

## Conversion of Yayoi Bronze Ware Rituals in Kinki Region

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Shortly after the emergence of bronze wares in Japan, there had been differences in how they were handled in Kyushu and areas east of Kyushu. In Kyushu, wearing bronze wares on individual's body increased the dignity of the owner, but in areas east of Kyushu, by holding them high away from the body, and thus functioned as ritual wares shared by community. I investigated the role of bronze bells in rituals, that were the main bronze ritual ware in Kinki region, from the clay imitations of bronze bell excavated from the Karakokagi site. As results, it became clear that in Middle Yayoi period, rituals were performed in which large buildings and bronze bells were inseparably linked even in settlements, based on a worldview in which humans sought to overcome the natural world, but in Late Yayoi period, bronze bells production was carried out within the settlement, but rituals using bronze bells were no longer performed. Furthermore, through the exhaustive examination of clay imitations of the bronze bell and small bronze bells, I found that rituals using bronze bells had been changed significantly in Late Yayoi period, with differences in time and region. Conversion in rituals is thought to have been linked to changes in the bronze ware production system, the shrinking of the bronze ritual wares distribution area, and the flourishing spread of small bronze wares. I also pointed out that one of the factors that prompted those changes was the relationship between tools, such as the use of iron tools in bronze ware production.

Key word: Bronze ritual ware, Kinki region, Bronze bell, Clay imitation of the bronze bell, Small bronze bell