Radiocarbon Dates of the Charred Plant Remains Excavated from the Oujiyama Site, and Comparison with Dates of the Incipient Jomon Pottery on the Southern Kyushu, Japan

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This paper presents a chronological study of the charred plant remains of the Incipient Jomon period excavated at the Oujiyama site in Miyazaki Prefecture and the charred pottery adhesions from the Incipient Jomon period to the beginning of the Initial Jomon period excavated at the Nishitaragasako and Uwatoko Fortress sites in Kagoshima Prefecture. The former are analyzed by radiocarbon dating, while the latter are examined not only through radiocarbon dating but also through stable carbon/nitrogen isotope analysis to identify what was cooked in the pottery. The results confirmed that the charred plant remains of *Quercus* and bulb excavated at the Oujiyama site are dated to the Incipient Jomon period. This is important evidence to indicate that acorns of *Quercus* and bulbs of *Allium* (Liliaceae) were used as food in Southern Kyūshū in the Incipient Jomon period. Meanwhile, the mumon pottery (plain pottery) excavated at the Nishitaragasako site is assumed to immediately postdate ryūtaimon pottery (linear-relief pottery) and to be contemporary with the mumon pottery excavated at the Kenshō Castle site in Kagoshima Prefecture although their dates cannot be identified precisely because the results of stable carbon/nitrogen analyses suggest that the pottery adhesions may include seafood. It is, however, worth noting that the mumon pottery is chronologically placed right after ryūtaimon pottery in the Incipient Jomon period and before Iwamoto-type pottery in the beginning of the Initial Jomon period. The dates of Iwamoto-type pottery excavated at the Uwatoko Fortress site match those of pottery dated to the beginning of the Initial Jomon period. It will be important to reveal people’s livelihood in the ryūtaimon period and the actual transition process from the demise of ryūtaimon pottery to the emergence of kaigaramon-type pottery (shell-impressed pottery) by accumulating data of radiocarbon dating results of plant remains, pottery and relevant structural remains and the stable isotope analyses of charred pottery deposits.

Key words: Incipient Jomon period, charred plant remains, charred pottery adhesions, radiocarbon dating, stable isotope analysis