The Archaeological Analysis of Military Organization in the Kofun Period

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The given theme in this symposium is the archaeological analysis of military organization in the kofun period. The aim of my article is to investigate 3 points of analysis from the latter half of first period to the middle period of the kofun era. The first point is the evolution of change of the organization and function of the military since the latter half of the first period. The second point of analysis concerns the ability to establish a standard army in the first half of the middle period by the developing political power whose members were later buried during in the Mozu-Furuichi cluster of mound tombs. The final point is the aim of organization in the middle period.

In the latter half of the first period, the change in the burial procedure of weapons in tombs reflects the change in the aim and purpose of the demonstration of power and use of defense. This influence was also reflected in the condition of the armament itself. At that time, this change was brought about by newly-risen groups connecting with other groups located in the south-east region of the Korean peninsula.

During the middle period the foundation for the large scale mobilization of armies was established through the supply of similarity equipped weapons. These were unified in function and form and supplied by the Mozu-Furuichi group. The standard army was controlled by the presiding organization or chief of this group and bound by a pledge of allegiance. The standard army would then guarantee the stability of the military organization.

Further, a new composition of weapons included farm implements used in the transferring and stationing of armies appeared in some tombs which surpassed previously buried weapons. This composition of weapons indicates the existence of a military organization that has the ability for deliberate, long-distance and long-prolonged military action, if the circumstance at a given time did not include a serious military confrontation in the country.

Through these investigations I hope to present the following conclusion. The focus of the military organization that was established since the latter half of the first period in the kofun era changed from internal to external, mainly regarding the Korean peninsula.