

Synthetic Studies on Tomb Figurines in the Sui and Tang Dynasties

Kobayashi Hitoshi

(The Association for the Advancement of Fine Arts, Osaka; Curatorial Department; Curator)

【Outline of survey】

Study on tomb figurines is one of the significant subjects in Chinese art history. The figurines of the Sui and Tang dynasties excavated from tombs in various regions of China are particularly rich in quantity, which enhances further investigation on their stylistic transitions and regional characteristics. The purpose of this study is to conduct an elaborate research on excavated materials mainly from datable tombs and elucidate the historical development of the Sui and Tang tomb figurines. This would be discussed from multilateral aspects including stylistic changes, regionality, production techniques and funerary concepts among different periods and regions. In collaboration with top rank scholars in Japan and China, this study is based on field research in China and takes original approaches to the following four issues: 1) influence on the Sui and Tang tomb figurines from those of the Northern and Southern dynasties; 2) stylistic transitions and regionality of tomb figurines of the Sui and Tang dynasties; 3) production techniques and workshops of the Sui and Tang tomb figurines; and 4) funerary concept in the Sui and Tang dynasties observed from the figurines. This survey will expand previous academic accomplishments of art historical research on pottery figurines of the Northern and Southern dynasties, and add new vision to the studies on art history from the Northern and Southern dynasties to the Sui and Tang dynasties, which have recently been drawing attention of scholars.

【Expected results】

This study, based on investigation of rich excavated materials and kiln sites, is expected to shed light on understanding the substance of tomb figurines in the Sui and Tang dynasties by examining their physical characteristics, stylistic changes, regional distinctions, production techniques and workshops as well as their relationship with the concept of funerary practices. As artistic diversity from the Northern and Southern dynasties to the Sui and Tang dynasties is now being regarded as a significant element, such survey is an extremely timely project in terms of adding new viewpoints to researches on art history of the Sui and Tang dynasties and other relevant fields of study.

【References】

- Kobayashi Hitoshi, “The Excavation Results of the Tang Liquefang Kiln Site in Xian, Shaanxi Province and Their Significance—Focusing on Burial Tomb Figures”, *ETHNO-ARTS*, Vol. 23, 2005, pp. 110-122.
- Kobayashi Hitoshi, “Study on Sui Dynasty Tomb Figurines”, Shimizu Mazumi, ed., *Bijyutushi Ronso: Zokei to Bunka*, Yuzankaku Shutupan, 2007, pp. 345-367.

【Term of project】 FY2007 - 2011

【Budget allocation】 700,000 yen

(2007 direct cost)

【Homepage address】

None