Gold Deposits

Nishimikawa Placer Gold Deposits

This site was discovered in the mid 12th century and has been the largest gold mine in Japan. It was the first mine to be discovered, so there are two historical mining sites, and an ancient stone wall where ore was removed from the surface of the earth. A "cross mining", when miners bored into the earth to follow the vein, was also performed, where ore was removed from underground. In addition, many remains of stone walls were identified as a local representative of ancient gold mining technology. Although the mines and waterways still survive scattered over a wide area, the history of production of gold and silver in Sado goes back to the ancient times. In the Konjaku-monogatari-shu (Tales of Times Now and Past) compiled in the 12th century, it is clear that gold panning was taking place at Nishimikawa Placer Gold Deposits. At Nishimikawa Placer Gold Deposits, long waterways connecting the canals and dams were made, and were made to store water in order to wash down any excess dirt. Remains of Onagashi, a process known as "run off", were found along the waterways. In addition, many remains of stone walls were identified as a local representative of ancient gold mining technology. Though documents and pictures from the 11th to 13th century refer to the area, it was discovered and therefore it retains a mysterious place in Japan. It is said that the mine is filled with "tunnel mining", and "chase mining", where miners followed the veins when digging; and "tunnel mining", where ores were removed from underground. In addition, many remains of stone walls were identified as a local representative of ancient gold mining technology.

Tsurushi Silver Mine

This mine was discovered and therefore it retains a mysterious place in Japan. It is said that the mine is filled with "tunnel mining", and "chase mining", where miners followed the veins when digging; and "tunnel mining", where ores were removed from underground. In addition, many remains of stone walls were identified as a local representative of ancient gold mining technology.

Aikawa Gold and Silver Mine

In the Meiji era, Aikawa Gold and Silver Mine merged into "Sado Mine," with the federal government running operations starting in 1869 before selling the property to the Mitsubishi Corporation in 1896. During this period, both Western engineers and Japanese engineers who had studied abroad were invited by the government and Japanese engineers who had studied abroad came to Sado and introduced advanced technology from the West such as excavation of vertical shafts to connect horizontal tunnels and mechanization for transporting ores. These technologies greatly increased the amount of gold and silver produced, and Sado Mine was reborn as a leader in modernized Japanese mines.