

World Cultural Heritage for Osaka

Humans and animals existing on the earth greatly vary.

Preserving valuable properties and bequeathing them to future generations by appreciating cultural and natural diversity is one of the important objectives of listing World Heritage sites.

Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun has survived for more than 1,500 years by overcoming numerous threats while living together with the local communities, and the kofun tombs have been handed down to us today as heritage.

In order to pass on these valuable properties further to future generations as heritage of humanity, we have been aiming to have Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun inscribed on the World Heritage List.



Present view of Nakatsuhime-no-mikoto-ryo Kofun and Mitsuzuka Kofun



“Outstanding Universal Value” of Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun

Representative example of keyhole-shaped kofun

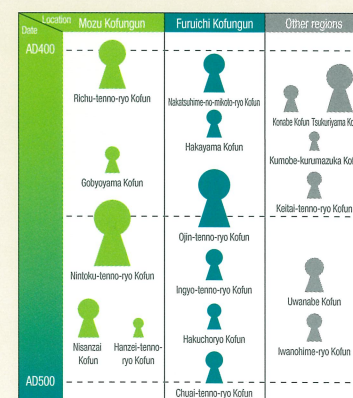
In the Kofun Period, a number of keyhole-shaped kofun were constructed in the Japanese archipelago. The diagram on the right shows that giant keyhole-shaped kofun were concentrated especially in the Mozu and Furuichi areas in this period, compared with other regions. It is no exaggeration to say that these tombs were built in a large-scale national project, into which advanced construction technology and a huge amount of labor were invested.

The period when such gigantic keyhole-shaped kofun, considered as tombs of great kings, were constructed in Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun overlaps with the period of the “Five Kings of Wa,” who appeared in old Chinese history books mainly written in the 5th century. Did the “Five Kings of Wa” construct these monumental burial mounds with the hope of stabilizing the nation politically and involving itself in the East Asian international society?

Distinctive and diverse components

Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun is considered to be the tomb group where tombs for the ruling elites, including great kings and their relatives and vassals, were concentrated. The tomb group, located in Osaka Prefecture, comprises a variety of sizes and types of burial mounds, such as immense keyhole-shaped kofun unique to the Japanese archipelago to small round and square kofun. There are no examples of kofun groups with such a great variety of mounds concentrated in such a restricted area other than Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun.

It is said that differences in the scale and form of mounds as well as the structure of burial facilities depend on the social status and family background of the deceased, representing the socio-political hierarchy of the time. Such a feature cannot be seen anywhere else in the world.



Giant kofun constructed around the 5th century A.D.

To preserve and pass on the heritage sites to future generations

For everlasting beautiful kofun

In the Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun area, local residents are engaged in voluntary activities to clean up kofun tombs and their surroundings. These activities show the wishes of the local communities to keep the kofun, their familiar and important sites, in a good condition, in order to hand them down to future generations.

Kofun are surely urban oases. We would like to take good care of them for our children and grandchildren!



Cleaning-up activity by Nintoku-ryo wo mamori-tai

Ms. Nakaya, Supporter Group for the World Heritage Inscription of Mozu-Furuichi Kofungun

What we learn and hand down through contact with kofun

People in the past lived in harmony with kofun tombs for a long time by, for example, using mounds as community forests and fields and irrigating rice paddies from moats. Through various experiences related to kofun, which have been co-existing with the local communities since ancient times, children are able to learn their value.



Furuichi Kofungun Exploration Project

Mr. Hosomi, Field Museum Talk *Shiyu-kai*

We arrange kofun tours to attract more people and make them feel like living in a city where the kofun group is located!

