

Comparative study on Ancient Tumuli in China and Japan

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Regarding the hierarchical system of ancient burials, the article proposes that the cores during the Western and Eastern Zhou periods include coffin and chamber, *ding* assemblage, and sacrificial system of chariots and horses – all these elements were deeply buried underground. The hierarchical system of Han burials could be divided into two parts: aboveground and underground. The core of aboveground part lies in tumulus; the height of tumulus strictly corresponds to occupant's hierarchy. The hierarchical significance reflecting on the underground part involves facilities and ceremonial suite, especially jade ceremonial suite. However, during the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the core of burial system shifted toward frugality by abolishing aboveground facilities and simplifying underground tomb facilities, coffin and chamber, and burial goods. Besides, the custom of jade ceremonial suite was completely extinguished. The fashion of frugality still had a considerable impact on later Dynasties. Nonetheless, the custom was gradually destroyed during the Sixteen-States period in the sense that the construction of aboveground facility was restored. By the Southern and Northern Dynasties, the burial hierarchical system was represented by the two parts again and became even more full-fledged.

In terms to ancient Chinese ideology of underworld, the author suggests that Ancient Chinese viewed the death as the termination of life in reality and a beginning of a new life again.

In view of the relationship between ancient tumuli in China and Japan, the article generally proposes the system of tumuli in the Yayoi period and key-hole shape tumuli- having one square end and one circular end-in the Kofun period was irrelevant to the burial system in China from the Warring States to the Southern and Northern Dynasties. But as social changes in Japan intimately linked to China and the Korean Peninsula, it is safe to say the burial system in the Yayoi period and the key-hole shape tombs was under the influence indirectly from these two regions.