Report on a Survey of Sei-gaku Graves Situated in Yamada-machi, Katori-gun

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A number of scholars have previously conducted research on the Sei-gaku beliefs that were developed by OHARA Yugaku in rural villages in the eastern part of the Shimousa region during Tenpo period (1830–1843). However, as a result of conducting an examination by means of a survey of Sei-gaku graves in the two locations of the Kimyodai quarter and the Kohinata quarter of Fuma district in Yamada village to determine in what way these beliefs are reflected in graveyards, a traditional custom, it would appear that there was no conscious attempt to fit in with the traditional village grave system. The same new system of burial was adopted in both quarters, which saw phenomena such as the construction of large-scale earthen mounds designed in an oblong shape, the adoption of tombstones in the Sei-gaku style, and the separate burial of men and women, things that until that time had not been seen in traditional graveyards. It is conceivable that in a different sense from the penetration of the practical beliefs of Sei-gaku among the village, there existed on one level something that prevented Sei-gaku from penetrating as far as the traditional custom of a grave system.