

いせき ふくしきろ 宮畑遺跡の複式炉

Bilateral stone fire pits in the Miyahata Site

In villages from the middle period of the Miyahata Site, composite hearths called fukushiki-ro were used. A composite hearth, which is one of the larger-scale hearths in the country, consists of a hearth with a pot buried in the ground and another stone-lined hearth.



Composite hearths at the Miyahata Site



Composite hearths at the Miyahata Site

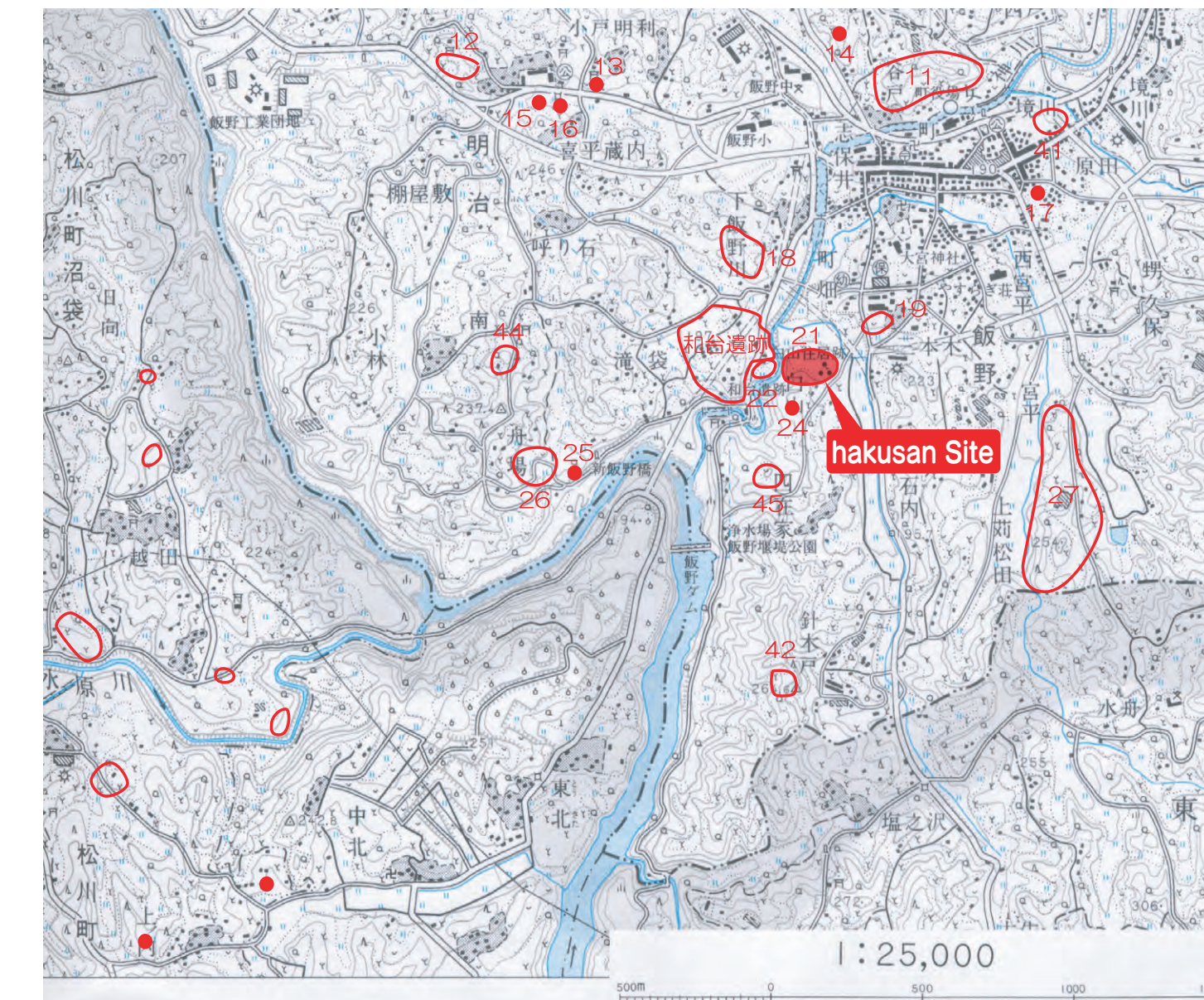


A magnified photo of composite hearths

Discovery and naming of composite hearths

Column

The name “Fukushiki-ro” was coined by Umemiya Shigeru, a member of the Fukushima Prefectural Board of Education, and Goto Shuichi, a professor of Meiji University, upon the excavation at the Iino-hakusan Site. They first appeared around the middle of the Mid-Jomon period and were widely used until the end of the Mid-Jomon period. They suddenly disappeared, however, in the Late Jomon period and fell into disuse.



Location of the Iino-hakusan Site



Composite hearths at the Iino-hakusan Site



Excavation work in 1957



Restored pit dwelling

How a composite hearth was used

The Jomon people used hearths for cooking, heating, and lighting. It is thought that composite hearths were used for cooking meat, bread, and cookies, and preserving ashes. However, it is not yet clear how composite hearths were actually used, and they remain a mystery of the Jomon period.



Hearths in the Jomon period

There are various forms of Jomon-period hearths. In the early Middle Jomon period, hearths surrounded by stones with a pottery buried in the ground were generally used; around the late Middle Jomon period, composite hearths, and; in the Late Jomon period, hearths surrounded by stones.



A hearth surrounded by stones with a pottery buried in the ground (Middle period, Tsukizaki Site)



Composite hearths (Middle period, Tsukizaki Site)



A hearth surrounded by stones (Late period, Komine Site)