

Kami Rituals and Tomb Mound Rituals

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Stone miniature implements are excavated from tomb mounds among various relics. These stone miniature implements were evidently used in *Kami* worship and an analysis is attempted of the relation between the rituals of tomb mounds and worship of gods from the variety of implements and their significance in tomb mounds.

Four periods are found concerning the variety of the stone miniature implements and their significance. The first period corresponds to the later fourth century when farming tools and tools for carpentry started to be used as burial articles. The second period was around the late fourth century to the early fifth century, and besides farming and carpentry tools, ancient accessories such as *magatama*, long swords, mirrors, and imitation weaving instruments and brewery utensils also became burial articles. The third period corresponds to the mid-fifth century to the later fifth century; nothing had changed much fundamentally since the second period though the implements became cruder. The fourth period corresponds to the early sixth century. The implements became cruder and the main items became long swords and mirrors, implements that were not farming and carpentry tools.

A comparison of the stone miniature implements in tomb mounds and items in ordinary ritual sites shows that stone miniature implements had not appeared in the ritual sites during the first period. After the second period many stone miniature implements such as *magatama*, mirrors and long swords are excavated at ritual sites, and this tendency continues until the fourth period. This shows that the production of stone miniature implements originated from the iron farming and carpentry tools that were burial articles at tomb mounds.

The burial of farming and carpentry tools in tomb mounds was a popular custom from the early to the late Tomb Mound Era. Moreover, the fact that the tools became stone miniature implements shows that farming and carpentry tools must have been extremely important items for the buried person. It is assumed that the items were ritual tools of chiefs of various districts who also had the role of priests in harvest festivals. Making stone miniature implements of the tools for the dead to take to the other world, shows that performing farming rituals must have been the most important task for them. There is a theory maintaining that the buried person in the early Tomb Mound Era was a *kami* or the nearest existence to a *kami* but this is not true. They were only priests who performed harvest festivals.