

Tortoisebased Stelae in the Ede Period

—In Comparison with those from the Eastern Han Dynasty in China and from the Unified Silla Dynasty in Korea—

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In this paper, author first investigates tortoisebased Stelae from the Eastern Han Dynasty in China and from the Unified Silla Dynasty in Korea, via achievements in research since SEKINO Tadashi 関野貞, and positions those stelae within those prescriptions which succeeded the ideas of tomb regulation, from the Wei dynasty. Since the Sui-Tang dynasties, these regulations had been made severely by status, in the Ming dynasty, tortoisebased stelae such as Shen-dao-bei 神道碑, which was built alongside the spirit road, were permitted to those above the third rank of peerage. Generally memorial monuments, were permitted to those above the fifth rank, other than Gods whose rank no one could deny, to whom they were permitted in any case.

Secondly, upon recognizing that no study on tortoisebased stelae had been undertaken on a nationwide scale, the author investigates many reports which were made about several stelae, and surveyed every stele to investigate its relation to tombs. He induces that regulations of stelae in the Edo Period, when these stelae were begun to be made in Japan, fundamentally followed those of the Ming dynasty. They probably made much of the third rank of 'samurai' peerage, as those stelae including Shen-dao-bei which were built in front of tombs, and made much of fifth rank, as the other memorial monuments of literary or military men did. But, as a Japanese style, they only very rarely featured stele crowns decorated with tow dragons, which were permitted to higher ranks, but often used facestones

with square pillars, which were permitted to lower ranks. As a formative style, they often used those of the latter Silla and Koryo period in Korea, whose characteristic was erect neck and wild beast's head in body-frame, not the usual tortoise's, and which were used as stupa monuments for highly ranked priests. later than these, stelae appeared in part Chinese style. These were parallel with the phenomenon that those stelae in Japan were often related with Buddhism.

The Tokugawa shogunate gave tacit warnings against 'Daimyo' erecting tortoisebased stelae for tombs. Adding this to above induction, the author concludes ; this was resulted from the shogunate resented 'Tenno' being regarded as the external representative of Japan, through tortoisbased stelae, which pointed out concretely and historically the political system of East Asia, rather than the regulation of stelae raising 'Tenno' ' s dignity through the rank of 'samurai' peerage. With the 'Taikun' title, which was independent of 'samurai' peerage, the Tokugawa 'Shogun' had to be the sole external representative of Japan. Therefore, it was considered wise to build tortoisebased stelae of tombs by interposing Buddhism and making vague the regulation of 'samurai' peerage.