Company Graves on Mt. Kōya and Mt. Hiei

Nakamaki Hirochica

Some Japanese companies not only hold company funerals and memorial services for their deceased employees, they also have their own graves. These graves are called company graves or corporate graves, and many of them are constructed on Mt. Kōya or Mt. Hiei. This paper looks at 103 company graves on Mt. Kōya and 23 on Mt. Hiei, and aims mainly to provide basic data on them and to indicate future questions to be answered.

In the company's grave compound, are usually erected the graves of the founders and monuments for the repose of deceased employees' souls. In this paper, the author focuses mainly on the towers for the repose of deceased employees' souls, and attempts to trace their history and to analyze the names and forms they take. Furthermore, this paper also refers to the area where the companies or unions that constructed these monuments are located, which is mostly the Kansai District, together with their lines of business.

Since notes on the erection of the monuments are often inscribed, the author has classified the motives for their construction into seven headings, and analyzed them. These headings are: (1) Momentum behind construction, (2) Gratitude for the expansion of the company (or to the predecessors), (3) Prayer for the repose of the predecessors' souls, (4) Prayer for the expansion of the company, (5) Prayer for safety in business, (6) Gratitude toward clients, and (6) Praise to Mt. Kōya or Mt. Hiei.

Concerning memorial services for deceased employees connected with the memorial monuments set up by companies, the author takes up the examples of Kokuyo Co., Ltd. and Chiyoda Mutual Life Insurance Co., and attempts to make some comparison between them.