A Consideration of the Intent Behind the Creation of Kosode Byobu

SAWADA Kazuto

This paper considers the creation of Kosode Byobu by Shojiro Nomura, a set of 100 pieces, as to its value as a resource.

Kosode Byobu contains a significant number of valuable kosode fragments from the early modern period. For this reason, it is indispensable to the history of textiles. On the other hand, it is true that this is a group of pieces that is rather difficult to handle. This arises from the fact that Kosode Byobu is a form that has been rearranged. Kosode Byobu was not created by laying each part of the original kosode onto a folding screen in its rightful position. By the purposeful intent of Shojiro, individual kosode fragments were rearranged so that they visually take the form of a kosode.

With these issues, we analyzed the trend of how the kosodes on the folding screens were rearranged. We then debated what led to such rearrangement and further decided to investigate Shojiro’s intent behind the creation of the screens.

In doing so, it became apparent that more pieces than had been previously recognized convey the composition of the initial design. Even so, many such pieces use a fragment as a part it originally was not. This arises from the fact that the fundamental form chosen by Shojiro for his creation was to display the uwamae, the surface that is shown in front when being worn. This fundamental form, in turn, is thought to have been highly influenced by the format of kimono fabric design of the time. Considering the format of kimono fabric design of the time, it can be understood that an expression intended to enhance artistic value took the form of the created Kosode Byobu.

Kosode Byobu had been anticipated to fill the role of a sample of kimono creations, however, the selection of resources strongly reflects the history of the kosode as envisioned by Shojiro. This became clear in comparing it with the narrative in Yuzen Kenkyu, written by Shojiro. To demonstrate his own vision of the history of the kosode—this surfaces as the true intent behind the creation of Kosode Byobu.

Key words: Shojiro Nomura, Kosode Byobu, textile