Change of Colony in the Upper Reaches of the Abukuma River from the Middle to the Late Jomon Period: From the Excavation Survey of the Shibahara A Site and the Koshitawa Site in Miharumachi, Fukushima Prefecture

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The central facilities of a colony in the last years of the middle Jomon period were house-pits having multiple hearths. The other facilities which were found are only water place constructions and earthenware coffin tombs. The landscape had fewer variations. At the beginning of the late period, house-pits of four main pillars having stone enclosure hearths were constructed and outdoor earthenware coffin tombs increased. Dug-standing pillar buildings were also accepted. Subsequently, in the first half of the late period, dug-standing buildings increased, and mirror-handled shaped dwellings paved with stones and tombs with arranged stones were also introduced. Furthermore, in the second half of the late period, at the new stage of Shibahara A site, it changed to a colony having flat land type dwellings paved with stones, open fields, stone columns, groups of tombs with arranged stones and soil burning surfaces.

It was said that multiple hearths were widely distributed in the Tohoku region, but as far the Uehara type is concerned, it was a hearth specific to the area from the upper reaches of the Abukuma River to the upper reaches of the Mogami River and the reaches of the Aka River. Four-pillar house pits having stone enclosure hearths were distributed only in the upper reaches of the Abukuma River. Concerning dwellings paved with stones, flat land type dwellings paved with stones having enlarged mirror handles were also distributed mainly in the upper reaches of the Abukuma River. Earthenwares decorated with aggregated incised-lines having local characteristics were made. The upper reaches of the Abukuma River were the passage connecting the coastal area of Sendai Bay and the Kanto Plain, and they created a unique lifestyle different from that in the northern and southern areas at this time.

Key words: Jomon colony, multiple hearths, dwelling paved with stones, Shibahara A Site, Koshitawa site