
Aspects of the Jomon Grave System Based on the Burial Attributes of Human Bones and the Results of mtDNA and Dating Analysis at Ebishima Shell Mound, Iwate Pref.

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The Ebishima Shell Mound is located in Kaitori, Hanaizumi-cho, Ichinoseki City, Iwate Prefecture. Since 1956, the Ebishima shell mound has been surveyed several times, and 57 human bones were unearthed in the primary and secondary surveys, and 32 human bones in the tertiary survey. Many of these human bones are considered to be examples of the OoHora C2-type to A-type stage, and are understood to be a continuous burial area formed from the middle to late in latest period of Jomon. Among these human bones, burial attributes such as those with close burial sites, i.e., those that are considered to be included in the same burial subgroup, those that have the same head orientation, and those that have the same tooth extraction type have been examined. Regarding the burial attributes, which have been important in examining the social structure of the Jomon period, we picked up cases that had this in common, and examined the mtDNA of those human bones.

As a result, it was found that the mtDNA haplotypes did not match in the cases considered for this study. Therefore, at least the 6 specimens for which mtDNA analysis was possible, which are the subject of this study, do not have a maternal genealogical relationship. One of the reasons for this is the age difference of each human bone. On the other hand, when it comes to the positional relationship between human bones with similar calibrated ages, it is difficult to say that they are close to each other. What can we conclude from the burial attributes, ages, and mtDNA analysis results of the human bones in the Ebishima shell mound? One possibility is that the burial pods lasted for hundreds of years, much longer than previously thought. The second possibility is that the understanding that visually and spatially articulated burial subgroups are burial sites of known human groups that include blood relatives such as families and households is a mistake. In other words, the Jomon people did not pay much attention to the burial site when burying blood relatives.

Key words: Jomon period , Ebishima shell mound ,grave system , social structure , mtDNA