Production of the Folding Screens of Scenes In and Around Kyoto (Rekihaku A Version)

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Rekihaku A Version is known as the oldest folding screens of Scenes In and Around Kyoto (Rakuchu-Rakugai-Zu) in existence. It is yet to be known for whom and why the work was created, and there is no established theory about its creator. Answering these questions, the author proposed a tentative theory that Hosokawa Takakuni, a powerful figure in the Muromachi Shogunate, had placed an order with painter Kano Motonobu at the occasion of building a new palace for the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiharu near the Hosokawa residence and handing over the family headship to his heir Tanekuni.

After published, this tentative theory encountered criticism, which the present article is aimed at investigating while also taking into account the results of the latest joint research.

The shogun palace depicted in the painting is a key to clarify when and why the work was created. As had been suggested by the author, the review of historical records confirmed that the depicted site is the Yanagi Palace, which validated that Hosokawa Takakuni or someone near him had placed an order.

With regard to the creator, there is no positive evidence to support the theory that the work was painted by someone from the Tosa school of painting. Considering the period, the theory that Kano Shoei created it seems to be unlikely either. Taking into account the painting style and historical background, it is appropriate to consider that someone near Kano Motonobu painted the work, as is suggested by the theory that has been commonly accepted in the field of art history.

Dr. Hideo Kuroda, who denied the theory of the author, has presented several researches until now. However, his theory has become almost the same as my theory, and the different parts of his theory have been pointed out to be wrong. Although my study results in the past had some wrong or unclear interpretations and descriptions, the progress of this joint study and other researches has been bringing my theory to the point, in general, where it becomes an established theory in academic circles.

Keywords: The Folding Screens of Scenes In and Around Kyoto (Rakuchu-Rakugai-Zu), Rekihaku A Version, Kano school, Kano Motonobu, Hosokawa Takakuni