

## **Culture and Science of the Acorn VI**

### **–Culture and Science of the Acorn in Japan after the Jomon Period 2 –**

Toshio Mitsunaga

Professor Emeritus of Kinki University

101-3, Kashiwabe-cho, Shimogamo, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-0815, Japan

#### **Summary**

Acorns were an important foodstuff from the Jomon period to the modern age in the Islands of Japan, especially for people of mountain villages, as a staple food. Also, the culture and science of acorns born in the Jomon period was followed in other places from Hokkaido to the Kyushu areas. But it had different features in each place in Japan. One of the reasons is that the Island of Japan extends a long way from north to south, has various natural conditions, and has different distributions of the trees in the family Fagaceae. That is, the deciduous trees in the family Fagaceae such as *Quercus serrata* and *Q. crispula* are widespread in Tyubu, Tohoku and Hokkaido areas, and the evergreen trees such as *Quercus gilva* and *Castanopsis cuspidata* var *sieboldii* form the forests in the west areas near Kanto and Toukai. The culture and science of acorns still lingers throughout Japan today, and further, acorns are now being reevaluated as a new foodstuff in areas such as Tottori prefecture.