Village Society, Shrine and Temple Graveyards

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This paper seeks to re-examine the two concepts of the "toya system (appointment of head of a miyaza) village" and the "dual grave system" on the basis of surveys on folk customs in the village of Hayama in Tsuge-mura, Nara Prefecture. The concept of handling surveys proposed by scholarship is such that when, after a certain degree of effectiveness has been demonstrated, a new field of research is opened up, it is inevitable that conversely, the limitations of a survey come to be acknowledged. The concept of a "toya system village" advanced by Masao Gamo could not have been reasonably induced from a study of the running of the village of Hayama from the very beginning. There is also the concept of the toya system which is abstracted from the word toya used in folk studies with regard to miyaza rituals, and together with the za-kabu system is a concept that is useful today as a fundamental concept in research on miyaza. In the first stage of research, the concept of a dual grave system was related to the discovery of two types of graveyards where there is a burial graveyard and a gravestone graveyard wherein the two concepts of an avoidance of death and defilement and the separation of body and soul were found in a specific grave system. In the second stage, the viewpoint that was adopted was that the element of gravestones is relative in the history of the funeral grave system and that the single grave system and dual grave system are variants that were separated as a result of the way in which the element of gravestones was added to burial graveyards which had previously not had gravestones. And today, research must advance toward a new third stage. For this stage, tracking the historical process from the time of the first emergence of the erection of gravestones and the establishment of gravestone graveyards in specific local communities will prove indispensable. Here, the practice of erecting a gravestone is an extremely personal practice, and where as a result of the combination of the forces of attraction and forces of repulsion from graves (burial graveyards), temples (jido), and households (residences) that affected the siting of gravestones the diverse gravestone sites within local communities confronted the process inscribed by history and the concepts of the dual grave system and a single grave system become relative. Taking the above into consideration, some of the points raised by this research are outlined below. The first cases of the erection of a gravestone date back to 1544 with a five-tiered gravestone for ICHINOYOSONGYO, a priest of the Tendai Sect, a boat-shaped haiko gravestone with relief dedicated to a female Zen monk called SHUNYO erected in 1548, and a gravestone in
the style of a panel monument dedicated to Hayama Hyuga-no-kami Mitsumasa dating from 1566. From this period on to the beginning of the Early Modern period, the erection of gravestones continued without interruption. However, during this period between 1558 and 1570 there was a movement which saw the erection in significant numbers of Jizo relief monuments and monuments inscribed with the six characters that make up the name Nannya Amida Buddha by members of nembutsu associations and members of one koshinmachi association. In Hayama as well, depending on the graveyard there is a huge difference in time when gravestones were first erected. In the Shunmei-in graveyard which created a system contiguous to a dual grave system, this occurred unusually early in the second half of the 16th century, and in the Dosaka graveyard, where a similar system had been created, this took root from the middle of the 17th century. By contrast, in the Mushiroden graveyard of Jofuku-ji temple which created a single grave system, and in the gravestone graveyards of Jizo-in and Buppo-ji temples, which created a typical dual grave system, this occurred approximately half a century later in the early stages of the 18th century. Also, even if people were users of burial graveyards based on a system of communal use within an enclosed area, each household had the option of choosing whether to erect a gravestone or establish a gravestone graveyard, and this was one means of expressing awareness of one family's genealogy which was permitted within the local community.