The Cultural Environment in the Dongyizhuan in the Sanguozhi

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At the beginning of the Dongyizhuan ("Accounts of the Eastern Barbarians") section of the "Sanguozhi" ("History of the Three Kingdoms"), there is the Tribute of Yu chapter in the Shangshu and there is a description of the system of nine regions (jiu fu) in the "Zhouli." Established under this concept of tianxia (all under Heaven), Wei subjugated the Gongsun clan and governed the Nangnang and Daebang commanderies. Wei also subjugated Koguryo, and conquered the area up to the Yellow Sea. It is said that matters concerning the countries of the eastern barbarians were recorded as a reward, and this was how the existence of li (rites) in the countries of the surrounding barbarians became known. An examination of the positional relationships between the countries of the eastern barbarians and the Wei capital, distances, and area, shows that the Dongyizhuan, including the Wajinden, was written based on the tianxia concept. The Gishiwajinden is based on the notion of the five regions with tributes made by Luoyang to Nangnang, a distance of 5,000 li, and the 12,000 li from the Daebang commandery to the country of Yamatai is based on the notion of the nine regions in the "Zhouli." They were described based on the concept of a smaller tianxia where geographical perception from the capital is substituted by distance from commanderies. The author proposes new interpretations for the "acquisition of iron" from Byeonhan in the section on Han (Korea), the trade (nanbeishidi) mentioned in the Gishiwajinden, and ensigns on the basis of the distribution of characteristic types found in archaeological sites and artifacts in the area of the eastern barbarian countries. The author suggests that there are graves affiliated to the kings of Wa and graves affiliated to the kings of the local Yamatai in the area assumed to be the state of Yamatai, the capital of the kingdom of Wa. It was through the title Qinweiwowang (Wa ruler friendly to Wei), and the gifting of a gold seal and silver seal with purple ribbon and ensign, that Wei and Wa had a military alliance as well as a tributary relationship. In conclusion, the so-called Gishiwajinden was written within the context of international relations between the Three Kingdoms and the Gongsun clan (Yan) and the countries of the eastern barbarians.

Keywords: Tribute of Yu Chapter in the "Shangshu" ("Book of Documents"), Zhouli ("Rites of Zhou"), area, ensign, alliance between Wei and Wa