observed in Honshu and are unique to Hokkaido. In the Kakinoshima Site (Hakodate City) in the south of Hokkaido, a U-shaped earthwork mound with a length of 160m and height of 2m was discovered.



Investigation of the Stone Circle, Washinoki Site (Mori Town)



Investigation of the Earthwork Burial Circle, Bibi Site No. 4 (Chitose City)

### Conveying Techniques and Culture

Living lives based on hunting, gathering and fishing, the Jomon people also actively sought out cultural exchange and trade beyond the boundaries of their own local culture. This came to its peak in the late Jomon period, where jade accessories, lacquerware and asphalt to be used as adhesive were introduced into Hokkaido from Honshu. On the other hand, there are examples of northern culture being introduced into the south, such as obsidian made in Hokkaido excavated from the Sannai-Maruyama Site (Aoyama City) in Honshu's north. As for Hokkaido's relationship with the Asian continent, a special type of arrowheads on blade was introduced from the north around 7,000 years ago and spread through Hokkaido's northeast. Some arrowheads have even been found in the southwest, and there are some examples of culture reflecting the same geographical conditions as the Asian continent being introduced into Hokkaido.



Jade ornaments,  
Kusu Site No. 4 (Chitose City)



Lacquered combs  
Karinba Site (Eniwa City)  
Important Cultural Property



Spouted pot coated with red lacquer  
Nodai Site No.1 (Yakumo Town)  
Tangible Cultural Property Designated  
by Hokkaido Prefecture



Tip of a harpoon covered  
with asphalt  
Funadomari Site  
(Rebun Town)  
Important Cultural Property



Lump of asphalt in a pot  
Toyosaki Site N (Hakodate City)



Stone tools from the microlithic culture,  
Yubetsu-ichikawa Site (Yubetsu Town)

### Relics that Convey the Jomon Spirituality

One of the most typical examples of a relic that represents the Jomon spirituality is the "dogu" or clay figurines. At first, the figurines had breasts and were created to represent a woman, but as the figurines later changed into the shape of a pregnant woman, they are thought to have been used to represent prayers for birth or rebirth. However, towards the end of the Jomon Period, figurines featuring beards, flat chests and other male elements came to represent both sexes. Many of the figurines found were purposefully broken. This "destruction," which symbolizes death, may have represented the Jomon philosophies about rebirth.

A clay tablet featuring the imprint of a child's footprint was also excavated from a 6,500-year-old grave. This kind of relic is unique to Hokkaido and is thought to feature the imprint of an infant who died at a young age. Stone clubs dating back 5,000 years have also been excavated. These relics were thought to have been made in the shape of male genitalia as a symbol of fertility. By examining these relics which give us a glimpse into Jomon festivals and ceremonies, we can feel their respect and admiration for life itself.



Top: Clay figure, Nishishimamatsu Site 5 (Eniwa City)  
Bottom: A plate-like figure Fugoppe Shell Midden (Yoichi Town)



Foot printed clay tablet and burial stone tools, Toyohara Site No. 4 (Hakodate City) Important Cultural Property



Stone sticks and pottery excavated from the Earthwork Burial Circles, Shuen Burial Circles (Shari Town)  
Tangible Cultural Property Designated by Hokkaido Prefecture

### Post-Jomon Hokkaido

While the Jomon culture was persevered for over 10,000 years even through environmental changes such as changes in climate and large-scale natural disasters, it saw its sudden demise around 2,500 years ago. This was due to the rice-farming that was introduced into northern Kyushu via the Korean peninsula and the Yangtze River basin in China. The Yayoi culture, which brought about the production of metal products and the cultivation of grains as key industries, spread rapidly through the Japanese archipelago.

After this occurred, the cultural sphere that had spread from the southwest of Hokkaido to the north of Tohoku and had been preserved for several thousand years since of the Jomon Period disappeared, but the traditions of Jomon culture stayed alive in a hunting-gathering culture in Hokkaido, known as the "Zoku-Jomon (Post-Jomon) culture". Between the fifth and seventh centuries, the equivalent to the Kofun Period in Honshu, the "Okhotsk culture," which specialized in fishing and the hunting of marine mammals, spread from Sakhalin down the east coast of Hokkaido to Okushiri Island in the south. Furthermore, when a centralized government was established south of Honshu in the seventh century, the "Saisamon culture," which incorporated the cultivation of millet and other grains was born in Hokkaido. The "Ainu culture" soon followed. Many sites have been discovered mainly in Hokkaido's northeast in which depressions from pit-dwellings from the post-Jomon era remain. These sites are preserved as part of an important cultural heritage that conveys the unique history of Hokkaido to the present day.

In this way, a unique history runs in Hokkaido different from the mainstream Japanese history we know today.



Depression from pit dwellings, Shibunotsuri Pit Dwelling Site (Yubetsu Town)



Artifacts from the Okhotsk Culture, Matsumori-kawa Hokugan Site (Rausu Town)  
Important Cultural Property, Photo: Masahiko Sato



Ainu clothing made from bark called Attus in the Ainu language  
(The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture)





## The distinctive character and value of Jomon culture seen from world prehistory

Simon Kaner  
(Director of the Centre for Japanese Studies University of East Anglia, UK)

The archaeology of the Jomon period in the Japanese archipelago is of tremendous significance for world prehistory. And yet, largely due to the language barrier, Jomon archaeology does not yet have the global impact it deserves. The bid to have a series of the most impressive Jomon sites in northern Tohoku and southern Hokkaido inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage will help rectify this situation.

Since the earliest reports of Jomon sites, dating back to the 19th century, the archaeology of the Jomon period has generated great international interest. In addition to giving rise to the first proper archaeological report of a Japanese site (both interdisciplinary and bilingual), Edward Sylvester Morse's investigations at the Omori shell middens in 1877 were widely reported, including in the *Illustrated London News* – the 19th century equivalent of CNN. Neil Gordon Munro paid great attention to Jomon sites in the first synthesis of Japanese archaeology, his monumental 'Prehistoric Japan', first published in 1908.

The archaeology boom of the later 20th century resulted in the production of what is undoubtedly the richest archaeological record for temperate fisher-hunter-gatherers anywhere in the world. And it is an extraordinarily diverse record, including completely excavated settlements, ceremonial sites, cemeteries, extraction sites, wetland sites with astonishing preservation of organic materials, caves and rock shelters – in addition to thousands of shell middens of the kind first reported by Morse.

The achievements of the Jomon peoples of the Japanese archipelago are unquestionably of immense significance. They created what are among the oldest known ceramic containers in the world, for example at Odai Yamamoto over 16,000 years ago, thousands of years before pottery was being used in the Near East or Europe, and long before they took up farming. Their early use of lacquer (for example from Kakinoshima B some 9000 years ago) demonstrates what a detailed understanding they had of the materials available to them – what archaeologists in the west sometimes call 'affordances'. They lived in some exceptionally long-term settlements, including Sannai Maruyama in Aomori, the largest Jomon site yet discovered, occupied for over 1500 years, longer than most cities in the contemporary world.

Jomon potters exhibited a remarkable sense of design. Even many of the earliest ceramic vessels are decorated with distinctive designs, including delicate linear relief patterns. At a recent exhibition of Jomon dogu at the British Museum in London, many visitors commented on how modern many of the dogu appeared, finding it hard to believe that they were really made thousands of years ago. This highly developed design sense was complemented by

technological mastery of ceramic techniques, so clearly exhibited in 'chuku chan', the hollow dogu found by a lady digging in her vegetable garden at Chobonaino in Hakodate.

Jomon people clearly had a very well developed sense of their place in the world, and their relationship with the other world. These relationships are in part expressed through their stone monuments, which include stone circles, standing stones and other stone arrangements. Neil Gordon Munro was intrigued by the stone circles of Oshoro, just outside the port town of Otaru in Hokkaido. Since then Japanese archaeologists have investigated many hundreds of Jomon stone monuments, including the wonderful stone circles of Oyu and Isedetoi in Akita, and Komakino in Aomori. Just as at the archetypal stone circle at Stonehenge in England, there are still many unanswered questions: What was their connection to the movement of the heavenly bodies? Were they related to death and burial, or to seasonal ceremonies, or both? These enigmatic sites are some of the most immediately accessible to modern visitors – as they remain as visible monuments in the landscape, carefully revealed through archaeological investigation. Archaeologists have gone to great lengths to ensure their survival in the face of development pressures – as shown at the stone circles of Washinoki in Mori-machi in Hokkaido, where the site has been preserved over a major road tunnel.

These sites and monuments are the enduring traces of Jomon populations who were fully modern human beings, with exactly the same intellectual, emotional and physical capacities as people today – just shaped in unfamiliar ways through their own cultural experiences. Although we cannot reconstruct how they spoke, they must have had a rich language, with which they doubtless created many concepts for describing how they saw the world around them. The study of Jomon archaeology offers a glimpse of other, different ways of inhabiting the landscapes of the Japanese archipelago – and perhaps this in part explains the fascination which still enraps the Jomon.

The bid to have a series of Jomon sites in northern Tohoku and southern Hokkaido inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage offers the opportunity to re-examine the significance of the Jomon for world prehistory, and indeed for the modern world. Many new interpretation facilities have been built and with their outstanding displays and explanations, usually in English as well as Japanese, they provide the top guidance for the modern visitor. With the approach of the Tokyo

Olympics and Paralympics in 2020, the eyes of the world will be on Japan as never before. This offers opportunities to present the wonders of the Jomon cultures (and their plurality needs to be emphasized to avoid any misunderstandings about the diversity represented by Jomon archaeology) in new ways, so that everyone can appreciate the outstanding universal value of the archaeological remains of the Jomon period, and their significance for human history. They are a match for any European cathedral, and are of comparable importance to the cave paintings of the Upper Palaeolithic in France.



## Steps toward Recognition as World Heritage

In today's society, in which preservation of the natural environment is an important challenge, we can learn much from the values and lessons taught by the Jomon culture, which flourished for over 10,000 years in harmony with nature without ever altering the surrounding environment in any major way.

For this reason, 4 prefectures of northern Japan and their municipalities are collaborating to have the Jomon ruins in the south of Hokkaido and north of Tohoku designated as UNESCO World Heritage. This area was home to large-scale villages from the start of human settlement to the end of the Jomon culture, and features stone circles and other monuments. It also shows that trade and a common culture continued to flourish over a long period of time despite the geographical boundaries of Tsugaru Strait, and represents the special value of the Jomon culture among the ruins left behind by other hunting-gathering societies throughout world history.



### Component parts in Hokkaido

#### •Kakinoshima Site (Hakodate City)

Ruins of a village dating back 3,000 to 8,000 years. A U-shaped earthwork mound measuring 190m in length on which ceremonies about disposal of tools, such as pottery and stoneware, were performed.

#### •Ofune Site (Hakodate City)

Ruins of a village dating back 4,500 to 5,000 years. Features the remains of a large-scale settlement such as the remains of a pit-dwelling over 2m deep. The remains of marine animals such as whales and fur seals, a major source of food, have been unearthed.

#### •Irie-Takasago Shell Midden (Irie) (Toyako Town)

Remains of an adult who suffered from polio as a child have been unearthed, proving the owner was cared for a long period until adulthood.

#### •Irie-Takasago Shell Midden (Takasago) (Toyako Town)

Ruins of a village featuring a 2,500 to 4,200-year-old shell midden. Located on a terrace close to the inner bay area, it gives us an insight into the environment and production activities of that time.

#### •Kitakogane Shell Midden (Date City)

Ruins of a village dating back to 2,500BC featuring a shell midden from 5,500 to 6,000 years ago. While giving us insight into the Jomon livelihood which was based on fishing, and a waterhole had been used as ceremonial place where stoneware was disposed.

#### •Kiusu Earthwork Burial Circle (Chitose City)

The remains of mass grave surrounded by an enormous embankment dating back to 1,300BC. The embankment was created using the dirt from the sunken inner burial yards and measures 75m in circumference. There are several graves located in the pit.

#### •Washinoki Site (Mori Town) \*related site

The ruins of a 4,000-year-old monument/grave. With a diameter of 37m, it is Hokkaido's largest stone circle and was discovered during the construction of a highway. A tunnel was dug for the highway to preserve the ruins. It is not included in the world heritage candidate sites, but is a related property.

## Heritage Assets of the Jomon ruins in Hokkaido and the north of Tohoku



Information provided by the Eniwa Board of Education, Obihiro Board of Education, Date Board of Education, Chitose Board of Education, Toyako Board of Education, Hakodate Board of Education, Mori Board of Education, Yakumo Board of Education, Yubetsu Board of Education, Rausu Board of Education, Rebun Board of Education, The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture, Hokkaido Archaeological Operations Center/Анаэкалар Вассиэһэһэ