

Chronology and Absolute Dates of the Corridor Style Stone Chamber Types in the Kinai Region

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This article discusses the chronological sequence of the types of corridor style stone chambers in the central part of Kinki district known as Kinai region and the historical dates of respective types. The author has already published his opinion about this subject, but because recently some different opinions have appeared he argues here that his early opinion does not require any major amendments even after assessing the burial chambers of tombs whose data were not known when he wrote the above article.

The corridor style stone chambers which were used in the tombs of the ruling class people in Kinai region from the latter half of the 6th century, when the construction of the key-hole shaped tombs ended, changed from Hirabayashi to Tennōzan to Ishibutai to Iwayayama, and to Pseudo Iwayayama type. These changes can also be explained in view of the principles of the typological study such as the simplification of the wall structure with the use of larger stone materials, the development of the stone surface finish techniques, the gradual lowering of the ceiling of the burial chamber proper which had been considerably higher than that of the entrance passage. But these typological features must be considered all together. It would be irrelevant to make a chronological sequence of the degree of work on the stone materials alone. This chronological sequence of the stone chamber types corresponds to the chronology of the Sue stoneware fund in respective chambers, which further supports the sequence.

The absolute dates of these types are ascribed as follows: Hirabayashi type to the fourth quarter of the 6th century, Tennōzan type to the first quarter of the 7th century, Ishibutai type to the second quarter of the 7th century, and Iwayayama and Pseudo Iwayayama types to the third quarter of the 7th century. These dates agree with the results of the recent chronological study of the pottery in the Asuka region of Nara prefecture.

(Translation by KŌNO Tetsurō)