

Hooks and Spirits

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Daggers and their handles made from antlers and tree branches during the Jōmon and Yayoi Periods have been found from Tōhoku to Kyūshū regions. In general, these are called “waist ornaments” (*koshikazari*) and they had a hook-shaped projection.

These daggers are often found beside the waist of remains of men with a specific type—type 4I which is extracted the upper two canine teeth and the lower four incisors in western Japan during the Latest Jōmon Period. Whereas the daggers were seldom found beside bodies with type 2C tooth extraction—an extraction of all the upper and lower canine teeth.

Bodies with type 4I tooth extraction and type 2C tooth extraction are usually excavated from cemetery remains in a ratio of one to one. One cemetery consists of several groups and the bodies with type 4I tooth extraction occupy central positions in each group. Thus an inference is possible that the bodies with type 4I tooth extraction were the original members of the group, whereas those with type 2C had married in from other groups. Therefore, an analysis of the ratio of men and women in both types of tooth extraction clarify the rules of residence after marriage.

According to results of research, the residence rules differed in different regions and periods. These artifacts were popular in the region and period that observed bilocal residence. In the groups that observed bilocal residence, as men and women married in, there were both men and women who were original members and could succeed to properties and maintain rights, and other people who could not. If so, the original members could justify their rights by their genealogical and kin relationship with their ancestors. The hook-shaped projection of the relics must have had a symbolic function to keep spirits closer to the bodies, and ornaments that only original members could wear must have had a function to connect the members with the ancestors of the group. The fact that mostly men wore the artifact shows that the Jōmon and Yayoi Periods must have been a time when matrilocal residence changed to patrilocal residence and that this was a time when men's rights became predominant.