

Togamayama Hokuroku tomb group

To the south of the Hase valley across from Mt. Miwa, and east of the Ōbara river across from Mt. Tomi, a mountain mass 292.5 m in elevation is Togamayama (Mt. Togama). Excavation was conducted there from 1972 to 1975, when a belt of land lying across its northern flank, towards the Asakura station on the Kintetsu rail line, was scheduled for development as the Asakura apartment complex. Groups of tombs had been formed along the mountain ridges, and as a whole they are called the Togamayama tomb group. Of these, investigations were carried out on 13 tombs in the Ryūtanī subgroup, 10 tombs in the Shionji subgroup, and 8 tombs in the Osaka subgroup.

Among these, the Osaka No. 5 tomb is a square mounded burial of a type common in the Late Yayoi period, but Haji ware was recovered from a ditch forming its boundary, from which it is thought to date to the Middle Kofun period (first half of the fifth century), making its age of construction the oldest in the group. Also, the burial facilities of the Osaka Nos. 8 and 9 tombs have an unusual structure as compartment-style chambers made of tiles, and No. 8 in particular is unique as the only tomb with a hexagonal floor plan. These are so-called Final Kofun period tombs built in the Asuka era (mid-seventh century), and the interred were possibly members of the *ritsuryō* bureaucratic class.

The majority of the other tombs are round mounds around 10–20 m in diameter, with directly interred wooden coffins or horizontal stone chambers as the burial facilities, and were constructed in the Late Kofun period (sixth century). As grave goods, as items related to the Korean peninsula there were iron bells from the Osaka No. 3 tomb, and a flat-bottomed jar of Baekje derivation from Osaka No. 4. Apart from these, iron equestrian gear was recovered from the Ryūtanī Nos. 3 and 12 tombs, and the Osaka No. 4 tomb, among others.

Among these tombs, although Shionji No. 1 is considered to be a round tomb 22 m in diameter, it is possibly a keyhole tomb, and artifacts with few parallels were recovered from its burial facility of a directly interred wooden coffin. In addition to fairly common items such as 150 glass beads, mortar-shaped steatite beads, amber beads, and iron arrowheads and knives, other finds included a pair of gold rings, 7 hollow comma-shaped beads of silver decorated with small glass beads, plus hollow round silver and multi-colored glass beads. The latter can all probably be inferred as related to the Korean peninsula. This tomb is thought to have been built in the first half of the sixth century.

The inscription on the Suda Hachiman Shrine Mirror, a *gazōkyō* (mirror decorated with pictorial images in raised relief) designated as a National Treasure, includes characters which can be read as “Oshisaka palace.” To the north of this tomb group lies the Wakimoto site in Hase valley. Large-scale buildings and a moat-like piled stone feature from the end of the fifth century have been detected, and a relationship is inferred with the Hatsuse Asakura palace of Emperor Yūryaku. Also, the octagonal Dannotsuka tomb is located in the nearby Osaka area, which is designated as the mausoleum of Emperor Jomei. The Togamayama Hokuroku tomb group was built with connections to these sites in its environs, and its historic significance is great. Incidentally, the Osaka Nos. 1, 2, 8, and 9 tombs have been relocated and reconstructed within the Asakura apartment complex.