

## The Paekche Kingdom and Cultural Diversity in the Sixth Century

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An increasing number of studies are being published on Paekche (?-660), as interests on this early kingdom continue to grow in Korea. Although primary written sources on Paekche are limited, archaeological finds from Paekche, once scarce, swelled in recent years, thanks to numerous excavation projects in South Korea. What attracts many to Paekche is its sophisticated culture well illustrated by artifacts from its later capitals of Kongju and Puyō. It is noteworthy that this rich culture came from the population which was known to be mixed and heterogeneous. According to the *Sui shu* (vol. 81, biographies 46, Tong-I, Paekche), the Paekche residents included those who originated from Silla, Koguryō, Japan, and China (Suzuki 1995, 44).

Until the late seventh century, the Korean peninsula was divided into multiple states: Paekche in the west, Koguryō in the north, and Silla in the east. In addition, the Kaya states lay near the Naktong River in the south till the middle of the sixth century. Because the war among them continued to change borderlines, each state's population was changeable as well. In addition, purposeful migrations sometimes took place as seen in the example from the time of King Naemul in the *Samguk sagi*'s Silla annals. According to this account, a severe draught and famine made a Paekche chief to decide to move his entire community of three hundred people to Silla, despite the Paekche king's protest (*Samguk sagi* I, 68-69). Commoners crossing borders in search of better living conditions must have been commonplace in early Korea.

Paekche, therefore, was not the only state that received residents from the other states. Nevertheless, the Chinese annals made special remarks about Paekche's diverse population. This paper examines Paekche's formal and informal exchanges with the Chinese continent and the Japanese archipelago with the hope that such information will shed light on the segment of the Paekche population that had originated from foreign land.

Our primary source materials include the *Samguk sagi*, the oldest surviving history of Korean kingdoms, the Chinese annals, and the *Nihon shoki*, the oldest of the Japanese chronicles. While the *Samguk sagi*'s treatment of Paekche is lacking in details, the *Nihon shoki* accounts surrounding Paekche are detailed at times. However, many scholars have pointed out the problem of distortions prevalent in the *Nihon shoki* accounts of both domestic and international affairs (Aston 1956, xiv). The authors borrowed the Chinese concept of hierarchical world order and exaggerated the power of the Yamato state as if it controlled both the Japanese archipelago and the southern Korean peninsula in the early period. The Paekche kingdom was often portrayed as Yamato's vassal state, submitting tribute and hostages to insure military aid. The truth of the matter is that the two kingdoms likely enjoyed equal partnership (Inoue Hideo 1991). Many of the archipelago individuals appearing in the *Nihon shoki* may have been much more independent from the Yamato state than portrayed, and their actions were possibly based on the interests of their clans and regions (Kim Un-suk 1992). This paper takes the view that the *Nihon shoki* accounts can reveal important historical information on affair related to Paekche if we are able to trip them of distortions.

### Early Background

It is well known that Chumong, the legendary founder of Koguryō, had originally come from Puyō, according the Koguryō annals of the *Samguk sagi*. The Paekche annals of the *Samguk sagi*, however, portrays Chumong as a migrant from Northern Puyō to Cholbon Puyō, who fathered Piryu and Onjo, founders of Paekche at the Han River area (*Samguk sagi* II, 8-9).

As Prof. Best points out, the Chumong story may be an old myth handed down by the Puyŏ people who lived near the Sungari River region of present-day Chinese northeast, and both the Koguryŏ and Paekche ruling classes appropriated this heroic founding story (Best 2006, 205). At the same time, this mythological account does suggest the migrations that actually took place from north of the Korean peninsula all the way down to the Han River valley and prompted the founding of Paekche. In fact, there are ample archaeological reasons to believe that the Paekche ruling class originated in the north. The Paekche tombs from the third to fifth centuries remaining in Sokch'on-dong just south of the Han River are Koguryŏ-style stepped stone-piled square tombs. Prof. Kwon suspects waves of migration from Koguryŏ, rather than directly from Puyŏ, to the Han River region around the second and third centuries (Kwon 1995, 18-21). As late as in 538, King Sŏng (r. 523-553) renamed his country South Puyŏ, indicating his pride in the Puyŏ origins. As pointed out by many, Paekche maintained a dual structure following the northern migrants' conquest of the indigenous population (Yi Ki-dong 1996, 2).

The *Samguk sagi* accounts relate that Chumong's older son Piryu and his followers settled at Mich'uhol, present-day Inch'on facing the Yellow Sea, while his younger son Onjo lived in present-day southern Seoul by the Han River where land was fertile. The accounts go on to say that Piryu's group later joined Onjo's group because Mich'uhol was not arable. This legendary account may accurately convey the fact that Paekche combined an agricultural foundation with maritime strength. Unlike Koguryŏ and Silla that were based in mountain valleys, Paekche spread in the plain along the Han River and its tributaries (later the Kŭm River) favorable for agriculture. At the same time, Paekche's access to the Yellow Sea via Inch'on and other natural harbors allowed its rulers to exploit seafaring (Yi Ki-dong 1996, 7).

For centuries, the Chinese commanderies Lelang, established near present-day P'yongyang by Han China in 108 B.C., and Daifang, founded in present Hwanghae Province in the early third century, undoubtedly spread Chinese culture to the emerging states of the Korean peninsula (Best 2006, 22). The *Samguk sagi* recounts many military confrontations between Paekche and Lelang, including King Koi's attacks in 246 (*Samguk sagi* II, 32). Whether through trade or by warfare, the incipient Paekche state interacted with the Chinese commanderies and adapted Chinese culture and technologies to their needs. By the early fourth century, both Lelang and Daifang had become semi-independent states with little direct political link to the dynasties on the Chinese mainland. It is well known that Koguryŏ's incursions in 313 and 314 greatly weakened Lelang and caused much damage to Daifang. Consequently, many Chinese residents fled Lelang and Daifang to Paekche in search of safe havens. After the demise of Lelang in the mid fourth century, Daifang sought an alliance with Paekche to fend off Koguryŏ's threat. King Ch'akkye's marriage to Daifang's princess, related in the *Samguk sagi* as an occurrence in 296, probably took place around this time (*Samguk sagi* II, 35). When Daifang ultimately surrendered to Paekche sometime between 355 and 369, its remaining residents were absorbed into Paekche. These men and women of Chinese ancestry contributed to the development of the Paekche state and culture (Song 2004, 22-23). Thus, Paekche, from the beginning, were comprised of three primary groups of residents: the ruling elites from the north, the indigenous Han people, and the immigrants and their descendents of Chinese ancestry.

By the time of King Kunch'ogo in the late fourth century, the Paekche kingdom developed strong enough to lead successful military campaigns against Koguryŏ. In 372, he sent tribute to the Eastern Jin court in southern China and was recognized with a Chinese title. This tribute mission not only signifies Paekche's sufficient resources but its technical capability to reach China by sailing across the Yellow Sea. From earliest times, the peninsular peoples could reach China by land, travelling counterclockwise along the Yellow Sea and Bohai Sea coasts via the Liaodong peninsula and then all the way down to the Shandong peninsula. As Koguryŏ expanded and harmed its neighbors, Paekche explored sea routes, and thus the Yellow Sea became the center of traffic in early East Asia by linking the Korean peninsula to the Chinese east coast and the Japanese archipelago

The less challenging way to navigate to the Shandong peninsula was to sail along the Yellow Sea and Bohai Sea shores, but this also invited Koguryō's interference. Kunch'ogo's successful communication with the Eastern Jin dynasty suggests that he was able to send his envoys across the Yellow Sea directly from Korea's west coast to China's Shandong peninsula. Their shortest distance to cross the middle of the Yellow Sea was approximately 125 miles, sailing from the tip of the Hwanghae peninsula to the tip of the Shandong peninsula (Sin 2005, 37). This sea route ensured freedom from Koguryō's attacks as long as present-day Hwanghae province located north of the Han River was under Paekche's control. Paekche safely dispatched fourteen more official missions to the Chinese dynasties in the next hundred years (Best 1982, 486-487).

Kunch'ogo's effort to find allies across the sea led to Paekche's diplomacy with the Yamato state in the Japan archipelago in 366. According to the *Nihon shoki*, Paekche envoys dispatched to the Kaya states happened to come in contact with a man sent by the Yamato government. In the following year, Paekche reportedly sent its envoys to Yamato, having no apparent difficulties in crossing the Korea strait (*Nihon shoki* I, 300-301). Whether or not this legendary account reflects a historical event, it is likely that Paekche initially contacted the Yamato state through the intermediary of the southern Kaya states, the closest peninsular states to the archipelago. When countering Koguryō's southern incursions in 400, Paekche utilized troops from Yamato and other archipelago powers as seen in the inscriptions on the Koguryō king Kwanggaet'o's stele (Hatada 1979).

### **The Southern Expansion and Diplomacy in the Sixth Century**

We now fast forward to the fall of the Paekche capital Hansōng to Koguryō in 475, which cast a long shadow on Paekche's development in the sixth century and beyond. Having lost the Han River region, the Paekche ruling house moved south and selected Ungjin, present-day Kongju, and later Sabi, present-day Puyō, in the Kūm River region. This move allowed the kingdom to rebuild its foundation and extend its authority in the southern peninsula, making up for the lost fertile land by the Han River. King Tongsōng (r. 479-501) first tightened his control over the Yōngsan River valley in the southwestern corner of the peninsula. The settlements in this region had been semi-independent with unique culture as demonstrated by their giant jar coffins, but they, at the same time, had mediated Paekche with the Japanese archipelago (Yoshii 2004; Yi Hyōn-hye 2000). Tongsōng's military expedition to present-day Kwangju and subjugation of the surrounding area are recorded in the *Samguk sagi* (II, 73, Tongsōng, year 20).

Next, Paekche pushed eastward to the areas near the Sōmjīn river where Tae Kaya in present-day Koryōng had recently extended its influence. In 512, according to the *Nihon shoki*, King Muryōng (501-523) asked Yamato to support his takeover of upper Tari, lower Tari, P'ada, and Muro. Many scholars are now in general agreement that these places were located near the Sōmjīn River (Kim Chōng-hak 1981, 168; Pak Ch'ōn-su 2007, 240). Muryōng then contended with Tae Kaya over the control of Kimun and Tasa, present-day Namwōn and Hadong in the middle and lower stream of the Sōmjīn River (*Nihon shoki* II, 197-198, Keitai, year 23). Paekche's takeover of Tasa was particularly important as it facilitated river transportation for the region as well as access to the Korea strait that linked to the Japanese archipelago (Kim T'ae-sik 1993, 134-136). These newly conquered regions in the southwest provided Paekche with people and their skills new to Paekche.

As Paekche's influence moved eastward, its relationship with Silla worsened. Silla was Paekche's ally through much of the fifth century and reportedly sent ten thousand troops to aid Paekche at the time of Koguryō's incursion in 475. The alliance between the two continued in Tongsōng's reign as he married a Silla aristocratic woman. The relationship turned sour in the sixth century when they competed over the control of the Kaya states. By the mid sixth century, their relationship deteriorated as Silla took snatched the coveted Han River region in 554 and

completed its annexation of all Kaya states in 562. Surrounded by two enemy states, Silla and Koguryō, Paekche continued to work on its friendly relations with the Chinese dynasties and the archipelago powers.

Paekche's reciprocal relationship with China continued through the sixth century. The Chinese dynasties provided Paekche kings and top leaders imposing titles as well as prestige goods and cultural items. These titles and goods helped strengthen the king's authorities and impress current and would-be subjects in and outside of the Paekche domain in the peninsula.

Although Tongsōng's first envoys to China was blockaded by Koguryō in 484, his second and third missions succeeded in reaching the Southern Qi court and received Chinese titles for him in 486 and 490. Nevertheless, it was King Muryōng who demonstrated a firm grip of his domain and reconfirmed Paekche's strength in the international arena. He was able to send impressive tribute missions to the Liang court twice, in 512 and 521, report his successful fights against Koguryō, and received the Liang emperor's praise that Paekche had once again grown to be a strong state (*Samguk sagi* II, 78). What made these missions possible was Paekche's establishment of new sea lanes allowing navigation across the Yellow Sea with no interference by the Koguryō navy. The new route that linked the mouth of the Kūm River to the mouth of the Huai River, just south of the Shandong peninsula, was approximately three times as long as the previous route from the Hwanghae peninsula to the tip of the Shandong peninsula. The longer navigation across the Yellow Sea required more knowledge, skills, and resources. Although Koguryō, and later Silla, dominated the Han River region and thus the northern coasts of the Yellow Sea, Paekche had the freedom to navigate through the new sea lanes in the southern Yellow Sea (Sin 2005, 38-39).

Thanks to the new sea routes, King Sōng maintained Paekche's close ties with Liang, and Widōk (r. 554-598) opened diplomacy with the Chinese northern dynasties, Northern Qi and Northern Zhou from 567 through 586. Besides official diplomacy, Paekche had other channels to tap into the rich Chinese culture, as represented by the monk Palchōng's extended study in Liang (Best 2006, 137). Southern Chinese techniques and styles employed in the building of Muryōng's tomb also suggest much work done by a large group of Chinese artisans (Yoshii 2001b). Paekche embraced the Chinese script, learning, and statecraft and adapted them to its own needs at this time.

With Paekche's cultural and maritime strength, Muryōng was able to promote exchanges with Yamato and regional chiefs in the archipelago. In 513, Muryōng sent King Keitai (r. 507-531) of Yamato a delegation led by two generals and Hozumi no Oshiyama, a man of the archipelago living in Tari near the Sōmjīn River. The delegation offered to Keitai Tan Yang-I, a scholar of Chinese learning particularly knowledgeable in the Five Classics. Three years later, another scholar Ko An-mu was sent to Yamato as Tan's replacement. These two scholars' last names suggest their background of Chinese-descent. Similar exchanges were made under the reign of Sōng in 553. It appears that Paekche scholars of medicine, divination, and calendar were in residence, and they were to be replaced by a new group of scholars in return for horses, barges, bows, and arrows that Yamato supplied to Paekche (*Nihon shoki* II, 190, 194, and 258). Sōng apparently expanded the policy of regularly supplying talented personnel to Yamato.

Paekche's cultural aid to the Yamato state rose to a new level in the mid sixth century. In 552 (although more scholars believe it was in 538), Sōng dispatched two officials and presented King Kinmei (r. 539-571) with an image of Buddha in gilt-gold, several cloth coverings, and many volumes of sutras. In his memorial, Sōng recommended Buddhism as the most excellent doctrines, surpassing the knowledge of Confucius (*Nihon shoki* II, 255). Buddhism had entered Paekche by the late fourth century was gaining popularity among the ruling class through the fifth century. The spread of Buddhism in the Chinese dynasties was an important factor, but, even more importantly, Paekche was in need of higher spirituality at this time. The desire to seek comfort and refuge in Buddhism is well depicted in the wish of King Widōk to join a monastery as a monk upon his father Sōng's death in the war against Silla (*Nihon shoki* II, 268). Buddhism

served as a powerful vehicle to transport cultures and peoples to Korea from as far as India and central Asia. Monk Palchōng's travel to and from Liang China was already mentioned.

Paekche's extensive network in Asia is demonstrated through its gifts of people and goods to Yamato as mentioned in the *Nihon shoki*. In 542, Sōng sent his envoy along with two slaves and goods from Khmer from Southeast Asia. In 599, King Pōp (r. 599-600) sent Yamato a camel, a donkey, two sheep, and a white pheasant. In 612, a one of the Paekche men who migrated to Yamato turned out to be a skilled performer in mask dances of India and Tibet, which he had learned in southern China (*Nihon shoki* II, 234; III, 6 and 25). Some Paekche men clearly traveled as far as southern China and Southeast Asia and brought back new goods, knowledge, and skills.

### A Web of Connections

Scholars used to think that the Yamato state had completed its basic hierarchical structure and controlled much of western Japan by the middle of the fifth century. Their argument was often based on the assumption that local chieftains residing as far as in Kyushu and eastern Japan had spent years serving the king in Yamato. Prof. Gina Barnes, for instance, assumed that by the late fifth century the Yamato king had penetrated into regional chiefs' territories and obtained direct access to individuals at the bottom of their hierarchy (Barnes 1988, 27). More recently, however, Japanese scholars believe that the Yamato ruler, even in the late fifth century, simply led an extensive alliance of tribal polities outside of the Yamato region. While the Yamato ruler received the chiefs' loyalty and military service, the regional chiefs enjoyed being part of Yamato's vast trade network and may have even obtained Chinese titles via Yamato's tributary relations with China. The alliance was based primarily on mutual benefits and personal loyalty, and therefore could be severed by chiefs who saw little merit (Oyama 1999, 73; Kito 1976, 174).

The fragile nature of the alliance is demonstrated in the Iwai Rebellion of 527, in which the Iwai clan in present-day Fukuoka in northern Kyushu fought against the Yamato forces. The *Nihon shoki* relates that Silla, wishing to block Yamato's military aid to Kaya, may have prompted the chiefly clan Iwai to rebel (*Nihon shoki* II, 195). This amply speaks of the regional power's independent dealings with Silla and other peninsular states. Recent archaeological excavations of Iwai tombs in fact reveal unique burial styles and heavy use of peninsular goods. After the suppression of the Iwai Rebellion, the Yamato government placed northern Kyushu under its firm control (Yamao 1999, 60).

Western Kyushu was another area with strong connections with the Korean peninsula. Ariake Sea, a large bay curving in present-day Kūmamoto and Saga prefectures in western Kyushu, used to be a larger inland sea in the first millennium, and archaeological finds from fifth-century and sixth-century sites suggest a league of powerful chiefs located along the shore. These chiefs shared common burial cultures and possibly maintained a degree of independence from Yamato (Yamao 1999, 137). The bay served as a haven easily accessible to travelers sailing from southwestern Korea. The *Nihon shoki* relates that a boat carrying Paekche monks and laymen drifted to Ashikita harbor in 609 (III, 21, Suiko year 17, month 4). Eta-funayama Tomb located by the Kikuchi River in present-day Kūmamoto near the bay is known for rich burial goods of peninsular origins. While the goods from the late fifth century are of Tae Kaya origins, the goods from the sixth century are of Paekche origins, showing a clear shift in the interred partnership. The Paekche goods include gold earrings and gilt-bronze shoes nearly identical to the ones found in King Muryōng's tomb (Pak Ch'ōn-su 2007, 189).

Paekche's close connection with the Ariake Sea region is illustrated in the story of Illa (J: Nichira), a high-ranking Paekche official (Talsōl), recorded as an event of 583 in the *Nihon shoki* (II, 295-299, Bidatsu, year 12). His father is introduced as head of the settlement called Ashikita in the country of Hi, present-day Kūmamoto prefecture, but he is also referred to as Arishito. We

can assume that Arishito was a title for a Kaya leader, seeing the example of another Arishito, a Tae Kaya leader who opposed Silla officials accompanying the Tae Kaya prince's bride from Silla (*Nihon shoki* II, 198). The fact that he was a chief in the Ariake Sea region and yet held the Kaya title Arishito suggests a special connection between Ariake Sea and southern Korea. Illa states in the story that his father was sent to the peninsula by Ootomo no Kanamura during the reign of Senka (r. 536-539), and this seems to relate to the *Nihon shoki* account of Senka's having Kanamura assist Imna (Kaya) and Paekche against Silla's invasions (*Nihon shoki* II, 222). Whether or not the Yamato king in fact initiated Kanamura's son's peninsular expedition, it is likely that military men from the archipelago, including Arishito from western Kyushu, took their troops to aid the Kaya states, being assaulted by Silla at this time. What transpired after Arishito's participation in the expedition is not explained in the *Nihon shoki*. We can only speculate that he moved on to Paekche, married a local woman, and fathered Illa, who probably grew up in Paekche.

When Kibi no Amabe no Atahe Hashima visited Illa's house in Paekche, a Paekche woman came out and spoke in the Paekche language. The Paekche king initially did not wish to let go Illa, a valuable official, but eventually gave in with the understanding that Illa could assist King Bidatsu (r. 572-585) in restoring the Kaya states. Despite the *Nihon shoki* treatment of Illa as a Yamato subject, he obviously lived in Paekche most of his life but moved to work for Yamato in his final years.

The *Nihon shoki's* goes on to say that Illa and his entourage first stayed in Kibi and then arrived in Naniwa, where he officially offered his armor and message to Bidatsu. Illa's message included a warning of Paekche's plan to have three hundred ships full of its people settle in Kyushu, and he encouraged Bidatsu to ambush the ships and slay all including women and children. Perhaps due to such anti-Paekche behavior, Illa was assassinated by his Paekche co-worker; the Ashikita clansmen buried his body and executed his murderer.

This complex story portrays Illa's familiarity with the two worlds, Paekche and the Japanese archipelago, as well as his divided loyalty between Paekche and western Kyushu. He was a loyal subject of Paekche while in Paekche, but he became dedicated to Yamato's interests upon arrival. He was a military man in armor and familiar with military strategies. From the Paekche ruler's perspective, Illa was a useful official well connected to his father's clan by Ariake Sea as well as the Otomo clan that prominently took charge of Yamato's military affairs. From Yamato's perspective, Illa's linguistic ability, knowledge, and experience from Paekche were invaluable.

Illa was not the only Paekche official of archipelago descent. Many the twenty Paekche delegations appearing in the *Nihon shoki* accounts from the 540s and 550s included men of archipelago descent. Some scholars count eight such Paekche officials, while others identify as many as sixteen such individuals (Kasai 2000, 111; Yi Chae-sök 553). The discrepancies come from ambiguities in their names as well as the lack of their background information. Of the eight Paekche officials who clearly carried Japanese names, four had the surname Mononobe, two Shinano, and one Ki. Most of them are recorded with Paekche official ranks. Mononobe no Magamu for instance, appeared with Sidök, the eighth rank, at the time of his first dispatch to Yamato in 543, and returns with Talsöl, the second rank and the highest of all envoys to Yamato, eleven years later. The three other Mononobe individuals are referred to as Nasöl, the sixth rank. Through the dispatch of these officials, King Söng appealed for Yamato assistance in resolving the Kaya issues. His international outlook and diplomatic skills are noteworthy, but who were these officials of Japanese descent?

A careful study of the *Nihon shoki* accounts from the late fifth century reveals that, just as Illa, these officials were the descendants of archipelago generals and soldiers who had moved to Paekche and southern Korea decades before. Immediately following the fall of Hansöng in 475, the Yamato government dispatched troops to Paekche in more than one occasions. The *Nihon shoki* claims that King Yuryaku (r. 470s?) assisted Paekche's move of the capital to Ungjin. This

obviously means that Yamato sent a relief army probably comprised of soldiers from Kyushu. Three years later, Yuryaku hand-picked Tongšōng, who was born to Konji, King Kaero's (r. 455-475) younger brother, and raised in Yamato, for the Paekche throne, and had five hundred Kyushu soldiers accompany him home. The *Nihon shoki* also mentions that in the same year Achi and Umakai of Kyushu led naval troops to attack the Koguryō troops and aid Paekche (*Nihon shoki* II, 133-134). Although other regions of the archipelago dispatched their soldiers as discussed below, Kyushu sent by far the largest number of generals and soldiers to southern Korea, because of its geographic location and relative autonomy. It appears that the Kyushu chiefs sought to obtain goods, information, and technology from the peninsula in return for military mobilization, whether or not the Yamato government was involved.

While some of the archipelago military men who must have returned home upon the completion of their expeditions, others probably remained in Paekche and assisted Paekche rulers. Others may have drifted away and become traders on their own. Those who remained got married with local women and fathered children, who in turn worked for Paekche, returned to the base of their fathers in Kyushu, or traveled back and forth across the Korea strait as trader-translators. Indeed, the *Nihon shoki* mentions that quite a few archipelago men stayed in southern Korea, married local women and fathered "Karako," or "children of Korea" (*Nihon shoki* II, 44, Kimmei year 2). Some of them were sent to Yamato as part of the Paekche delegations. Hozumi no Oshiyama, who led Paekche's delegates in 513, may be a good example.

Archaeological studies support the activities of Kyushu men in Paekche. Nine keyhole-shaped mound tombs from the late fifth to early sixth centuries, very similar to their counterparts in the archipelago, were found in the outer areas of the Yōngsan River region, and scholars believe that the interred came from northern and western Kyushu. The tombs contained a wide array of burial goods from Paekche's capital, the Yōngsan River region, Kaya, and the archipelago, indicating their far-reaching activities (Hong 2006, 41-45; Kwon 2008, 101; Pa, Ch'ōn-su 2007, 281-282; Pak, Sun-bal 2001, 255).

The land of Ki (originally meant "tree"), later called Kii, in present-day Wakayama prefecture was another Japanese region that enjoyed close ties with Paekche. Several Ki individuals are mentioned in the *Nihon shoki* as key figures in Yamato's dealings with the Korean states. For instance, it is said that King Yuryaku sent Ki no Oyumi, together with generals from other prominent clans, and had them attack Silla towns. When Oyumi fell ill and died, his son Ki no Oiwa hurried to Silla to take over the troops. Later Oiwa and his men were invited to visit Paekche (*Nihon shoki* II, 117-120, Yuryaku year 9, month 3). Some years later around 480, Ki no Oiwa appeared again as a man of ambition who allied with Kaya generals and fought against the Paekche army. The Kaya generals and troops were defeated and killed, and Oiwa finally returned to Japan (*Nihon shoki* II, 162, Kenzo year 3). Again, we have no reason to believe that Ki no Oiwa's involvement in the peninsula was a result of the Yamato king's directives as it is likely that the Ki clan had its own motives and resources.

There were many reasons why we find Ki men playing active roles in the exchanges across the Korea strait. The mouth of the Ki River, just south of present-day Osaka, served as an invaluable port for the Yamato state from the mid fifth century (Kanaizuka 2002). In addition, the region produced large trees of high quality, thanks to warm and wet climate. We know from archaeological finds that early residents of the Japanese archipelago built canoes (dugouts) as large as twenty meters in length and two meters in width, and they were invariably made of *Cryptomeria* (Japanese cedar) and Camphor trees. The country of Ki was particularly blessed with these trees. Ki also produced *Sciadopitys verticillata* (J: Koyamaki), a tough tree indigenous and available only in Japanese mountains, which was used for building coffins for Paekche royalty and aristocrats. King Muryōng's tomb contained his and his queen's coffins made of large panels from several-hundred-year-old Koyamaki trees from the country of Ki. Because the coffins showed unique Paekche designs, they were undoubtedly built by skilled Paekche artisans who apparently had good supply of Japanese lumber for their work (O 2004, 260; Yoshii 2001a).

The rich lumber resources allowed the people of Ki to become skilled boat builders and seafarers (Kishi 1966, 124-128). As result, many Ki men appear in the early accounts concerning the archipelago's involvement in the Korean peninsula.

Frequent migrations from Kyushu, Ki, and other parts of the archipelago to the southern peninsula can also be attributed to the rise of Tae Kaya in the second half of the fifth century. As Prof. Pak Ch'ŏn-su discusses, Tae Kaya goods are found ubiquitously from archaeological sites of this period throughout the Japanese archipelago, and the rise of Tae Kaya had much to do with its prosperous trade with many partners in the archipelago. Before Paekche's encroachment in the sixth century, Tae Kaya controlled the Sŏmjŏn River region including its mouth Hadong and thus monopolized the inland transportation route as well as access to the southern coast and the Korea strait (Pak Ch'ŏn-su 2008, 135-137). While many Tae Kaya immigrants settled in the archipelago and spread their culture and technologies, some people of the Japanese archipelago migrated to southern Korea to facilitate Tae Kaya's exchanges with the archipelago. The existence of several archipelago-style tombs along the southern coast from the same period suggests that powerful men from the archipelago took residence in southern Kaya possibly as a middleman (Hong 2006, 40-41).

In the sixth century, Paekche actively utilized these men of Japanese origins available on the southern peninsula, in an effort to further their interests. The Paekche rulers had no hesitation to employ men of foreign origins and dispatch them to outer regions, whenever necessary, particularly in their dealings with Kaya and other needs related to the Yamato. We can conjecture that Paekche's multi-ethnic society allowed its rulers to be open and flexible to those who had come and joined from outside.

## Conclusion

From its early years, Paekche amalgamated diverse population and cultures, thanks to its location and origins. In addition to the indigenous population in the Han River region, the ruling class primarily came from the north, and the Chinese residents of Lelang and Daifang migrated particularly at their demise in the fourth century. The Han River basin, centrally located in the peninsula and accessible by sea also drew in migrants from other regions and states.

Paekche sought to restore its former standing through several objectives after Koguryŏ's incursion of 475 forced it to move to the southwestern Korean peninsula. First, it attempted to maintain close ties with the southern and northern Chinese dynasties for political advantage and cultural benefits. Second, Paekche continuously pushed to extend its territory all the way to the southwestern and southern coasts of the peninsula. In the process, the kingdom inevitably faced oppositions from the Kaya states and Silla, which occupied the southern and southeastern corners of the peninsula respectively. Third, to deal with the perpetual conflicts in the southern peninsula, Paekche allied itself with Yamato and other chiefly powers in the Japanese archipelago that lay across the Korea strait.

Paekche's effort to strengthened official relations with China led to the establishment of new sea lanes that linked the mouth of Kŏm River to the south of the Shandong peninsula across the southern Yellow Sea, avoiding the northern Yellow Sea controlled by Koguryŏ. This in turn necessitated gaining complete control over the southwestern corner of the peninsula where there were human resources and a long tradition of seafaring. The Yŏngsan River region also had a long history of close ties with the archipelago, especially the political powers in Kyushu, and they in turn probably strengthened Paekche's ties with Kyushu.

Although the records of Paekche's interaction with China outside of official diplomacy are scarce, we can speculate informal exchanges between Paekche and the Chinese mainland. Paekche monks traveled to China, and Chinese artisans worked for the Paekche ruling class. Trades and travels were extended to Southeast Asia and Inner Asia by way of China. The fact

that Paekche even shared some of the exotic goods and skills with the Yamato state reveals that Paekche had enough supply for domestic consumption. Paekche's ability to employ talented men of Chinese descent was extremely helpful not only for its own administration and cultural prosperity but for its diplomacy with Japan. Muryōng provided Yamato with scholars of Confucianism and knowledge from China, and Sōng dispatched Buddhist monks along with Buddhist texts and statues. Such cultural aid made lasting contributions to the development of the fledgling Yamato state.

In addition to its relations with the Yamato king, Paekche related to many chiefly powers, including the chiefs of Ariake Sea in western Kyushu and the Ki clan of present-day Wakayama. Skilled Paekche individuals moved to the archipelago and impacted on its cultural and political lives. While some of them were dispatched by the Paekche court, many migrated to the archipelago on their own. By the same token, men of Japanese descent moved to the southern peninsula and at the same time maintained their ties to their place of origin in the archipelago. Some of these individuals migrated voluntarily as traders while others came and settled down after military campaigns. Although the *Nihon shoki* often depicts these individuals as Yamato officials or Japanese residents in Korea, they in fact had divided loyalty and identified themselves with either Paekche or Yamato, depending on the circumstances. Paekche embraced these men of Japanese origins and employed them to enhance its political negotiations with Yamato.

Paekche's diversity reached its height in the sixth century, a time of great cultural interchange and rapid political development in East Asia. The kingdom actively employed and integrated capable individuals who had come from outside in accordance with its interests. An atmosphere of flexibility and inclusiveness must have existed around the Paekche court, allowing diverse groups of people to contribute. Although such measures were taken for political and military gains, their most important contribution, they enhanced Paekche's rich culture in the end.

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