

WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group

Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan

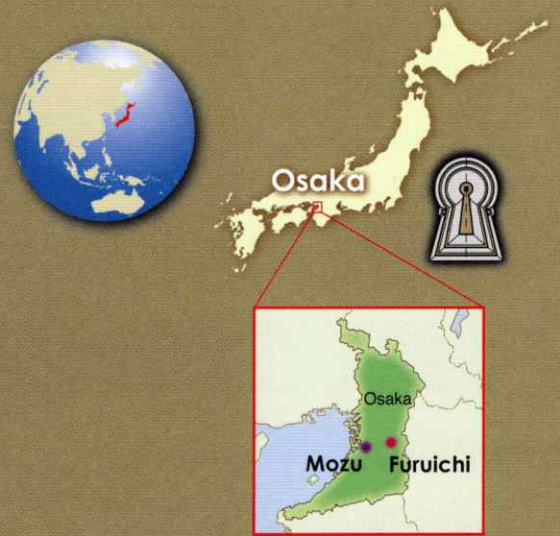


World Heritage Site of Osaka
Mozu-Furuichi
Kofun Group
Mounded Tombs
of Ancient Japan

What is the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group?

The World Heritage property “Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group” is a tomb group of the king’s clan that ruled the ancient Japanese archipelago. The tombs were constructed between the late 4th century and the late 5th century, which was the peak of the Kofun period. They are located in the southern part of the Osaka Plain which was one of the important political cultural centers and a maritime gateway to the Asian continent.

The kofun group includes many tombs in the shape of a keyhole, a feature unique in the world, with the largest measuring as long as 500 meters in mound length. They form a group, along with smaller tombs that are differentiated by their various sizes and shapes. In contrast to the type of burial mound commonly found in many parts of the world, which is an earth or piled-stone mound forming a simple covering over a coffin or a burial chamber, kofun are architectural achievements with geometrically elaborate designs created as a stage for funerary rituals, decorated with *haniwa* clay figures.



Mozu area



No.21 Nisanzai Kofun

Mozu area —Sakai City—

The Mozu tombs are distributed in an area of a two-kilometer radius in Sakai City, with 23 kofun in 21 sites as components of the World Heritage property. They include giant keyhole-shaped tombs such as the largest burial mound in Japan Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun, which is also one of the largest in the world, and the third largest Richu-tenno-ryo Kofun.

Outstanding Universal Value of the Mozu-Furuichi

Criterion (iii)

While 160,000 kofun are found throughout Japan, the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group represent and provide exceptional testimony to the culture of the Kofun period of Japan's ancient history. The 45 components demonstrate the period's socio-political structures, social class differences and highly sophisticated funerary system.





Three attributes of Japan's unique and characteristic kofun

Attribute a)

A wide range of types of mounded tombs grouped together

Densely concentrated in two areas, the mounded tombs of the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group show a wide variation of shape and size, from the largest keyhole-shaped kofun measuring almost 500 meters long to others as small as 20 meters. They most clearly demonstrate the distinct feature of the kofun built in the Japanese archipelago: mounded tombs differing in shape and size were built in the same region during the same time period.

Mozu area

-  Keyhole shape
-  Scallop shape
-  Round
-  Square

* Gray-colored kofun is not component parts.

- 1 Hanzei-tenno-ryo Kofun
- 2 Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun(2-1)
- Chayama Kofun(2-2)
- Daianjiyama Kofun(2-3)
- 3 Nagayama Kofun
- 4 Genemonyama Kofun
- 5 Tsukamawari Kofun
- 6 Osamezuka Kofun
- 7 Magodayuyama Kofun
- 8 Tatsusayama Kofun
- 9 Dogameyama Kofun
- 10 Komoyamazuka Kofun
- 11 Maruhoyama Kofun
- 12 Nagatsuka Kofun
- 13 Hatazuka Kofun
- 14 Zenizuka Kofun
- 15 Richu-tenno-ryo Kofun
- 16 Terayama-minamiyama Kofun
- 17 Shichikannon Kofun
- 18 Itasuke Kofun
- 19 Zenemonyama Kofun
- 20 Gobyoyama Kofun
- 21 Nisanzai Kofun

Furuichi area

- 22 Tsudo-shiroyama Kofun
- 23 Chuai-tenno-ryo Kofun
- 24 Hachizuka Kofun
- 25 Ingyo-tenno-ryo Kofun
- 26 Nakatsuhime-no-ryo Kofun
- 27 Nabezuka Kofun
- 28 Suketayama Kofun
- 29 Nakayamazuka Kofun
- 30 Yashimazuka Kofun
- 31 Komuroyama Kofun
- 32 Otorizuka Kofun
- 33 Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun
- Konda-maruyama Kofun
- Futatsuzuka Kofun



Kofun Group

Criterion (iv)

The Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group demonstrates an outstanding type of ancient East Asian burial mound construction. The role of the kofun in the establishment of social hierarchies within this particular and significant historical period, as well as the tangible attributes such as the clay sculptures, moats and geometric terraced mounds reinforced by stone, are outstanding.

Attribute b)

Four standardized plan types

The mounded tombs of the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group come in four plan types: keyhole shape, scallop shape, round and square. They are the standardized kofun shapes, which served as models for local kofun constructed across the archipelago. In other words, the kofun group played the leading role in developing the design and construction technologies required to build them.



Keyhole-shaped kofun

Location of the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group

Gateway for interaction with other powers of East Asia

Against the backdrop of a divided Chinese court, East Asia witnessed the growth of the Goguryeo, Baekje, Silla and Gaya kingdoms on the Korean peninsula and Wa in the Japanese archipelago during the period corresponding to Japan's Kofun period. It was a time of turbulence for the region, with various kingly powers engaged in repeated conflicts and coalition-forming.

The Osaka Plain, on which the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group is located, served as a gateway for interaction with the powers of the Korean peninsula and China, and was a leading center of politics and culture in ancient Japan.



Attribute

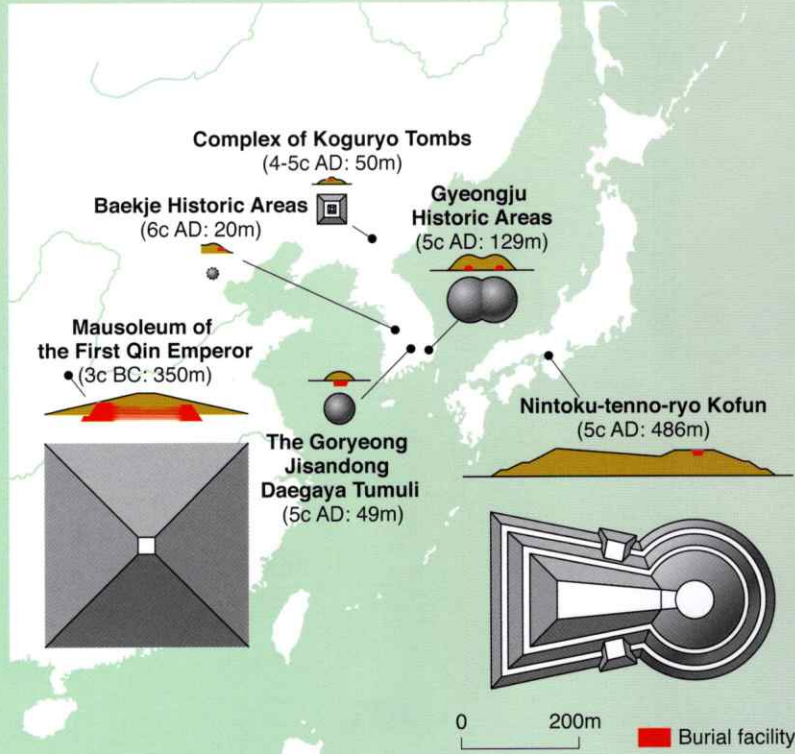
Evidence of el

A burial facility wa
were placed along
glorious platform
clearly demonstra



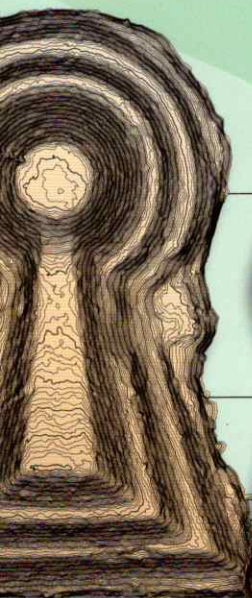
Three-dimensional earthen structure
Matsuhime-no-mikoto-ryo Kofun, airborne LIDAR survey-based

Matsuhime-no-mikoto-ryo Kofun (No. 26)



Major shapes of burial mounds in East Asia

Round and square-shaped mounds are common in East Asia; in contrast, the mounded tombs of the Japanese archipelago have distinctive shapes.



Gobyoyama Kofun (No. 20)



Nagatsuka Kofun (No. 12)



Hatazuka Kofun (No. 13)



Genemonyama Kofun (No. 4)



Suketayama Kofun (No. 28)



Scallop-shaped kofun

Round kofun

Square kofun



Unearthened large stone burial mound (No. 22 Tsudo-shiroyama)



A large amount of unearthened stone burial mounds (No. 39 Nonaka Kofun, Prefecture Department of Archaeology)

The time of kofun construction

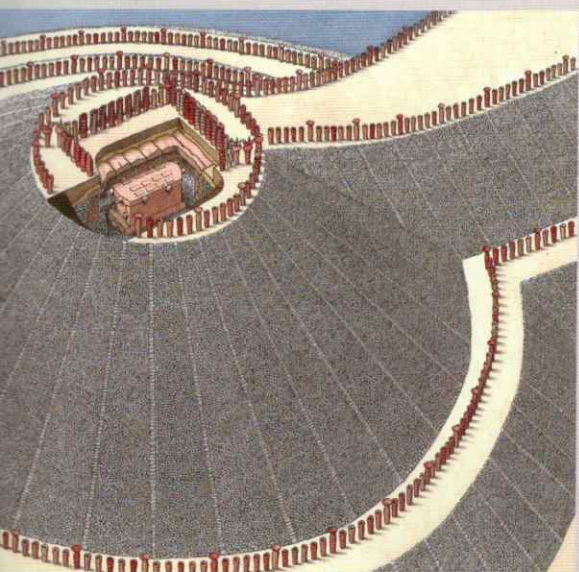
The formation and development of an ancient kingly power

Preceded by the Jomon period based on hunting and gathering, and the Yayoi period when wet-rice agriculture was introduced, the Kofun period witnessed the growth of various forces throughout the archipelago and the formation of political alliances between them. Dating to just before the full-scale introduction of a ruling system and new religion (Buddhism) from the Asian continent, it was a distinctive historical stage during which power was symbolized through mounded tombs.



c) Elaborate and distinctive funerary rituals

dug into the top of the mound of each kofun, and haniwa (earthenware funerary sculptures) and paving stones were placed on the mound surface. The fact that funerary rituals took place on the mound and that the mound was made to be a stage for these rituals were major features of the kofun of the Japanese archipelago. The tombs of the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group are typical of this.



Ornamented mound at the time of construction and the burial facility
The burial facility (a stone chamber and coffin) was built into the top of the mound after construction had completed, and the mound surface was decorated with numerous cylindrical haniwa and paving stones.



Cylindrical haniwa to decorate the mound
(No. 20 Gobyoyama Kofun)



Earthenware armor
Osaka University



An extraordinarily large cylindrical haniwa
(No. 22 Tsudo-shiroyama Kofun)



Waterfowl-shaped haniwa suggesting ancient people's views on life and death
(No. 22 Tsudo-shiroyama Kofun)



Metal ornament testifying to interaction within East Asia
(No. 44 Minegazuka Kofun)

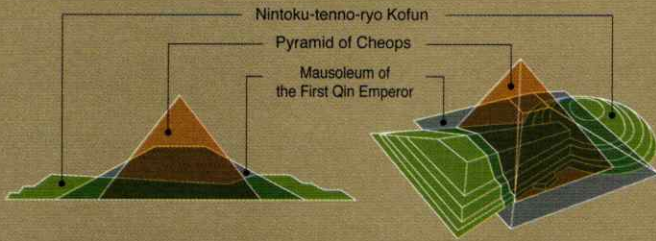


Helmet-shaped haniwa
(No. 18 Itasuke Kofun)



House-shaped haniwa considered to be the origin of shrine architecture
(No. 20 Gobyoyama Kofun, Photo: Imperial Household Agency)

What is *kofun*?



Kofun is a collective term for the ancient tombs with earthen mounds that were actively constructed in the Japanese archipelago from the middle of the 3rd century to the late 6th century CE. In those days, members of the high-ranking elite were buried in *kofun*.

A burial mound was constructed by heaping up the soil that was dug from the ground around the mound site. The sloping sides of the mound were covered with stones, and the excavated area formed a moat, descending to a level lower than any other part of the tomb.

	Nintoku-tenno-ryo Kofun	Pyramid of Cheops	Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor
Length	486m	230m	350m
Height	35.8m	146m	76m
volume	1.4 million m ³	2.6 million m ³	3 million m ³

Kofun show a variety of shapes: keyhole-shaped mounds; scallop shell-shaped mounds; round domed mounds; and square mounds. Their size also varies, ranging from small tombs of around 10 meters to huge tombs of more than 400 meters.

The period in which most of these mounded tombs were constructed is called the *Kofun* period, and it was at this time that the earliest form of political centralization—the Yamato Kingly Power—started to form in the Japanese archipelago.



No.33-1 Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun



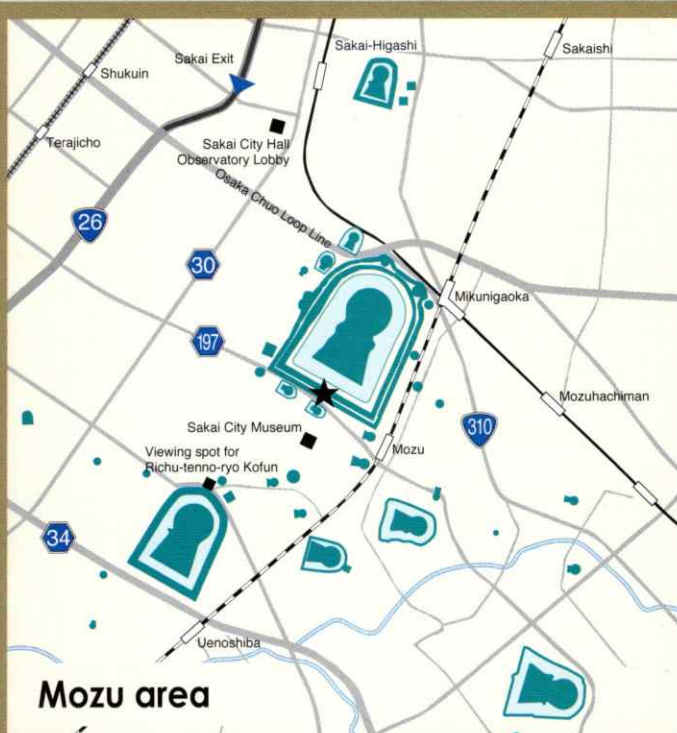
No.26 Nakatsuhime-no-mikoto-ryo Kofun



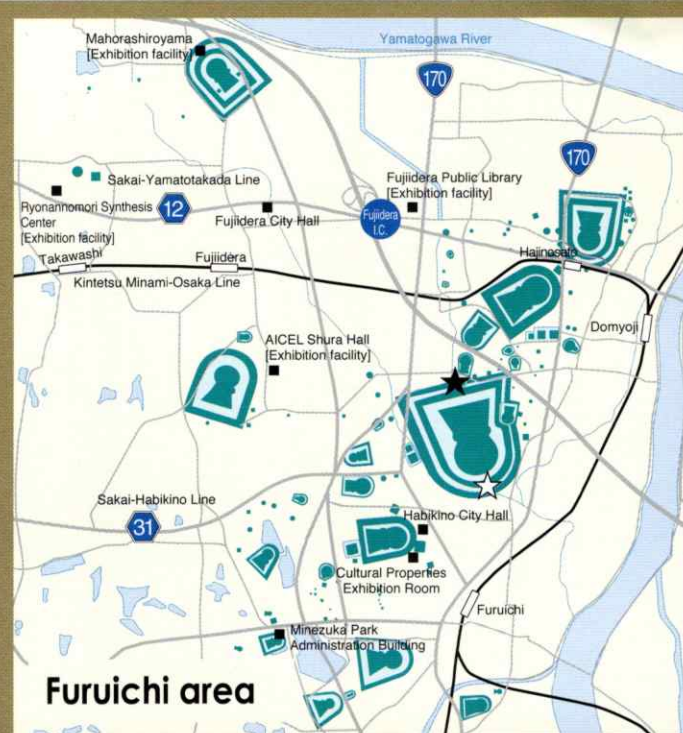
Furuichi area

Furuichi area —Habikino City and Fujiidera City—

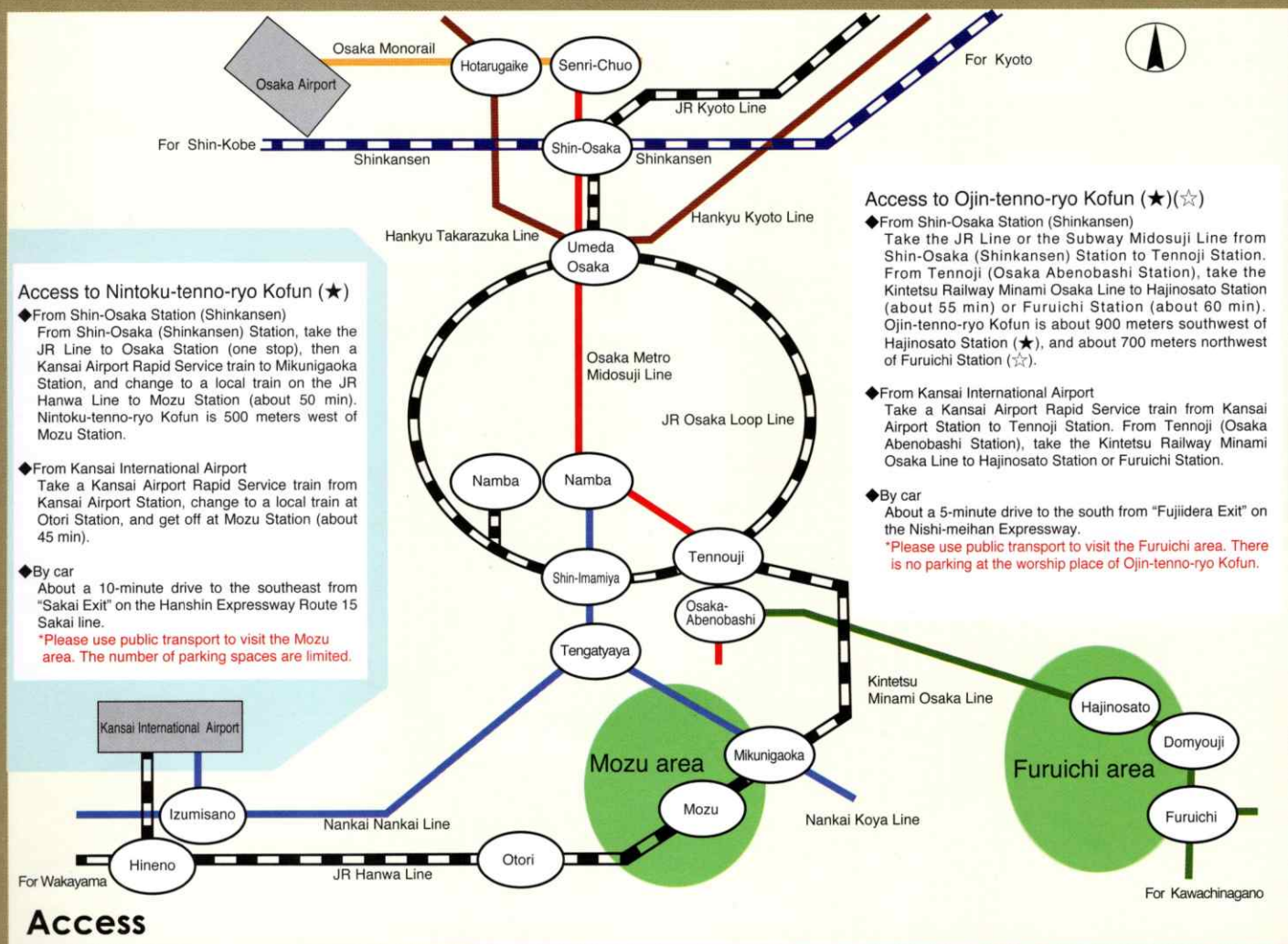
The Furuichi tombs are distributed in an area with a radius of two kilometers, stretching over the cities of Habikino and Fujiidera. The World Heritage components are 26 *kofun* in 24 sites, including the gigantic keyhole-shaped Ojin-tenno-ryo Kofun (second largest in Japan), with a mound length of over 400 meters.



Mozu area

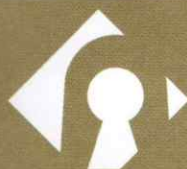


Furuichi area



All visitors to kofun are kindly requested to keep in mind the following visitation manners:

- Take all rubbish home with you.
 - Follow traffic rules when touring kofun sites.
 - Keep good manners when touring kofun sites to avoid disturbing local residents and other visitors.
 - Please note that while all kofun can be viewed from the outside, entry is primarily not allowed.
 - Refrain from taking any animals to the worship places* (excluding guide dogs or service dogs).
 - Smoking is prohibited at the worship places.
- *Most large kofun, which generally include tenno-ryo Kofun in their name, have a place for worship in front of them.



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