

Mozu Kofungun

Might of the great kings toward East Asia



Mozu Kofungun is a mounded tomb group spreading over a radius of 2 km in Sakai City. In the Kofun Period, more than 100 tombs were created in this area. Half of them, however, were lost due to urbanization and other reasons, and currently 44 tombs, which were built from the late 4th century to the late 5th century, remain. These include giant keyhole-shaped kofun, notably Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun, one of the world's largest burial mounds. They are valuable properties that demonstrate the Japanese kofun culture. In addition, many burial goods, including haniwa (earthenware figures) in various shapes, gilt bronze accessories, iron horse trappings and weapons, have been excavated from Mozu Kofungun. These excavated artifacts show the influence of the Korean peninsula and China, proving that Japan had active exchanges with other East Asian countries at that time.

World's largest symbol of power Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun



With a mound 486 m in length, this is the world's largest keyhole-shaped kofun. Square projections are attached to both sides of the constricted part of the keyhole mound, and the mound is surrounded by a triple moat. It was built in the middle of the 5th century, and there are more than 10 satellite or subsidiary tombs surrounding it.

In the Meiji Period, a stone chamber with a stone coffin, a helmet and breastplate and other burial goods was discovered and sketches drawn at that time still remain.

Symbol of cultural property protection Itasuke Kofun

Itasuke Kofun is a keyhole-shaped kofun with a mound 146 m in length, located in the southeast of Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun. There were several tombs considered as its satellites. It is dated to the early 5th century.

This tomb was threatened by urban development in 1955; however, it came to be preserved mainly thanks to a civic opposition movement and designated as a national Historic Site in 1956. The helmet-shaped haniwa excavated here is now used as the symbol for the preservation of cultural properties in Sakai City.



Helmet-shaped haniwa excavated from Itasuke Kofun



Rich natural environment remaining in Daisen Park Guwashobo Kofun

Guwashobo Kofun is an independent round kofun having a mound with a diameter of 61 m, surrounded by a single moat.

In the excavation conducted in 2008, haniwa and earthenware were unearthed.

The forest on the mound is reserved for observing the natural vegetation.



Gilt bronze belt fittings excavated from Shichikanyama Kofun (Possessed by Kyoto University Museum)

Appearance of Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun in the Edo Period

Drawings in which kofun tombs were depicted as they appeared in the past are in existence. At Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun, on top of the round rear part is a big stone and the mound is surrounded by a double moat. Why don't you compare this with the appearance of the tomb today?

Drawing of Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun (early 18th century) (Possessed by Sakai City Central Library)



Furuichi Kofungun

Unbroken line of the great kings



Furuichi Kofungun is a mounded tomb group spreading over a radius of 2 km in Fujiidera and Habikino Cities in the southeastern part of Osaka Prefecture.

The group of huge mounded tombs, constructed from the late 4th century to the middle of the 6th century, comprised more than 120 tombs of various shapes and scales, ranging from the giant keyhole-shaped Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun with a mound more than 400 m to small square tombs with a side less than 10 m. Out of the remaining 45, no less than seven keyhole-shaped kofun over 200 m are included.

The notable burial goods here are iron weapons and armor. More than 200 swords were once excavated from a single mound. Other excavated burial goods include gorgeous accessories made of gold or silver; the gilt bronze horse trappings excavated from Konda-maruyama Kofun (National Treasure) is a representative example.

Tomb of the dominant great king. Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun



Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun, with a mound 425 m in length, is the second largest kofun after Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun. In terms of the volume of the mound, it is the largest in Japan. The mound has a three-tier structure and each side of the constricted part has a square projection. The mound is surrounded by a double moat and bank.

The inclined surfaces of the mound as well as both the inner and outer banks are decorated with *fukiishi* cladding stones and more than 20,000 cylindrical haniwa on the terraces. Based on the characteristics of the haniwa found, this tomb is dated to the early 5th century.

Visitors' guidebook in the Edo Period

There is an illustrated guidebook called "Kawachi-Meisho-Zue" drawn in the Edo Period. In the guidebook, Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun is introduced. A hexagonal hall on the mound that is dedicated to Emperor Ojin and rows of cherry blossom trees on the way to the hall are depicted.

Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun from Kawachi-Meisho-Zue



Shrine and park for recreation and relaxation for citizens Tsudō-shiroyama Kofun

Tsudō-shiroyama Kofun is a large keyhole-shaped kofun with a mound 210 m in length, located in the northernmost part of the Habikino Hill. It was the first to be constructed in the Furuichi area. In the Muromachi Period (middle 14th to late 16th century), the tomb was used as a small fortress "Koyama-jo". It is now cherished by citizens as a park where they can enjoy cherry and ripe blossoms in spring.

The mound was surrounded by a double moat and bank. In the excavation carried out in 1983, three waterfowl-shaped haniwa set in line were found.



Waterfowl-shaped haniwa excavated from Tsudō-shiroyama Kofun (Important Cultural Property)



Understanding construction technology for kofun

Mitsuzuka Kofun

Mitsuzuka Kofun is a group of three mounded tombs, lined up from the east to the west, to the south of Nakatsuhime-no-mikoto-ryo Kofun. From the east, the three mounds are named Yashimazuka Kofun, Nakayamazuka Kofun and Suketayama Kofun. They are all square kofun; Yashimazuka and Nakayamazuka with a side measuring about 50 m and Suketayama 36 m. They were constructed almost in the same period.

In the excavation of the moat between Yashimazuka Kofun and Nakayamazuka Kofun, two pieces of wooden *shura*, large and small, were discovered.



Shura (Important Cultural Property) Tools like sleds for carrying heavy goods