Memorandum on the Distribution of the Double Grave System

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The double grave system had a dense distribution in the Kinki District; it is only occasionally found in limited areas of eastern and western Japan. This paper was compiled as the first step in tackling the question; "What does this characteristic distribution mean?"

The author first puts in order previous research results in the form of a bibliography, on the basis of which he attempted to clarify the true situation regarding the distribution of the double grave system. He also takes this opportunity to present a previously-prepared chart of distribution regarding the double grave system. He also points out the following: that the Kinki District was the central area for the establishment and development of the double grave system; phenomena of transmission and expansion can be seen in the distribution area centering around the Kinki District, from its center to peripheral areas; this sphere of distribution can be understood as a fixed sphere that was historically formed through the sharing of a folk phenomenon, the double grave system.

Concerning the scattered distribution of the double grave in limited areas of eastern and western Japan, the author also deduces that this may have some relation with examples that share the term "double grave" in the Kinki District, and he points out the possibility of their transmission from the Kinki District.

Next, as a point to be noted in discussing the problem of the distribution of the double grave system, the author states that examples with different backgrounds leading to their establishment should not be confused; and he puts in order special cases that took a form similar to the double grave system due to interference by the administrative authorities through the Cemetery Act of the Meiji era. Specifically, he takes up the example of Fukuzawa, Sakuma Town, Iwata County, Shizuoka Prefecture, and examines historical documents that seem to support the oral evidence taken from elders in the survey held in Shōwa 48 (1973). He also reinvestigates the area in Shōwa 62 (1987), and verifies the shift from burial to cremation, and the increase in the erection of tombstones.