

## TABAYASHI, Kei. A Study of the Sui Dynasty Mural Tomb in Shui Village, Tongguan County – Focus on the Relationship Between the Painting (Mural and Line Engraving of the Coffin) and the System of Dress and Palanquin

The mural tomb found in Shui village, Tongguan county, Shanxi province is one of the most important tombs of the Sui Dynasty. It is believed that the tomb belongs to a member of the Sui imperial family, probably the first son of Emperor Wen (文帝). The mural paintings in the tomb tunnel are well-preserved: they feature an image of several people holding a parade (imitation of a travel), and pictures of a bodyguard and a multi-storied building. The unearthed objects include a stone coffin decorated with carved images such as celestial beings, beasts, chariots and other complicated patterns. Researchers have pointed out the similarities between these carvings of the celestial world and the art of Wei Dynasty tombs and Northern Qi Dynasty tombs. Since there is no comprehensive study so far about the paintings, in this study, I will examine all the paintings (the mural paintings and the carvings of a coffin) to understand more about the production date and circumstances (e.g. who supervised the construction) and also about the artistic aspects of the tomb.

The walls are painted with images of people wearing special outer wears with round necks and tight sleeves, trousers, leather belt and ritual caps. These particular motifs can be seen in Sui Dynasty mural tombs and Dunhuang caves built after the year 610 AD, such as the tomb of Shi She-wu and Dunhuang Mogao Cave 281. Later on, they became common in Tang Dynasty mural tombs. According to *Old Book of Tang*, following the first clothing reform in 605 AD, a revision of the regulation was made in 610 AD. In the revision, it was stated that during travels of soldiers and officials, civil and military officials must wear military uniforms (戎衣). Moreover, several historical records mention that ritual caps of Sui Dynasty officials are called with the same affix “(military)” (戎冠). These mural paintings and records suggest that the tomb was built sometime after 610 AD, as the people depicted in the tomb are wearing the above-mentioned special uniform and cap, depicted in a clearly unified style (only found in this tomb). Judging from the strict style, these wall paintings were most likely created right after the clothing reform in 610 AD. The mural paintings provide precious information for studying art development in the Sui Dynasty and the following Tang Dynasty.

An important funerary object, a huge stone coffin, lies east-to-west in the chamber. The coffin has delicate line carvings of traditional Chinese celestial beings, auspicious patterns, Sogdian style beasts and special chariot towed by dragons and tigers on the left and right side panels. These elements are known from illustrations such as the *Luo shen fu* (洛神賦圖) scroll which showcases an imperial parade of a legendary Chinese emperor. A special type of Sui Dynasty carriage that carries only one person (known to be used from 606 AD) appears in the parade. To sum up, the cover, the head panel, the end panel, left and right side-panels and the bottom of the sarcophagus contain ancient (traditional) Chinese and new (Sogdian) visual elements, probably carved after 606 AD when Northern Dynasty concepts, such as the holy realm of celestial (immortal) beings, were integrated to Sui funerary customs.

Judging from the visual motifs, the only people that could have managed the design and construction of this tomb were those that had previous experience constructing imperial burials. One technologist to be mentioned is He Chou (何稠), known for his ingenious craftsmanship under the employment of Sui Wendi. He had Sogdian ancestors, hence it is possible that he could have created Sogdian elements as well. In conclusion, I suggest that the Sui Dynasty mural tomb in Shui village was created by technologist He Chou, presumably not long after 610 AD.

Along with the reforming of the ritual systems of the dynasties (especially the modifications and enacting of previous codes), burial images and patterns have had several significant changes. The Sui Dynasty mural tomb analyzed in this study clearly showcases the developments of the Northern Dynasty's artistic traditions. These synthetic Sui-style decorations also provide precious materials for studying art development in the Sui Dynasty and the subsequent Tang Dynasty.