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STUDY ON THE CAIRNS ON MT. IWASEO, NEAR TAKAMATSU
IN THE PROVINCE OF SANUKI

BY

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APPENDIX

Corpus of the Stone Sarcophagi with Engraved Head-Rests
Found in Ancient Sepulchres of Japan

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PREFACE

Here we issue Volume XII of our *Reports upon Archæological Research in the Department of Literature, Kyoto Imperial University*, which contains the results of our study on the cairns on Mt. Iwaseo, near Takamatsu City, in the Province of Sanuki, carried on since April, 1931 by members of our Archæological Institute, Mr. S. Umehara, Mr. S. Shimada, Mr. K. Arimitsu, and myself. All the results, however, have been arranged and systematized solely by Mr. Umehara in the present form now published.

Though the cairns on Mt. Iwaseo have already been visited and reports written by various scholars, notably Mr. K. Wakabayashi, Mr. S. Kasai, Mr. S. Yatsui, and Mr. A. Nagamachi, yet I believe that Mr. Umehara's most laborious work will give a comprehensive view of this kind of sepulchral monuments of ancient Japan with a clearer idea of their age, which, I hope, will prove an important contribution to archæology in Japan.

Our sincere acknowledgments are due to the authorities of Kagawa Prefecture, and also to Professor T. Terada, of the Takamatsu Higher Commercial School, Mr. T. Okada, of the Service of Antiquity of the Prefecture, and others for the kind helps offered us during our exploration. Nor must we forget to acknowledge our thanks to Mr. S. Yatsui, Mr. J. Uehara, Mr. S. Goto, and others for permission to utilize their photographs and other materials.

In connection with one of the most remarkable remains of the cairns, we publish here as appendix the *Corpus of the Stone Sarcophagi with Engraved Head-Rests*, which has also been compiled by Mr. Umehara.

KOSAKU HAMADA.

March, 1933.

STUDY ON THE CAIRNS ON MT. IWASEO, NEAR TAKAMATSU,
IN THE PROVINCE OF SANUKI

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STUDY ON THE CAIRNS ON MT. IWASEO, NEAR TAKAMATSU, IN THE PROVINCE OF SANUKI

RÉSUMÉ

INTRODUCTION

The cairns found on Mt. Iwaseo, in the suburbs of Takamatsu City, Sanuki Province (Kagawa Prefecture), early attracted the attention of some students, on account of their peculiar forms and modes of construction which distinguish them from the ancient sepulchres found in other parts of Japan. Already, several reports on these cairns are in publication, among whose writers may be mentioned the names of Mr. S. Kasai, Mr. A. Nagamachi, Mr. T. Okada, and others. However, any close scrutiny of the remains found in the cairns having hitherto been left unattempted, there is, at present, a diversity of opinion among specialists as to the very nature of these monuments, thus leaving much yet to be brought to light. Now, in the hope of filling up this gap and, peradventure, of contributing something to the progress of proto-historic archaeology in Japan, we have carried on researches since April, 1931. To begin with, we spent 10 days altogether in taking measures and observing other aspects of the principal cairns; next, we made a special study of the remains found in the Cairn "Nekotsuka". Also, with the kind help of Professor T. Terada, we conducted extensive researches in various directions. From the results of these researches, we are now in a position to form our own conclusion as to the nature of the cairns on Mt. Iwaseo, as set forth below:—

A PHYSIOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF MT. IWASEO

(Plates I—IV)

"Mt. Iwaseo" is a name given to a group of elevations with table-like flat

tops, rising to the south-west of Takamatsu City and averaging in height 200 metres above the sea-level. The mountain consists of three main parts, namely :— the central elevation, *Iwasco-Yama* Hill, which contains the *Suribachi-dani*, an eroded valley resembling a basin in shape; *Inari-Yama* Hill (also called *Shiun-Zan*), which occupies the eastern part of the mountain; and *Jôgwanji-Yama* Hill, which stretches out towards the south-west. The mountain, like the island of Yashima which lies to the east and the more adjacent islets of Megishima and Ogishima which lie in the sea just under the mountain, belongs to the type geologically known as “block-mountain”. It is surmounted by flat top-surfaces, presenting an almost even sky-line for the most part, and edges off sharp at the sides, presenting steep slopes. The fact that the whole mountain, except the saddles which connect the three hills and are about 100 metres long, is surrounded by precipitous sides that come down almost perpendicularly to the land-level, gives a very singular appearance to this group of elevations. The mountain, so we are informed, consists of blocks of granite, which again are covered with a layer of lava. As a matter of fact, we have observed not only that these batholithic rocks are exposed to view here and there, but also that the lava, which is known as “bronzite andesite” and occurs in the form of rocks, either cracked or broken through centuries of weathering and lying about piled one upon another, practically constitutes the top-layer of the whole mountain; so that at present hardly any soil is visible on the three hills and the saddles except only in regions between the *Suribachi-dani* and the north edge of the central hill, and also near the base of the mountain. This is another instance of the singular character of Mt. Iwaseo.

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITES

(Plate II)

It is easy to suppose that in ages remote Mt. Iwaseo was an island like Yashima, and had its base constantly washed by the sea-waves. In those days, the basin-like depression on the central hill must have been used for human habitation, for stone implements and pottery have been discovered there, and, also, bronze halberds belonging to the Aneolithic Age have been unearthed in the northern part of the mountain, objects that are strongly suggestive to us of

the mode of human life in those times. In later days, with the development of alluvial plains, this region was abandoned for temporary purposes of mortal habitation and was adopted as an eternal abode for the dead. The presence of so many cairns that interest us now, is thus accounted for.

Though the cairns are scattered nearly all over Mt. Iwaseo, the general tendency is that especially large-sized ones are located on the heights surrounding the Suribachi-dani and on the top of Inari-Yama, whilst smaller ones are found on the slanting surfaces and on the ridges. Moreover, the cairns, which are built of pieces of bronzite andesite, are found exclusively in regions where the aforesaid lava-rocks form the top-layer and the surface-soil is almost entirely absent. On the contrary, the basin-like depression, the foot of the mountain, Jôgwanji-Yama, and other places that are covered with soil, are profusely furnished with corridor-tombs. This distinguishing feature in the distribution of the cairns and the corridor-tombs is strongly suggestive of a close relationship between the kinds of erections and the geological conditions of the sites. The majority of these cairns, of which there are at least forty, are circular stone-structures 12 to 13 metres in diameter and 1 to 2 metres in height; but those found on the top of the central elevation, Iwaseo-Yama—namely, the Cairns “Nekotsuka”, “Iwafunetsuka”, “Himetsuka”, and “Kagamitsuka”—each possess a singular external appearance and grandeur of structure, and thus form the centre of the entire group of cairns, the aforesaid smaller ones occupying subordinate ranks. Considering this mode of distribution, our cairns may be said to have something in common with the burial-mounds of earth found in many parts of Japan. Below, we will study them on the spot, beginning with the Cairn “Nekotsuka”.

THE CAIRN “NEKOTSUKA”

(Plates V—XVII)

The site occupied by this structure is on the highest part of Iwaseo-Yama that looks down from the south-west into the basin-like depression below. It is famous for the discovery therein of rich remains at the excavation of May, 1910. Though the stone-piles are much deranged owing to this operation (Plate VIII, 1), still enough remains in fair preservation to convince us that it was originally a circular stone-mound with two quasi-square extensions radiating from it in opposite

directions—a combination of a circle with two squares—a very curious shape, indeed (Plate VII). The base, as measured from the extreme end of one square to that of another, being about 100 metres long, and the height of the circular part about 5.5 metres, this cairn is the largest in the whole group.

Though the interior of the cairn was very severely damaged by the excavation, there still remain intact two stone chambers in a corner of the circular part (Plate IX), which fact suggests the presence, in by-gone days, of other chambers in the centre of the circular mound. According to the people who participated in the excavation, a fairly spacious pit-type stone chamber was discovered in the middle, around which were arranged eight smaller stone chambers of the same type (Fig. 5); and it was this central chamber that contained the principal remains. These findings, now in the custody of the Imperial Household Museum of Tokyo, comprise 5 bronze mirrors (Plates X–XII), 17 short bronze daggers (Plates XIII and XIV), 8 bronze arrow-heads (ditto), 3 tube-shaped bronze objects (Plate XV), 1 jasper bracelet (Plate XII), pottery (Plate XVII), iron daggers, iron swords, iron axe-heads, iron arrow-heads, and various other objects. Among these remains, the short bronze daggers early attracted the notice of specialists, as they bear marks which indicate that handles were once attached to them; and, therefore, they may be regarded as a form of the bronze cutlery which is often so closely associated with the bronze halberds and daggers that are found principally in North Kyûshû and the vicinity and are considered relics of the Aneolithic Age in Japan. Also, the concatenated arcs and the inscription “ch’ing pai” in Chinese characters on one of the mirrors—quite characteristic of the relics of the Former *Han* Dynasty—are supposed by some to be suggestive of the age and nature of the very cairn itself. However, all the other mirrors are known to be of much later date; moreover, these and the majority of other remains of Nekotsuka are identical with the remains found in many other burial-mounds of earth excavated in various parts of Japan. We are inclined to believe, therefore, that these relics of different dates merely happened to be placed together within the same cairn, and regret our inability to readily agree with those specialists mentioned above.

THE CAIRN "HIMETSUKA"

(Plates XVIII—XX and XXXIX)

Situated about 550 metres to the east of Nekotsuka, this cairn also occupies a portion of the same ridge that surrounds the Suribachi-dani. The stone-piles are arranged in the form of a circular combined with a quasi-square which widens towards the west. The total length from the extreme end of the quasi-square to the outermost point on the circle, is about 43 metres; and the height of the circular mound is almost 4 metres (Plate XIX). A salient feature of this cairn is that, being in an excellent state of preservation, and well retaining its original form as when erected, the double-terrace arrangement of the stone-piles is clearly discernible (Fig. 11). When the circular mound, which forms the principal part of the cairn, was explored several years ago, the stone chamber situated inside it was demolished at the hands of the excavators. However, among the remains taken out of the chamber on that occasion, there was a bronze mirror. This mirror, now included in the collection of Mr. Jun-ichi Uehara, is said to have been discovered together with an iron sword and a pot of the Yayoi type. It is marked with a square frame design and the figures of the Four Sacred Animals of Cardinal Points, which clearly shows that it was made during the *Han* Dynasty (Plate XXXIX). Furnishing us, as it does, with such useful information, this fact will prove a great help to us in determining the nature of the cairn. Moreover, the inscriptions on the mirror are so obliterated, and there is such evidence of its having been broken and holes having been bored through it for the purpose of restoration, that there is ample reason to believe that it was a family mirror, and that in those remote days mirrors used to be handed down from generation to generation. It is also worthy of note that fragments of pottery of the Yayoi type are found here and there among the stone-piles, especially near the wall-like sides of the square part.

THE CAIRN "IWAFUNETSUKA"

(Plates XXI—XXV)

This cairn has long been much talked about chiefly on account of the stone sarcophagus found in the interior of its circular part. It is situated about 500 metres to the north of Himetsuka and on the same mountain-ridge. Consisting

also of a square fore-part and a circular rear-part, its total length is almost 60 metres (Plate XXI). The terraciform arrangement of the stone-piles is not so obvious as in the case of Himetsuka; but that it was on the same principle of construction is readily conceivable from the parts left intact here and there. Whilst there are found in the cairn many fragments of pottery of the Yayoi type (Fig. 15), what deserves our attention is the presence therein of pieces of tubular *haniwa*, such as are usually found in old burial-mounds of earth in Japan (Fig. 14).

The sarcophagus is of the **Waritake*-type, one of the earliest types of sarcophagi in Japan, and is characterized by a raised head-rest engraved on the stone near the head of the receptacle-part. The material of the sarcophagus is recognized to be hornblende andesite, which is found in quantity in Mt. Washi-no-Yama in Yamauchi Village, about 8 kilometres from this place. Also, at least three or four more sarcophagi with similarly engraved head-rests and made of the same material are to be found in the same Sanuki Province, some of which constitute the principal parts of the burial-mounds of earth in which they are placed. Besides the stone sarcophagus, this cairn contains, in a corner of the square fore-part, a stone chamber used as a receptacle for another corpse (Plate XXIII, 2, and Fig. 16). This chamber is now in a half-decayed condition.

THE CAIRN "KAGAMITSUKA"

(Plates XXVI and XXVII)

This is a large cairn situated directly to the north of Iwafunetsuka. In the terraciform arrangement of its stone-piles it resembles Nekotsuka, two quasi-square parts projecting in the east and west direction respectively, from a circular stone mound which forms the centre of the cairn (Plate XXVI). The total length is almost 70 metres. At present the stone-piles are severely deranged (Plate XXVII); and depressions, due to excavation, are found here and there on the surface. Thus the whole external appearance is much impaired. Besides, no stone chamber or other constructions are found inside the cairn to welcome the explorer.

* So called because the receptacle-part and the cover each resemble in shape a *waritake*, which here means "the split half of a segment of bamboo."

THE CAIRN "KITA-ÔTSUKA"

(Plates XXVIII—XXXI)

This is situated near the north edge of Iwaseo-Yama. Its stone-piles, arranged in the form of a combination of a square with a circle, retain their original external appearance fairly well. The square fore-part, especially, is in an excellent state of preservation, the terrace-like platform edging off sharp at the two lateral sides to form a kind of stone wall, and terminating at the front side in the shape of a pair of steps. This is a form quite peculiar to this cairn (Plate XXVIII). The total length of the stone-piles is about 40 metres.

Adjacent to the extreme end of the square fore-part, there is another cairn, square in shape (Plate XXVIII). Also, at some distance—about 16 metres—from the circular rear-part of Kita-Ôtsuka, there is yet another cairn, the stone-piles of which are in the worst condition of derangement. The former, it is readily recognizable, was constructed in the form of a double-terrace mound, the sides of the square each being more than 10 metres long at the base; whilst, with the latter, all the attempts hitherto made to define the original form have been without result (Fig. 19). However, buried among the stone-piles of this cairn is to be seen a pit-type stone chamber in a state of semi-destruction (Plate XXX, 2, and Fig. 20), which has also been found to contain some fragments of pottery of the Yayoi type.

THE CAIRN "HIMETSUKA OF INARI-YAMA"

(Plates XXXI and XXXII)

Situated almost on the crown of Inari-Yama which forms the eastern part of the block-mountain of Iwaseo, this cairn stands in marked contrast to the aforementioned Iwafunetsuka, and has also very often been made the subject of study. Consisting, too, of a square fore-part and a circular rear-part, its total length is about 55 metres. The circular part is constructed on the same usual double-terrace principle; but, the front side of the square part which faces the west, is so shaped as to form a series of six terraces resembling a flight of six steps (Plate XXXI and Fig. 22). This was obviously done to conform the structure to the configuration of the ground, which here slopes off sharp from the even surface above. The step-like formation is one of the salient features of this cairn,

for such grandeur of scale is hardly equalled by any other cairn. Both the square fore-part and the circular rear-part have holes made by explorers, but now contain nothing to suggest the mode of construction of their interiors as when erected. As the only remains of this cairn, we can but mention the fragments of pottery of the Yayoi type, which are found buried here and there among the stone-piles.

Besides Himetsuka, there are to be found, on the same Inari-Yama, a fairly large cairn in the southern part and two or three more in ruins in the northern part. Of these, the one in the south, though with crumbled stone-piles, may be considered to have been a combination of a square fore-part and a circular rear-part with another circular stone mound placed at the back (Fig. 23); and one of the ruined cairns in the north is found to have been an oblong stone mound (Fig. 24). In addition to these, there are to be seen, on the saddle-ridge between Himetsuka of Inari-Yama and Iwafunetsuka, two or three groups of ruins, very likely, of cairns. Some time ago, one of these was found to contain some pots, a pedestalled bowl, and other objects, of the Yayoi type (Fig. 25).

THE OTHER CAIRNS

(Plates XXXIII—XXXVI)

Next in importance to the principal cairns aforementioned, come about a dozen groups of ruins scattered about on the gentle slope in the southern part of the Suribachi-dani. Others also are found here and there in the northern part of Iwaseo-Yama; on the mountain-ridge extending southward from Himetsuka of Inari-Yama; near the *Kiri-dôshi* ("cut pass") lying between Jôgwanji-Yama and Iwaseo-Yama; and in other regions. With a single exception, all these are simple circular cairns (Plate XXXIII, 1) of limited dimensions. The exception, however, is the one to be seen in the northern part of Iwaseo-Yama, which is constructed in the form of a square fore-part combined with a circular rear-part (Fig. 28). In the one on the south side of the basin-like depression, a part of the interior construction is now exposed to view, revealing a pit-type stone chamber with a cist placed inside it (Plate XXXIII, 2, and Fig. 26). Besides, in the cairn found on the ridge at the back of the Shrine of Doi (Plate XXXVI), and, also, among the ruins lying near the Kiri-dôshi (Plate XXXV and Fig. 29),

similar instances occur of the exposure of pit-type stone chambers. In short, these minor cairns and ruins of cairns, together with Nekotsuka and other more important cairns previously studied, are indicative of the presence of a uniform principle in the construction of their interiors. Next, of the contents of these minor cairns and ruins, all that now remains is the fragments of pottery of the Yayoi type contained in some of them. Lastly, the corridor-tombs found in certain parts of Mt. Iwaseo, as illustrated in Plates XXXVIII and XXXIX, are perfectly identical with those found in many other parts of Japan. Their remains are also illustrated in Plate XL, showing them to be very different from those found in the cairns. The corridor-tombs, therefore, are quite distinct from the cairns not only as regards their distribution but also in their external forms and their contents.

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CAIRNS ON MT. IWASEO

The cairns on Mt. Iwaseo, being built of pieces of bronzite andesite and having external forms resembling a succession of terraces, which distinguish them from other ancient tombs in Japan usually built of earth, may possibly be considered to have much in common with the sepulchral cairns distributed extensively all over Europe and Asia, including the Far East. On the other hand, considering, apart from these distinguishing features, the fact that in the case of the principal cairns the external arrangement of the stone-piles is in the peculiar form of a combination either of a square with a circle or of two squares with a circle; next considering the fact that the interiors are usually formed into pit-type stone chambers, in which sometimes are found elaborately worked sarcophagi with engraved head-rests, as in the instance of Iwafunetsuka; and considering, again, that among the remains contained in them, there occur sometimes, besides the pottery of the Yayoi type, various other implements of bronze and iron, as is the case in Nekotsuka; considering these facts, we know that our cairns possess far more complex qualities than the cairns found in Europe and certain parts of the Far East. It must be said, therefore, that these monuments have characteristics entirely their own, as distinct from all other cairns.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE AGE AND NATURE OF THE CAIRNS

When and how these monuments, with such unique features, came to be constructed, would be an interesting subject for study, on which, indeed, turn all considerations as to their nature. With regard to this point, it has long been a general tendency among students, in view of the scarcity of cairns in Japan Proper, to consider our cairns in association with those found in Ryojun (Port Arthur), South Manchuria, and in parts of Chosen (Corea), and further to regard their occurrence in Japan as an evidence of the spread to this country of the Aneolithic culture in those lands. They would point out to us, as their data, the coincidence between Nekotsuka and the cairns at Ryojun in the abundance of stone chambers; the discovery in common of short bronze swords; and also the presence, though in small numbers, of other cairns in the Provinces of Tsushima, Hizen, Nagato, Sanuki, Awa, etc., in Japan Proper. Now, however, in considering this question, we must take due note of the fact that nearly all the so-called characteristics—with the single exception, perhaps, of the lapidary construction of our cairns—are features common to both our cairns and the splendid ancient burial-mounds of earth in Japan. Taking for instance the external forms, it is to be noted that the “fore-square-and-rear-circular” formation is symbolically characteristic of ancient tombs in Japan, and has no counterpart in any other part of the world; whilst the more complex “two-squares-and-one-circle” formation occurs also in “Kushi-Yama” Tomb at Yanagimoto, Yamato Province (Figs. 35 and 36)—in cairns of this type, the three principal parts lie in the centre and are attended by smaller circular mounds surrounding them, which is in perfect identity with the arrangement as seen in our ancient burial-mounds of earth. Next, about the arrangements of the interiors, the pit-type stone chambers occur most frequently in our ancient tombs (Fig. 37), and the sarcophagi constructed similarly of stone and having the same engraved head-rests as those contained in our cairns, also occur in large burial-mounds of earth of the fore-square-and-rear-circular kind, which are discovered in some parts of Sanuki and other provinces (see the Corpus appended to this Report). Finally, as regards the remains found in them, the same identity is noticeable between our cairns and the burial-mounds of earth, only in a far more marked degree, of which the instances are really too many to mention.

We may, therefore, justly correlate our groups of cairns with the ancient burial-mounds of earth, and, accordingly, conclude that they are of approximately contemporaneous construction.

Judging from the conditions of the burial-mounds of the Emperors Ôjin and Nintoku, and also from the results of archæological researches hitherto made, it is commonly admitted that in Japan such burial-mounds of earth had reached the meridian of splendour in their construction during the fifth or sixth century A. D. Now, it is from this date that the age of our cairns may be inferred. A further study of the remains of Nekotsuka and other cairns will also help to confirm this approximate estimate of their age.

In connection with the estimation of their age, some elucidation will naturally be called for as to how it was that cairns were constructed in this place only. Now, considering the fact that our ancient civilization had been affected by Chinese influence in nearly all its branches, and that old cairns are found in parts of Manchuria and in Chosen, no one could deny that our ancestors might have learned from the Chinese the idea of buliding cairns from stone. But this is not enough to account for everything as to how, in Sanuki alone, such cairns of a peculiar nature came into existence in an age when burial-mounds of earth were in vogue—this is especially so when we consider that cairns are of very limited occurrence in Japan and that no uniformity of construction is recognizable between Continental cairns and ours. Here the geographical conditions of the sites, as described at the beginning of this Report, come in very useful. On a mountain with such geological and physiographical conditions as Mt. Iwaseo possesses—consisting only of stone and surrounded by sharp-sloping sides—it must have been next to impossible to build burial-mounds of earth on it, even when it was the universal practice to do so; therefore, under the circumstances, stone was naturally substituted for earth. From this point of view, it would be easy to understand that these geographical conditions would go far to explain what brought these cairns into existence. Moreover, of the cairns in other parts of Japan, it is worthy of note that “Kyôtsuka” and other cairns in Shimo-Kasai, Sanuki Province, are located in a region under the same geographical conditions as Mt. Iwaseo; and it is also to be noted that the cairns found in Tsushima, Hizen, Nagato, and other provinces, are situated close to the sea-shore which

abounds in pieces of stone. Thus, all these cairns go to suggest a mutual relationship between the material used and the geographical conditions of the regions around the sites. We may here add that these cairns on Mt. Iwaseo have some analogy with the ancient tombs built in the time of the *Kōkuri* Dynasty, now to be found in northern Chosen and part of Manchuria, in that these tombs, though evidently modelled after the square-shaped burial-mounds of earth of the *Han* Dynasty, are in reality all stone-built square cairns with terraces. Finally, our cairns constitute a special landmark in the history of burial system in ancient Japan, and are quite worthy of our particular attention.
