The Graves of OHARA Yugaku Disciples

KOMETANI Hiroshi

The agrarian leadership of OHARA Yugaku at the end of the Edo Period not only influenced agrarian technology and everyday life, but also had an impact on traditional customs. Signs of his influence are to be seen in the grave systems of disciples, even though the demise of Sei-gaku activities was accompanied by a huge shift as these graveyards located in a number of regions were gradually transformed into modern graveyards. This paper defines the grave systems of these Sei-gaku disciples as Sei-gaku graves, and its primary objective is to introduce the circumstances surrounding these graves and related materials to the greatest extent possible. An examination undertaken of the events leading to their formation has revealed points of difference between Sei-gaku graves and local grave systems, and it has also been possible to confirm that their distribution extends along with Sei-gaku activities to Shiga Prefecture. The goal of these disciples was to obtain graveyards solely for disciples that were independent from the traditional grave systems of the region. This deference with regard to graves became increasingly emphasized in the passing down of this objective to the second generation and third generation of leaders, as illustrated by the construction of increasingly robust earthen mounds and the adoption of standardized forms for gravestones so as to distinguish their graves from others.