

Special Research Project Report  
on the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and  
Associated Sites in the Munakata Region

2024

Preservation and Utilization Council of  
“Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Site in the Munakata Region”



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**Special Research Project on the World Heritage Site:  
the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites  
in the Munakata Region**

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# **1. Foreword**



## Foreword

SATO Makoto

### Introduction

The Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2017. At the time of inscription, the evaluation of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was different to the content of the nomination submitted by Japan, instead recommending that inscription should be limited to only the island of Okinoshima and its three attendant reefs. However, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee recognized Nakatsu-miya on Oshima, Hetsu-miya, Munakata Taisha on the Kyushu mainland (Tajima, Munakata City), and the Shimbaru-Nuyama Mounded Tomb Group (Fukutsu City) as all constituting an integral part of the property, and approved the inscription in accordance with the nomination document submitted by Japan. Though, the Committee called for further work to be done relating to the property, in particular that, “Continuing and expanding research programmes on maritime exchanges, navigation and related cultural and ritual practices within the State Party and its neighbouring countries.”

In order to respond to the observations and recommendations for additional study set out by the Committee, the Preservation and Utilization Council of “Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region,” comprised of the organizations responsible for the preservation and management, and presentation and utilization of the property, namely Fukuoka Prefecture, Munakata City, Fukutsu City, and Munakata Taisha, decided to implement a special research project concerning “Maritime Navigation, Exchange and Religion in Ancient East Asia.”

### I . Implementation of the Special Research Project

In order to respond to the recommendation set out by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at the time of the Property’s inscription, that, “Continuing and expanding research programmes on maritime exchanges, navigation and related cultural and ritual practices within the State Party and its neighbouring countries,” the Special Research Project on “Maritime Navigation, Exchange and Religion in Ancient East Asia” was initiated.

The specific research topics were “maritime navigation,” “exchanges,” “rituals,” and “continuity of faith,” reflecting the observations of the ICOMOS recommendations. Project researchers were invited from Japan, China, Korea, the Netherlands, the U.S., each of whom are experts in the abovementioned fields, to conduct thematic research. Three international review meetings and an international symposium on the Special Research Project were also held, relating to the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region. In these meetings, the members of the Advisory Committee of the Preservation and Utilization Council and invited researchers of the Special Research Project were joined by other specialist researchers from Japan, the Netherlands and other countries, which helped to develop a multifaceted study from an even broader perspective. Members of the Advisory Committee and researchers of the Special Research Project also engaged in visits and surveys of various related sites, including those in China, the Republic of Korea, and Japan (Noto and Tsushima), which provided useful insights into the research topic.

The Special Research Project was initially planned to be implemented over a three-year period from 2018 to 2020, but the global pandemic had a major adverse

impact on study and research, with the result that the project was extended to the end of fiscal 2022 (end of March 2023). The presentations and reports from the international review meetings, public lectures and symposium are all publicly available on the Preservation and Utilization Council website, both in summarized written form together with videos of presentations. The Special Research Project Outcomes Report Meeting held on March 12, 2023, also included a panel discussion in addition to reports, titled, “New Horizons for Research on Okinoshima: Looking back on five years of study.” It is through these various meetings and media that we seek to present an overall view of this project, and elucidate future challenges.

## II . Research outcomes of the Special Research Project

Aiming to realize the inscription on the World Heritage list of the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region, in order to demonstrate the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) from a globally-oriented and human perspective, the forerunner of the Preservation and Utilization Council, the World Heritage Promotion Committee of “Okinoshima Island and Related Sites in the Munakata Region” worked over a three-year period from 2010 to 2012 to conduct commissioned research on the value of the property, requesting the cooperation and insight of 31 appropriately qualified researchers from Japan and overseas.

Research was conducted to re-assess the historical value of Munakata and Okinoshima from a global historical perspective and at a contemporary academic level. Previously, the outcomes of the excavations of the Okinoshima ritual sites, which were conducted from 1954 with the support of the Munakata Shrine Revival Association, were compiled into two large and wide-ranging reports: *Okinoshima: Ritual Sites of Okitsu-Miya, Munakata Shrine*, and *Okinoshima: Ritual Sites of Okitsu-Miya, Munakata Shrine, Part II, Munakata*

*Okinoshima Archeological research (1969-1971) of religious sites on Okinoshima, Divine Island in Genkai-nada Sea*, Munakata Shrine Revival Association, (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1958,1961 and 1979). Since then all subsequent research had been conducted in accordance with the outcomes of those esteemed and outstanding research reports.

The 80,000 ritual items excavated from the ancient ritual sites on Okinoshima were designated as important cultural properties in 1959 in view of their historical, cultural and academic importance, and in 1962 they were collectively designated as a national treasure, “Excavated Items from Okitsu-miya, Munakata Taisha, Fukuoka Prefecture.” The precincts of Munakata Taisha, comprising Okitsu-miya on Okinoshima, Nakatsu-miya on Oshima, and Hetsu-miya (Munakata Taisha) in Tajima on mainland Kyushu, were designated as the historic site of “Munakata Taisha Shrine Precincts” in 1971. In addition, the entire forest covering Okinoshima itself had already been designated as a Natural Monument known as “Okinoshima Primeval Forest” in 1926.

Subsequently, various initiatives were undertaken to disseminate the outcomes of research on Okinoshima to a wider audience, including the *Munakata Okinoshima Exhibition* co-organized by the Idemitsu Museum of Arts and the Munakata Shrine Revival Association in 1977, and a book targeting the general public by YUBA Tomonori, *The Shosoin of the Sea: Munakata Okinoshima*, (Heibonsha, 1979). However, it may well be that the outcomes of the initial reports may have been simply overwhelming in their scope, because thereafter research on Okinoshima did not develop in any novel direction thereafter. Deserving of special mention, however, is INOUE Mitsusada, who, in his retirement year lecture at the University of Tokyo, discussed the Okinoshima ritual site and artifacts, compiling his findings in *Nihon kodai no oken to saishi* [*Ancient Japanese Kingship and Ritual*], (University of Tokyo Press, 1984), and also the fact that an exhibition room of the National Museum of Japanese History was used to exhibit the Okinoshima ritual site

and other artifacts using a full-sized replica. In a museum setting where visitors can gain a comprehensive overview of Japanese history, this exhibition accorded historical significance to the ritual sites of Okinoshima.

However, we had not seen young researchers working on new studies on Okinoshima's ritual sites and their place in ancient rituals for a long time. On the other hand, Japanese archaeology has also made great progress over the subsequent half-century, and the excavation of many ritual sites and artifacts has developed anew, with Shinto archaeological studies having come to be called ritual archaeological studies. In addition, there have also been many new developments in Japanese historiography relating to Shinto festivals and rituals in ancient history. Theoretical and religious studies of faith and festivals have also been greatly developed. Given that we stand on the cusp of a new stage for academic research in this area, the intention was to examine the ritual sites of Okinoshima not only from a Japanese perspective, but also from a global perspective. The many new findings and research outcomes that have emerged as a result of the commissioned research at the time of the World Heritage nomination dossier submission, and also as a result of this Special Research Project following inscription as the World Heritage Site, have brought about significant developments in studies relating to Okinoshima.

### **III. Other studies, research outcomes and their dissemination**

Separately from the Special Research Project, various studies and research relating to Munakata and Okinoshima are being implemented from different perspectives. The recording, investigation, and research of the current status of various historical sites and artifacts as the World Heritage Site and also as Japanese historical sites or national treasures are also being pursued from the standpoint of the respective cultural property managers. For example, the current status of the Okinoshima ritual

sites are being monitored as a World Heritage site by Munakata City, Fukuoka Prefecture, Munakata Taisha, and others, and records are being made through ongoing observation, understanding, and evaluation of the current status. Through such studies, the actual burden and impact on the archaeological sites caused by the streaked shearwater and natural disasters, etc., are being checked and monitored. In addition, the Shimpō-kan Museum of Munakata Taisha is also engaged in diligent efforts to preserve and manage the Okinoshima ritual objects that have been designated as national treasures. Detailed surveys of their current condition and the need for restoration are being conducted by Munakata Taisha, with the cooperation of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Fukuoka Prefecture, and experts in archaeology and conservation. Furthermore, at the Shimbaru-Nuyama Mounded Tomb Group in Fukutsu City, which is a constituent component of the World Heritage property, excavation surveys to obtain data for site maintenance and disaster restoration are being conducted by Fukutsu City on an ongoing basis. These are beginning to clarify the specific shape, extent, and structure of some of the tumuli within the mounded tomb group.

The Preservation and Utilization Council publishes a journal called *Okinoshima Research Monograph* (currently Vol. 10), which features papers related to research and surveys by relevant specialists, curators and researchers from Fukuoka Prefecture, Munakata City, Fukutsu City and Munakata Taisha, who comprise the membership of the Council. The contents of *Okinoshima Research Monograph* are also publicly available on the Council's website.

On the Council's website it is also possible to view the research outcomes and report of the Special Research Project noted above, as well as the details of symposia, lectures and courses held to date. What is more, *Okinoshima Research* journal is also available as part of the digital archive. The website features contents targeting the general public and children, including

introductions to the property and pictures showing its current status. These are designed to be accessible and enjoyable for everyone to learn about the World Heritage Site. Please take a look if you have the opportunity.

### **Conclusion: Issues remaining for the future**

In the intervening time since the inscription of the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region in 2017, in accordance with the recommendation of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee that, up until fiscal year 2023 a great deal of time and effort has been expended on related research.

In the Special Research Project advanced predominantly by the Preservation and Utilization Council, researchers from Japan and overseas were commissioned as appropriate to conduct field surveys and elucidate new research results from various perspectives and in an interdisciplinary manner. The outcomes of research on ancient maritime navigation, exchanges, rituals, and beliefs as seen in relation to Okinoshima were discussed internationally with related researchers in Japan and overseas at the international review meetings in 2018-2022. After a general review meeting in 2022, we have been able to summarize the results in a final report in 2023.

In addition, basic surveys and research on the conservation, management, restoration, utilization, and dissemination of each component asset and historic site, etc., have also produced steady results. These studies and research outcomes have accordingly served to raise the historical and cultural value of the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region for the

world and humanity.

The outcomes of this Special Research Project are heard to be highly evaluated by UNESCO. The project thus adeptly underscores the critical importance of ensuring that the act of inscription itself is not an end in and of itself, but rather that endeavors continue to be made to clarify and further enhance the value of World Heritage Sites following inscription.

Incidentally, although this project has achieved significant results, it is of course not the end to efforts to elucidate the historical value of the World Heritage Sites. There is still ample room to pursue the issues highlighted by UNESCO. Research and surveys for the conservation, management, restoration, utilization, and dissemination of archaeological sites and artifacts also need to be continued. Based on this project, further efforts to elucidate and enhance the value of the World Heritage Site should be continued and expanded. It could well be said that a new next stage for research projects and the dissemination of their outcomes is now expected.

In addition, the establishment of an organization akin to a “World Heritage Center” that would bring together the national government, prefectures, cities, Munakata Taisha, local communities, and the public and private sectors is also being proposed and considered to serve as a base for such research and study projects, and to provide guidance on the World Heritage Site, and the dissemination of its value. We hope for cooperation and support from various sources in our ongoing efforts to set a future course that will further improve and enhance prospects for the World Heritage Sites.

## **2. Reports**



# Okinoshima in Prehistoric and Ancient East Asian Seas: Seafaring, Vessels and Maritime Networks

AKIMICHI Tomoya

The “Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region” was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on July 9, 2017. In the East Asian maritime region, stretching from the coastal zones of mainland Asia including China and the Korean Peninsula, to the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, Tsushima Strait, and the Sea of Japan, rising sea levels that occurred during the late Pleistocene and early Holocene eras resulted in the creation of extensive island seascapes. In parallel with these geological and oceanographic changes, new exchanges of people, goods, and information through vessel-borne voyages came to be realized. This paper aims to shed light on Okinoshima’s role and position in the prehistoric and ancient East Asian maritime world of seafaring, vessels, navigational safety rituals, and maritime networks.

## I . Seafaring and the high seas in the East Asian maritime region

### 1. Currents and tides

Let us start by considering prehistoric and ancient seafaring in the East Asian maritime region in terms of atmospheric and oceanographic phenomena. The major ocean currents in this region are the Kuroshio Current, which runs from off the coast of Taiwan in a northeastern direction, and the continental coastal currents. The Kuroshio flows to the west of the Ryukyu Islands, diverging south of 30°N, 128°E, and becoming the Yellow Sea Warm Current and the Tsushima Warm Current on the west side (Hishida et al. 1990). The Kuroshio is approximately 100 kilometers wide, with a maximum velocity of 4 knots/hour, and is characterized by high water temperatures and oligotrophic waters. Due

to the influence of this current all sea voyages that head southward from Kyushu tend to drift eastward. Prevailing easterly winds are therefore particularly important for sailing vessels to correct this drift.

During the *Kentoshi* era, the period from AD 630-894 when Japanese missions paid visits to Tang Dynasty China, the route taken from Kyushu to China *via* the Ryukyu Islands is known as the “Southern Islands Route,” but it would appear that this was not the usual route. Depending on the season, the Kuroshio Countercurrent flows in a circular clockwise direction between the Kuroshio Current and the Ryukyu Islands. Although its velocity (0.6 knots/hour) does not match that of the Kuroshio Current, it becomes apparent in the spring, and could have been the current that was followed on the “Southern Islands Route” (Uchiyama et al. 2016). The existence of other currents should also be noted, namely the Goto Countercurrent, which flows southward off the east coast of the Goto Islands to the west of Kyushu, and moving southward, the Koshiki southerly current, off the coast of the Koshiki Islands.

*The Nihon Shoki* (The Chronicles of Japan; Vol. 25, AD 645-654) recounts an event where in the fourth year of Hakuchi (AD 653), during the second mission to Tang Dynasty China, the second vessel of the mission (with 120 crew and passengers aboard) went adrift and capsized, and only five of the people on board washed ashore on Takeshima Island in the Osumi Island chain of southern Kyushu. It is recorded that these people made a bamboo raft using bamboo growing on the island (*Pleioblastus linearis*) and managed to escape and return to Kyoto. This would suggest that the crew of the shipwrecked vessel were carried on this current.

The Yellow Sea, on the other hand, is located in the area north of the line connecting the mouth of the Yangtze

River and Jeju Island and south of the line connecting the northern tip of the Shandong Peninsula and the southern edge of the Liaodong Peninsula.

After diverging from the Kuroshio Current, the Yellow Sea Warm Current flows northward through the Yellow Sea and the Bohai Sea. This maritime region corresponds to the “North Route” taken by the *Kentoshi* era envoy vessels (Fig. 3). From the bay of the Bohai Sea, the current flows southward, following the Chinese mainland as the Yellow Sea Coastal Current. Along the way this Yellow Sea Coastal Current then intersects with the coastal brackish water zones of the Yangtze River. South of the Yangtze River, the Zejiang-Fujian Coastal Current flows in a southerly direction (Yanguang Dou et al. 2016). Documented cases of envoy vessels returning from Mingzhou in China to Japan drifting down to Annam (Vietnam) would suggest that these vessels drifted on the Zejiang-Fujian Coastal Current.

The Tsushima Warm Current is a branched flow of the Kuroshio Current, which has one-tenth the flow and one-quarter the speed (0.5 to 1.0 knots) of the main current, and its power reaches a minimum in March and maximum in December. It flows through the Sea of Japan, where it reverses north of 40°N latitude, becoming the Liman Cold Current, which flows southward along the coastal areas of Russia, North Korea and the Korean Peninsula.

The Liman Cold Current is also closely related to the voyage routes of the Balhae (Bohai) and *Kentoshi* envoys. A detached bone harpoon head excavated from the Saka shell mound Jomon site on Tsushima may have been used to hunt sea animals, but detached bone harpoons were originally a type of fishing equipment typically found in Hokkaido and Tohoku, which would suggest that northern hunters or fishers may have journeyed southwards to Tsushima, riding the Liman Cold Current (Nagatome 1997; Masaki 2008).

According to the FRA-AORI Tsushima Warm Current Observatory (FATO) Project, a joint research project implemented by the Atmosphere and Ocean Research

Institute, The University of Tokyo (AORI), and the Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA), although the coastal current of Tsushima Warm Current is marked between Kyushu and the Oki Islands, no marked coastal current is found beyond Oki. Although both Offshore Northern and Southern Currents converge around the Tsugaru Strait, currents fluctuate largely between coastal and offshore zones. Only the Subarctic Front Current flows northward to the northern reaches of Hokkaido. The Offshore Northern Current reaches from the southeastern part of the Korean Peninsula to the Tsugaru Peninsula according to the flow path average recorded over the course of the past 25 years. In the Sea of Japan, these currents are thought to have had a significant impact, not only on voyages along the Japanese coast, but also on transoceanic voyages (transoceanic routes of the *Kentoshi* era envoy vessels to Tang Dynasty China, and vessels of Silla, as well as trans-Japan Sea routes of Balhae envoy vessels).

Next, let us consider tides. The southwestern and southern coastal regions of Korea stretching from Jeollanam-do Province to Gyeongsangnam-do Province are dotted with many islands and are known as being difficult to navigate due to rapid tides, and marked tidal level fluctuations. In the Tsushima Strait region, the rising tide flows from northeast to southwest while the retreating tide flows from southwest to northeast and the strongest currents appear three to four hours after high tide in the northeast current, and three to four hours after ebb tide in the southwest current (Inoue, Miida, and Tawara 1985: 922-923). The maximum tidal velocity is 1.4 to 3.0 knots per hour for the northeast current (ebb tide) and 0.7-1.7 knots per hour for the southwest current (high tide). The velocity of the tidal current is influenced by the Tsushima Warm Current, which makes the ebb tide faster than the high tide. (Yoshikawa et al. 2006).

## 2. Winds

Winds also have a critical impact on maritime navigation. In the Genkai Sea region between the Korean Peninsula

and Kyushu, the northwesterly monsoon prevails during the winter season (November to February), while between spring to autumn (March to October) wind directions are not constant, but fluctuate, with southwesterly, south and southeasterly being more prevalent.

In the prehistoric and ancient voyages made by oar and by sail, seasonal changes in wind direction were critical factors in deciding the timing of such voyages. Although there are few extant documents pertaining to the voyages made during the *Kenzuishi* (Japanese missions to Sui Dynasty China) and the *Kentoshi* (missions to Tang Dynasty China) eras, those that do survive provide some information about the timing of voyages and relevant wind directions. In terms of the outward journey to China, journeys were made in: July (once, S wind), August (five times, SE to ESE winds), and October (once, NNE winds). As for the return journeys, these were made in: May (once, gentle S winds), June (twice, gentle SE to ESE winds), August (once), September (once, NE winds), October (once), November (once, NNW to N winds), and December (three times, NNW winds). We do not see clear seasonal changes in these records.

In the East China Sea, it is generally the case that southerly and southeasterly winds prevail during the summer season, while in the winter season, northwesterly/north-northwesterly to north-northeasterly winds are dominant (Mozai 1987: 32-40; Ueda 2007: 275-287). The voyages of the *Kentoshi* vessels were seasonal, with the outward journey considered as having taken place in summer, and the homeward journey in winter (Ueda 2007; Honma 1976). However, homeward winter voyages would have been dangerous due to the strong monsoon winds, while voyages in summer would also have been problematic due to low pressure fronts during the rainy season and encounters with typhoons in the fall (Mozai 1987: 39-40).

In prehistoric and ancient voyages, it would most likely have been common practice to wait tentatively from a few days to a few weeks for the wind direction to change. Later, in the pre-modern Edo period, there were many ports

along the coasts of the Sea of Japan and Seto Inland Sea where *Kitamae-bune* vessels would lay anchor, waiting for good winds, which were known as *kazemachiko* (wind-waiting ports). It is likely that similar practices were employed in prehistoric and ancient times. For example, Fukura port (present-day Shika Town, Hakui-gun, Ishikawa Prefecture), located on the Noto Peninsula facing the Sea of Japan was an important international port between Balhae and Japan during the Nara period, where envoys from Balhae would make landfall, stay and repair their vessels, before returning to Balhae. Fukura was also a port of call for the *Kitamae-bune* of the Edo Period, and a large stone compass for seafarers that was donated to the port in 1847 still remains to this day (Kitami 1986: 243-258). Many wind-waiting ports had promontories, known as *hiyoriyama*, which literally means a “mountain to predict the weather,” from where seafarers could look into the distance to predict wind and weather conditions. In the early modern era, there were many such *hiyoriyama* at ports along the western and eastern shipping routes linking Edo (Tokyo) with Osaka. Along the western route there were 38 and along the eastern route there were 40, with some having elevations as high as 100 meters (Namba 1988).

### 3. Seafaring and astrology and biology

There are two distinct types of seafaring techniques; *jinori* and *okinori* (Kitami 1986: 233-243). The first *jinori*, which literally means “land-based voyage,” is based on triangulation, namely identifying the location at sea by cross-checking in two directions using near and distant landmarks. This technique is well-known as *yamatate* (*yamaate*) in Japan (Yanagida and Kurata 1975). In this technique when land masses and islands are used for triangulation, high mountains as well as high islands can be used as landmarks. In the East Asian region, such islands as Okinoshima, Oshima, and Genkaijima in Japan, and Ulleungdo, Jejudo, Wando, Geojedo and Jindo could have been used for such purposes. In actual fact, from the summits of Mt. Tsushimamiyama (243 meters) in Fukutsu

City it is possible to see Okinoshima, Iki, and Tsushima islands. From the summit of Mt. Senbyomakiyama (287 meters), Busan and Geojedo are clearly visible, and from Tsutsu at the southern tip of Tsushima Island (ca. 69 meters), Iki Island and Azuchi-Oshima can be observed. The other seafaring technique is *okinori*, which literally means “seafaring offshore,” including techniques to calculate location at sea by observing astronomical, atmospheric and oceanographic phenomena, such as the sun, moon, stars, and clouds, as well as behaviors of fish and seabirds. During the daytime, it is possible to gain a general idea of an east-west direction by following the rising and setting of the sun. Of course, in temperate zones, the sun’s rising and setting direction deviates depending on the season. At nighttime, stars and constellations are a useful means of calculating direction and bearing. *Polaris*, the North Star, was utilized widely as it does not move by season. *Ursa Major* is another constellation that was widely used for navigation. For example, in Japan, the three stars that form the “handle” of the “plough” in *Ursa Major* were called *kajiboshi* (rudder stars) and the four stars that form the square were called *funaboshi* (seacraft stars), and these were used by seafarers and fishers (Goto 2017) (Fig. 1).

In the East Asian maritime region, the streaked shearwater (*Calonectris leucomelas*), a migratory sea bird, visits Japan and Korea from the southern hemisphere for breeding in February and March. After the breeding season is over, they return south between

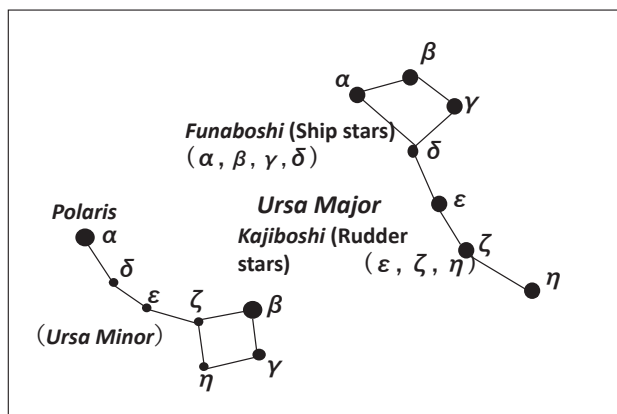


Fig. 1 : *Polaris* and *Ursa Major*

November and December. They feed on small fish such as Japanese anchovy, krill, and squid, and after feeding return to their nesting sites at precise times, and possess extremely precise flight capabilities. They also have a habit of feeding in very large flocks. Local fishermen of the Munakata region call this bird *ogachi*, and follow the flocks in search of schools of fish. In Japan, Okinoshima in the Genkai Sea is the largest breeding ground for these birds, and has been protected due to its sacred status. The situation is the same for Kanmurijima in Wakasa Bay. In Korea, there is a large nesting site on Sacheon-do in the southwest of the Korean Peninsula. In prehistoric and ancient times, this bird is thought to have been used as an important sign for locating Okinoshima.

## II . Vessels and seafaring in East Asia

### 1. Rafts

In the course of the spread of humans from island Southeast Asia to Oceania in the late Pleistocene and early Holocene periods, people were inevitably required to make ocean crossings. Although there is no extant archaeological evidence to confirm that humans used seagoing craft, it has been hypothesized that bamboo rafts made by lashing thick bamboo poles together might have been used. The technique of burning logs and then using lithic and shell as axes/adze tools to carve out dugout canoes is thought to have been developed around 8,000 years ago or thereafter.

In East Asia, rafts are considered to have been used since antiquity in rivers and lakes, before the invention of dugout canoes (Deguchi 1992, 1995; Akimichi 2019). Although a later example, the Amis people of southern Taiwan are known to have used bamboo rafts fitted out with sails. (Liu and Gao eds. 2015). In Sagominato, located on the northwestern coast of Tsushima Island, log rafts were used for seaweed harvesting, and it is thought that this style of log raft may have been introduced from the southern Korean Peninsula, Ulleung-do, or Jeju-

do. Even in Sou, located on the Echizen coast of Fukui Prefecture (present day Echizen-cho, Nyu-gun), some 750 kilometers east of Tsushima Island, log rafts were used for harvesting seaweed, which may indicate that these log rafts were transported by the Tsushima Current into the Sea of Japan, where they found their way to the Echizen coast (Deguchi 1995).

## 2. Dugout Canoe

The origin of dugout canoe making technology is considered to date back as far as 8,000 years before present (BP), and is a technique that employed fire and lithic tools. In Japan, the earliest example of a dugout canoe was excavated from the Kaminarishita site in Ichikawa City, Chiba Prefecture, and dates back to 7,500 BP. On the Korean Peninsula there are examples that date back further at the Jukbyeon site (BP 8,000) and Bibonri site (BP 7,700), while in China, excavated remains from the Kuà Hú Qiáo site (BP 8,000) and Hemudu site (BP 7,000) are known (Akimichi 2012; Li 2014).

It is important to note that a dugout canoe is not always constructed from a single log, with dugout canoes having been found that were made from multiple pieces of lumber joined together. In Japan, five examples of dugout canoes made using multiple pieces of lumber have been excavated. For example, the dugout canoe found in 1838 in Morokuwa Village, Kaito County, Owari Province (present day Morokuwa-cho, Aisai, Aichi Prefecture) used four camphorwood trunks, which were joined together as the bow, two trunks and the stern (Adachi 2016).

Materials used for dugout canoes vary: *mukunoki* (*Aphananthe aspera*) at the Kaminarishita site, *sugi* (*Cryptomeria japonica*) at the Shimane University campus site, chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*) at the Ikiriki site, pine tree (*Pinus* sp.) at the Bibonri site, Masson's pine (*Pinus massoniana*) at the Kuà Hú Qiáo site, and camphor tree (*Cinnamomum camphora*) at the Jukbyeon site. In general, in the Seto Inland Sea region, along the Pacific coast, and in the Ryukyu Islands, camphor was

commonly used, while conifers such as *sugi* and *hiba* (*Thujopsis* spp.) are thought to have been utilized where camphor trees did not grow. Camphor trees have a thick trunk, but do not grow upright. On the other hand, the long straight trunks of conifer trees lend themselves to use as dugout canoes.

Throughout the Kyushu region, including on Tsushima Island, the camphor tree is naturally distributed. Immense camphor trees in shrine precincts on Tsushima Island have been preserved as sacred trees in which deities dwell. In addition, although camphor trees were thought to not be distributed naturally on the Korean Peninsula, with the exception of Jeju-do where a dwarf species has been confirmed, a dugout canoe, excavated from the Jukbyeon site in Uljin County, which lies up the eastern coast of the Peninsula, was made of camphor while the paddle was made of sawtooth oak (*Quercus acutissima*). The possibility should probably also be considered that past climate change phenomena may have affected the vegetation.

One aspect of dugout canoe making technology that bears further attention is the *marunomi sekifu* of the Jomon period. In Kagoshima in southern Kyushu, including Tanegashima Island, unique polished stone implements have been excavated from early Jomon sites that have a chisel-like edge, or *marunomi sekifu*. As mentioned above, a dugout canoe was found at the Ikiriki site, which is considered to date back some 6,000 years. In addition, Sobata type Jomon earthenware pottery, which were first excavated at Sobata shell mound site at Udo in Kumamoto Prefecture, have been found extensively not only in Kumamoto and Kagoshima Prefectures in Kyushu, but also on the Amami and Okinawa Islands to the south, and a similar style of pottery has also been excavated from Tonsamdong shell midden site in Busan, southeastern Korea. This would suggest that in the early Jomon period, extensive inter-island interactions were occurring across a wide area, ranging from the Ryukyu Islands to western Kyushu and the southern Korean Peninsula. This would therefore overturn conventional

wisdom that voyages on the open ocean could not have been made in dugout canoes.

On a related note, abundant bones of Japanese sea lion (*Zalophus japonicus*) have been found at the Shamushomae site on Okinoshima, which date from the early Jomon period. As Japanese sea lions were known to come ashore to breed, they could be easily caught along the shoreline. It is possible that people who came to Okinoshima from Kyushu or the Korean Peninsula by dugout canoe or raft used for such purposes (Masaki 2008).

In addition, there are archaeological evidences to suggest the existence of maritime networks between the southern Korean Peninsula, Tsushima Island, and northern Kyushu in the Jomon period. One such piece of evidence is that the same type of compound bone hooks have been discovered at coastal sites on the southern Korean Peninsula and Tsushima Island. Furthermore, obsidian from Mt. Koshidake, Saga Prefecture, has been excavated not only from sites in Kyushu, but also from the Tonsamdong site in Busan. This tangible archaeological record provides clear evidence that the Jomon period Genkai Sea was a region for transoceanic exchanges and interactions between the southern Korean Peninsula, Tsushima and northern Kyushu, including Okinoshima.

### 3. From dugout canoe to semi-structured vessel

Semi-structured vessels in which the broadside boards are joined with lower dugout hull, and anti-water splashing boards are joined at the bow, were constructed predominantly in the coastal regions of the Seto Inland Sea from around the middle of the Yayoi period. This type of vessel is depicted in plate drawings from the Yayoi and Kofun periods (Aoya-kamijichi site, Tottori Prefecture, and Hakaza site, Hyogo Prefecture), and the *funagata haniwa* or clay images of vessels from the Kofun period (Nagahara-Takamagari No. 2, Osaka Prefecture, and Saitobaru No.170, Miyazaki Prefecture). Semi-structured vessels are classified into four types, based on the height, width, and joining methods of both

edges of the broadside board, or the presence/absence of fixing nuts and plates on both sides of the broadside board. There has also been a proposal that the total length of semi-structured vessels should be similarly classified into four types, according to total length; below seven meters, seven to nine meters, nine to twelve meters, and above twelve meters (Shibata 2013, 2020).

### 4. From semi-structured vessel to structured vessel

In the process of development from semi-structured to structured vessel, there are two distinct types of joining techniques; *tana-ita* (side-board) type and *omoki* (L-shaped joint board). In the *tana-ita* type, the bottom plates are joined to make the overall length of vessel longer, onto which *tana-ita* are joined. In the *omoki* type, a few bottom plates are joined together, with an L-shaped plate, or *omoki* being joined on the outer edge of the base, onto which the broadside boards are attached (Ishii 1995a, 1995b; Deguchi 1995) (Fig. 2). These two construction techniques are technically distinct, and their distribution is consequently different.

On the Korean Peninsula, there is a vessel construction technique similar to the Japanese *omoki* type, where boards are split into two halves, right and left, and then joined. For example, a small vessel, excavated from Anapji, Gyeongju, which has been dated to the United Silla period (AD 677-935), was composed of three parts; a bottom part of a dugout canoe being cut into the right and left halves, between which a third long board is joined so as to extend the width. The hull structure of Korean wooden vessels is similar to that of vessels built in the *omoki* style. Another case is that of a sunken vessel

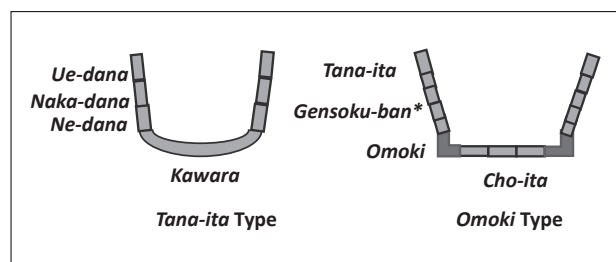


Fig. 2 : Two Types of Semi-structured vessel. \*Broadside board.

found at a depth of ten meters in 1984, offshore of the island of Joyak-do, Wando County, Jeollanam-do. The bottom section is composed of five long boards fastened using wooden nails in holes that run through both sides, and the outer sides of the bottom boards are joined using L-shaped boards in the same way as the *omoki* style. The upper side of the L-shaped boards is joined to broadside boards, fixed using wooden nails. Given the characteristics of the cargo of this vessel, which included such items as celadon, ceramic pots, chopsticks and spoons, the vessel is considered to be an eleventh century trading vessel from the early Goryeo period. A third example is also that of a sunken vessel, found in 1995 off the coast of Dalido, Mokpo city, which is thought to be about two centuries later than the one found offshore at Wando. Although the joined wooden boards are not L-shaped in this case, the joining technique between the bottom and the broadside boards is similar (Adachi 2016).

### 5. Envoy vessels

No excavated materials pertaining to envoy ships have been found that are later than the Asuka period (AD 593-710). According to research based on historical documents, including post-Kamakura-period paintings (post-1492), and shipwrecks from the Song and Yuan dynasties of China (off the coast of Sinan and Quanzhou), the *Kentoshi-sen* or envoy vessels are considered to be similar to Chinese junk-type ships, which are box-like with a flat bottom and upright broadside boards, and two masts for sailing. The technique for structured vessels as mentioned above, where the flat bottom is joined using the *omoki* technique, and to which broadside boards are attached, is considered to be the result of the influence of Baekje seafaring and construction traditions.

*The Nihon Shoki* (Chronicles of Japan) describes how in the first year of Hakuchi (AD 650), three persons—Agata, Yamato no Aya no Atahe; Abumi, Shiragabe no Muraji; and Agura, Naniha no Kishi—were sent to the province of Aki to build two Baekje vessels (*Kudara*

*no tsumi*; which literally means “large vessel of Kudara (Baekje)”).

It may be the case that these two vessels were the ones used as the envoy vessels in the second *Kentoshi* mission to Tang dynasty China in the fourth year of Hakuchi (AD 653). However, as the two envoy vessels were very large, reportedly accommodating crew and passengers of 121 and 120, respectively, there are questions about whether a mid-seventh century Baekje vessel would have been large enough to accommodate 120 people.

The last four envoy vessels to embark on a mission to Tang dynasty China departed in the summer of AD 838. Unfortunately, the third envoy vessel foundered off the coast of Tsushima Island, but the remaining three envoy vessels safely crossed the East China Sea *via* the South Route, arriving at the Yangtze Delta of China.

On their return voyage from China in AD 839, the first and the fourth vessels departed from Chuzhou, Jiangsu Province, and the second vessel from Haizhou, Jiangsu Province, aiming to take the Northern Route back to Japan, but the second vessel went adrift, washing ashore on southern islands, with the crew splitting into two smaller vessels, which barely made it back to Ohsumi in southern Kyushu. The remaining two ships chartered nine Silla ships at Chuzhou and returned to Ikitsuki, northwestern Kyushu. The 280 crew and passengers in the two envoy vessels were divided into nine Silla vessels, meaning that approximately 30 people were aboard each Silla vessel, which were medium-sized and had a lower waterline than the envoy vessels. Overall, there were five sea routes used during the *Kentoshi* envoy voyages (Bohai Route, North Route, Yellow Sea Route, South Route, and South Islands Route; Fig. 3).

In actual fact, Silla vessels were constructed and used at Dazaifu in northern Kyushu in the early Heian period, which is documented in the *Shoku-Nihon-Koki*, which states that in the sixth year of Jowa (AD 839), a Silla ship was ordered to be constructed, which would be durable to winds and waves. This passage suggests that it was known and accepted that Silla vessels were more likely to



Fig. 3 : Sea Routes of the *Kentoshi* envoy voyages. The Yellow Sea route was used in 653 and 659 AD.

be wave resistant than Japanese vessels.

*Kentoshi* envoy vessels were thought to have been about 30 meters long, eight meters wide, with 300 tons of displacement, and a 150-ton cargo capacity, with 120 to 150 crews and passengers on board (Ishii 1983, 1995a; Mozai 1987).

In terms of factors that may have contributed to the wrecking and stranding of the *Kentoshi* envoy vessels, strandings immediately after departure may have been due to heavy loading and the low waterline of the vessels. When on the open ocean the flat-bottomed vessels were particularly vulnerable to side waves, with poor propulsion and steering capacity in heavy seas, and the absence of a keel also impacting stability. There might also have been a lack of water tightness between the deck and hold, in addition to which there is a possibility that the joints linking all parts were not properly joined, such as between the base of the vessel and the broadside boards, and the stern, bow and hull sections.

From the historical records of vessels that drifted to Japan, it has been hypothesized that Chinese junk-style

vessels were of a structured type. For instance, according to a description in volume 35 of the *Nihon-Sandai-Jitsuroku* (Authentic historical documents consisting of 50 volumes compiled by the Japanese government during the Heian period), on March 13, AD 879, a foreign vessel washed ashore at Takeno-gun, Tango Province (present-day northern Kyoto Prefecture, facing the Sea of Japan), which was recorded as being 18 meters long and 4.5 meters wide. In volume 37 of the same document, two vessels, one sunken and one washed ashore were recorded on May 17 and May 19, AD 880, respectively, one off the coast of Futakata-gun and one off Mikumi-gun, both in Tajima Province. The former was recorded as being 30 meters long, with width unknown, and the latter was given as being over 15 meters long and 4.8 meters wide. Given the large size of these vessels it is assumed that they were manufactured using structured vessel techniques (Mozai 1987: 26).



Fig. 4 : Horse-shaped steatite object (left) and Boat-shaped steatite object (right). (Munakata Taisha, Shimpokan Collection)  
 Steatite ( $\text{Mg}_3\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{10}(\text{OH})_2$ ) is easy to process. Boat-shaped steatite object have been excavated not only on Okinoshima, but also at the Mitake-san site of Oshima and Shimotakamiya site at Munakata Taisha.

### III. Seafaring, seacraft and rituals for the safe navigation

It has been noted that rituals praying for the safe navigation underwent a transformation over a period of approximately 500 years from the mid-fifth to late tenth centuries, transitioning from being rituals conducted on the rocks, to rituals on sheltered rock sites, to semi-sheltered rock sites and eventually at open terrace sites. A vast amount of ritual objects, offerings, and sacred treasures have been unearthed, amounting to more than 80,000 items in total, which are registered as national treasures and have various symbolic meaning.

#### 1. Offerings and ritual objects

It is worth noting here that from the sixth to seventh centuries onwards, the number of ritual objects made for the purpose of safety of navigation increased in number. Prior to that time, most offerings were similar to the grave goods placed in kofun burial mounds (e.g., mirrors, comma-shaped beads [*magatama*], and iron swords). This period of transition corresponds to the timing of the transfer of rituals from sheltered rock sites (Site No. 22), and semi-sheltered rock sites and semi-open terrace sites (Site No. 5) to the open-terrace sites (Site No. 1) that succeeded earlier sites in the eighth and ninth

centuries. For example, inventories of excavations from this period include such items as a gold copper model loom, a Japanese model harp (*koto*), earthenware pottery for ritual use, and Human-shaped steatite objects as well as horse-shaped steatite objects and boat-shaped steatite objects (Fig. 4).

Boat-shaped steatite objects (*funagata*) among these items include depictions not only of simple dugout canoes, but also vessels with a bow and stern. More than 100 horse-shaped steatite objects have also been found, including horses with saddles and those without. These are thought to signify the “sacred horse” on which the deity rides. There is a ritual related to a horse at Kifune shrine in Kyoto, in which black horses are dedicated for inducing rains to come, while white and red horses are offered to bring an end to rain. However, in the Okinoshima context, these horse miniatures that were made as offerings were likely not related to prayers for an abundant harvest, but rather offered to pray for good weather or a prolonged rainy season. It is also believed that the human-shaped steatite objects were the most important ritual offering to the deity. Steatite stone is easily polished and one of the softest stones, making it easy to work with. Boat-shaped steatite objects made of steatite stone have been excavated not only from Okinoshima, but also from the Mitake-san

site on Oshima, and the Shimotakamiya Site of Munakata Taisha, both of which are part of the World Heritage property.

There is archaeological evidence in Okinoshima that rituals for safety of navigation were practiced at an even earlier time prior to becoming a national ritual practice. For example, a bronze dagger axe was excavated on Okinoshima, which dates to the mid-Yayoi period. A similar type of slim bronze dagger axe (without its blade tip) thought to be from the same era was found at the Kapo-dong site, Masanhappo, Changwon city, Gyeongsangnam-do in southern Korea. Interestingly, in both cases the bronze daggers were found having been thrust into the rocks. The Kapo-dong site is located at a river mouth, facing Masan Bay, and it is plausible that rituals praying for safety of navigation might have been conducted in a similar way to those on Okinoshima (Takesue 2011). Besides the Kapo-dong site, a bronze dagger axe also been excavated from the Kyodong-ri site No. 1, Ulsan City, facing the Sea of Japan, which would suggest that rituals for safety of navigation were already being extensively carried out during the Yayoi period in the East Asian maritime context. Bronze dagger axes were at the time regarded as being the source of authority and power, and it is thought that it would have been customary to offer such a ritual weapon to pray for safe passage.

## **2. Bone divination, ship spirits, and ship ranks**

The next point on which to focus is the practice of bone divination, conducted in the Yayoi and Kofun periods, where the scapulae and mandibles of deer and wild boar were first burned and the cracks in the burned bones then examined for portents. In Kyushu, Harunotsuji and Karakami sites on Iki Island, and the Mutayori site in Saga city provide evidence of bone divination during the mid-Yayoi period (Kokubu 2014). From a similar era, an accumulation of burnt bones used for divination purposes have been excavated in southern Korea, at the Nuk-do site, Sacheon City, Gyeongsangnam-do. Given that

Nuk-do was an international port at the time of the bone divination practices, it is considered to be the origin of bone divination practices in Wa (Japan) (Kim 2002).

More than 80 pieces of burned bones were excavated from the Gungok-ri shell mound site, Haenam County, Jeollanam-do, which prior to the Nuk-do site is the site with the most numerous excavated remains (Mokpo University 1987; Watanabe 1995). In Japan, the Aoyakamijichi site in Tottori Prefecture is known as the Yayoi period site where most burned bones have been excavated. These bone remains date back to the second century BC and are similar in age to those found in the Gangmun-dong site, Gangneung City, Gangwon-do, northeastern Korea. It has been suggested that the Korean Peninsula and western Japan was culturally inter-related through ritual practices that were shared across the Sea of Japan (Kitaura 2002). It should be noted that bone divination practices in coastal areas were most likely conducted not for agricultural purposes, but rather for divining the safety of a voyage and the likelihood of good weather (Kim 2002; Watanabe 1995, 2002). Bone divination probably therefore took place prior to an ocean voyage.

A second point of note with regard to safety of navigation is the offering of prayers to “ship spirits” or *funadama*. The practice of offering prayers to the *funadama* as an object of worship for safety of navigation was possibly the precursor to belief in the Three Female Deities of Munakata. For example, the *Shoku-Nihongi* historical document records on August 12, AD 763, how in the previous year of AD 762 an envoy ship from Balhae had encountered a storm, and after landing safely in Noto Province offered prayers for a safe return to Balhae. It is likely that the *funadama* spirit was considered as a sea goddess, revered in folk beliefs for being the deity that had control over safety of navigation. In beliefs relating to *funadama* there are still customs of placing dolls, coins, the hair of the navigator’s sisters, or harvested grains at the bottom of the vessel’s mast or in the engine room in order to dispel evil spirits and protect the vessel.

The use of women's hair as a kind of protection in nautical safety rituals is common to the *Onari* beliefs of Okinawa and also the *Mazu* beliefs of South China and Taiwan.

Another point concerning belief in rituals for safety of navigation is that the vessels themselves were given positions of rank. For instance, owing to the successful round-trip voyage of the *Kentoshi* mission headed by Awata Makoto, on February 22, AD 706 the rank of *Jugoi-no-ge* was conferred on the vessel. (*Jugoi-no-ge* corresponds to the rank of a human nobleman in the Heian period). A similar case was described in documents that relate how in AD 754 two vessels having returned safely back to Japan with Kanshin on board, famous as the founder of Risshu Buddhism, were also granted the rank of *Jugoi-no-ge*. Similarly, in AD 763 in Noto Province a Balhae envoy vessel was awarded the rank of *Jugoi-no-ge* and a crown for safely completing the transoceanic voyage. These cases indicate that rituals directly related to safety of navigation were performed on the ship itself, which is closely related to the safety of navigation rituals conducted on Okinoshima.

In addition to the above rituals, a final ritual is one of sacrifice while at sea. The evidence for such sacrifices can be found in the *Toi-jo* of the *Gishiwajinden* (Chinese historical document written between AD 287-290), which refers to *jisai* or *seiko* (slaves or prisoners of war), who were forcibly placed on board ocean-going vessels. These *jisai* were on board to be used as live sacrifices for safe passage, and if the voyage passed without incident, so too would the *jisai* survive. However, if the voyage encountered difficulties, the *jisai* would be sacrificed.

In addition to the practices detailed above, there were also cases of rituals that involved mirrors being cast into the sea to appease the sea gods and pray for safe passage (Yu 2012). Furthermore, in the *Man-yoshu* poetry anthology there are 23 verses, including a long poem, that deal with prayers for safety of navigation, but due to space constraints these cannot be covered in detail here.

### 3. Rituals for safety of navigation on the Korean Peninsula

There are several sites on the Korean Peninsula where rituals for safety of navigation are known to have taken place, including Jungmak-dong, Buan-gun, Jeollabuk-do facing the Yellow Sea, Longtan-dong, Jeju Island, and Kapo-dong, Masan, Gyeongsangnam-do (Kyungnam University Museum, 2006), and also Cheonghaejin, Jangdo, Wando-gun, Jeollanam-do, and Hyeonpo-ri, Ulleungdo (Yu 2011, 2012).

Jungmak-dong is located on top of a coastal cliff, and the area served as a refuge harbor from the dangerous seas off the western coast of the Korean Peninsula, which is perhaps why rituals for safety of navigation took place during the fourth to sixth centuries. More than ten Wa-style keyhole shape burial mounds (*zenpokoen-fun*) dating to the late-fifth and early-sixth centuries have been confirmed in the vicinity, and the large tomb of King Muryeong was built against the backdrop of advancing international exchanges, including with Southern Dynasty China, Baekje, Wa and Gaya.

In the burial mounds in the Yeongsangang river basin region, wooden coffins were used that were made using umbrella pine grown in Japan, which testifies to the closeness of exchanges between the Korean Peninsula and Wa in those times. At Jungmak-dong, the open terrace rituals came to be practiced in a ritual building from the eighth century onwards (Yu, 2011, 2012). Still in existence today is the "sacred water temple" (*Suiseido*), the name of which has maritime connotations, and provides a counterpoint to the rituals for safety of navigation that took place on Okinoshima (Nishitani 2014; Yu, 2011)(Fig. 5).

## IV. Conclusion: Maritime networks and World Heritage

The World Heritage Site "Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region" is composed of eight properties and besides these core

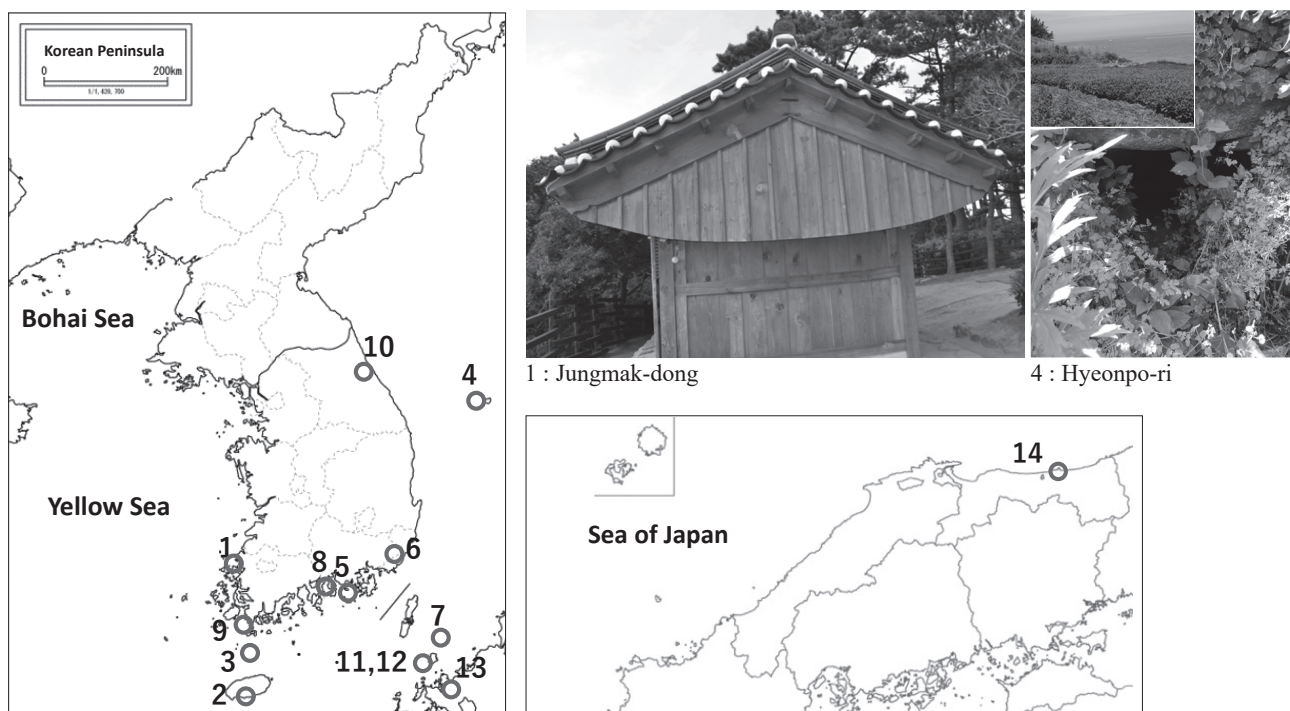


Fig. 5 : Safe Voyage Ritual and Bone Divination Sites in East Asia. 1~6: Safe voyage ritual sites, 7~13: Bone divination sites.  
(1,4:Photo by author)

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Jungmak-dong              | 7 Okinoshima Island        |
| 2 Longtan-dong, Jeju Island | 8 Nuku-do                  |
| 3 Cheonghaejin, Wan-do      | 9 Gungok-ri                |
| 4 Hyeonpo-ri, Ulleung-do    | 10 Gangmun-dong            |
| 5 Kapo-dong, Masan          | 11 Harunotsuji, Iki Island |
| 6 Kyodon-ri, Ulsan          | 12 Karakami, Iki Island    |
|                             | 13 Mutayori                |
|                             | 14 Aoya-kamijichi          |

areas, there are several relevant sites with close links to Okinoshima. These include the Taguma-ishihatake site, Tsuyazaki burial mound complex, Tsuyazaki-sengen sites, Sakurakyo burial mound complex, and Orihata Shrine, which are all sites associated with the Munakata Clan and the seafaring traditions of Munakata in the Yayoi and Kofun periods. Moreover, there are many remains, burial mounds, and ritual sites scattered throughout the area beyond the Munakata region that demonstrate the realities of maritime-based interactions. These include the Harunotsuji site in Iki Island, Mine site in Tsushima Island, and the Nuk-do, Wan-do, Jungmak-dong, and Kapo-dong sites on the Korean Peninsula (Yu 2011), the burial mounds of the Yeongsangang river basin region

(Takada 2019; Kwon 2019) and Hyeonpo-ri, Ulleung-do in the Sea of Japan.

The existence of a transoceanic network is reflected in the discovery of composite bone fish hooks and other fishing tools common to Japan and Korea during the Jomon period, the broad distribution of the custom of burning animal bones for divination practices, and the migratory footprints of the seafarers of Kanezaki *ama* divers for harvesting abalone shells as tributes and tax items.

Moreover, the shipwrecks, goods and items recovered from the seabed and exhibited in museums in China and Korea are a valuable source of comparison when exploring the significance of Okinoshima. It is to be hoped that underwater archaeology in Japan will make

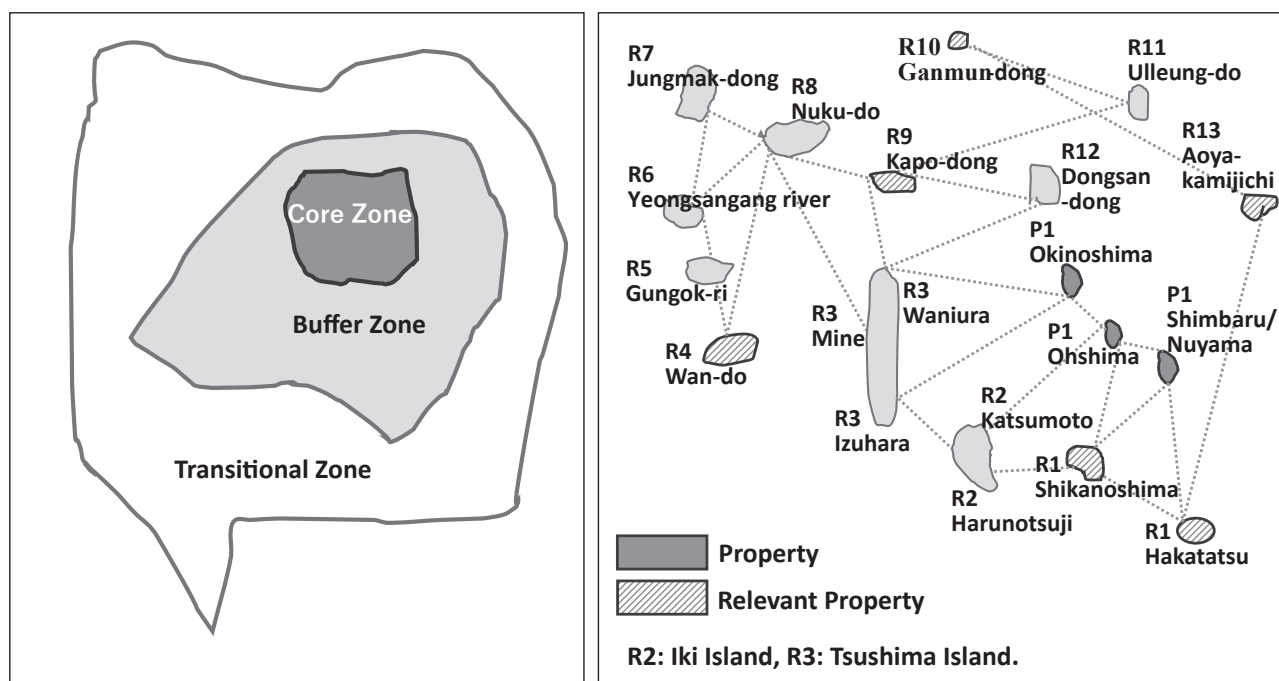


Fig. 6 : Land-based Model in the MAB/World Heritage (ICOMOS) (left) and Maritime Network Model (right), based on Munakata/Okinoshima Properties (P1) and Relevant Sites (R1 ~ R13).

more progress in the future.

As described above, archaeological sites relevant to the Okinoshima World Heritage are extensively distributed in islands and along coastal areas in East Asia. Indeed, the burial mounds in the coastal areas and small islands of the Genkai Sea region are closely related to the seafaring chieftains and maritime groups, and have significance also in that they form landmarks when viewed from the sea. There are many examples of such burial mound complexes that are worthy of note as landmarks visible from the sea, including the Mishima Jiikonbo burial mound complex (Yamaguchi Prefectural Board of Education, 1983; Yamaguchi Prefecture 1996), Koyama burial mound complex in Nagato and Yoshimo, the round burial mounds on Kaijima Island, north of Ainoshima Island, Tsuyazaki burial mound complex, Hirabaru burial mound No.1 (square tomb) on the Itoshima Peninsula, as well as many burial mounds in coastal and inland areas across the southern Korean Peninsula.

Cross-border maritime inter-regional exchange should be understood as “borderless networks.” This is a very

different concept from the conventional land-centered, concentric-circle approach of the MAB concept (Man And Biosphere) and the World Heritage core zone/buffer zone/transitional zone concept, and therefore can also be said to be something that is unique to maritime World Heritage (Fig. 6). This gives added significance to the existence of World Heritage sites that span a wide area, transcending regions and countries. This is something that also corresponds to the dynamism of history and culture in human history, and could provide a new basis for considering the composition of World Heritage sites, including not only future research but also the utilization of cultural resources and international cooperation among related heritage groups.

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# Exchanges between ‘Wa’ (Japan) and ‘Baekje’ (Korea) as seen from the ritual sites of Okinoshima and Jungmak-dong

WOO Jae-Pyoung

## Introduction

This paper discusses the value of the ritual sites of Okinoshima, inscribed as a World Heritage site under the title, “The Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region.” With a focus on the fifth and sixth centuries, which the period when rituals on Okinoshima reached their peak, the background to the rituals is discussed.

## I. Merchants of Wa trying to embark on long-distance sea journeys to Baekje

Let us first take a look at the ship-shaped earthenware pottery excavated at the Nigore burial mound in Kyoto. These are burial goods that were placed in the burial mound, made out of earthenware pottery in the shape of ships. (Fig 1-1).

Although these items were excavated in Kyoto, they actually depict ships from the Kingdom of Wa dating to be fifth to sixth centuries and are somewhat different to modern-day vessels. These were not sail-powered vessels, but rather were manned by a crew of 16, rowing with oars by hand.

Let us now compare these earthenware likenesses of ships to ones that were excavated at the Dalseong-Pyeongchon-ri site in Korea (Fig 1-2). These ships of the Gaya region on the Korean Peninsula are exactly the same type as those used by Wa. In other words, the ships of that age, whether from Wa, Gaya, Baekje or Silla, were all of the same type, that is to say not sailing ships.

Until now, as noted in various major works, research implemented by historical and archaeological societies into ancient international exchanges, including the ancient rituals of Okinoshima, has focused on the

interaction between royal houses, or between tribal chiefs in the era prior to the formation of kingdoms, looking at interactions between the heads of various regional groupings.

Although such interactions at the leader level are not in dispute, what this paper suggests is that ancient international exchanges were not limited to those at the elite level.

I believe that back in antiquity, as far back as the Yayoi period, groups of merchants whose main purpose was to engage in trade existed in the Japanese archipelago.

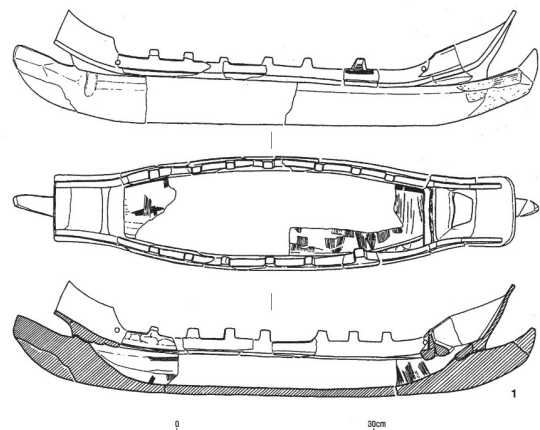


Fig. 1-1 : Ship-shaped earthenware vessel excavated from the Kyoto Nigore burial mound (Yasaka-cho Board of Education, ed., 1988).

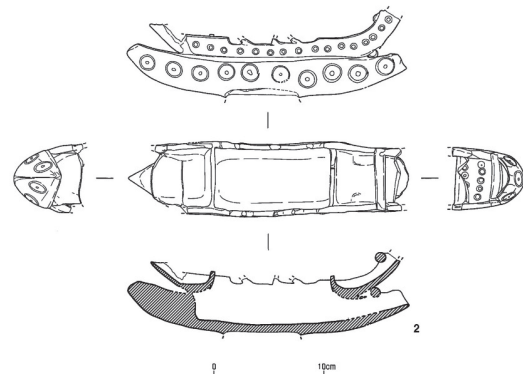


Fig. 1-2 : Dalseong-Pyeongchon-ri site (Gyeongsangbukdo Institute of Cultural Properties, 2010).

Fig. 1 Ship-shaped earthenware excavated in Japan and Korea

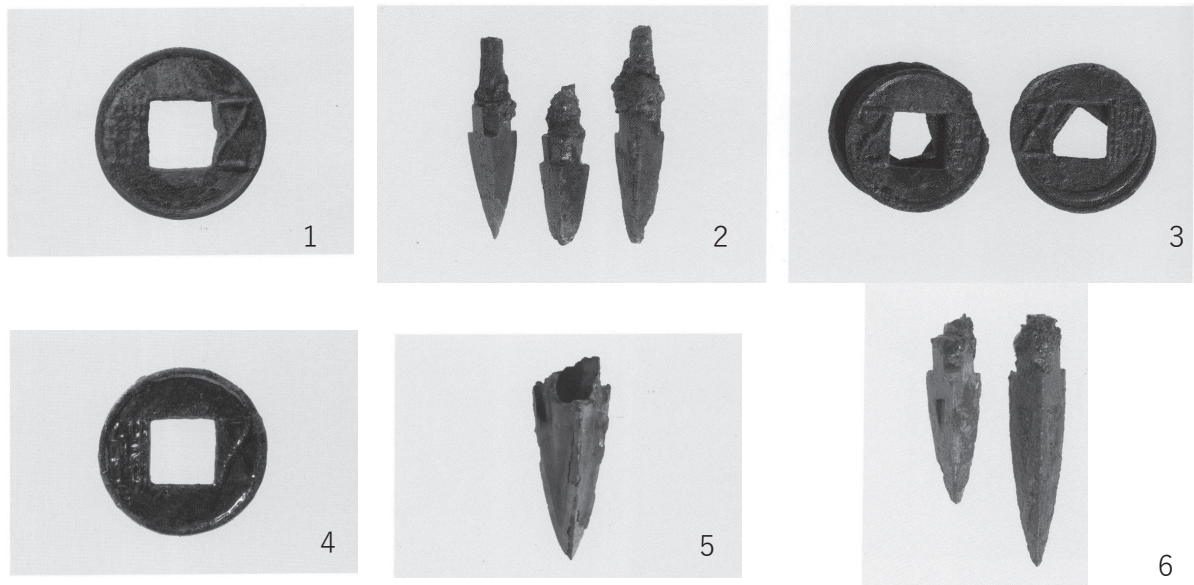


Fig. 2 : Coins and bronze arrowheads from Han Dynasty China that attest to the existence of ancient Japanese and Korean merchant groups. Han Dynasty Wu Zhu coins and bronze arrowheads excavated from Unbuk-dong site, Yeongjong-do, Incheon City, Korea (2, 3); Neukdo site, Sacheon City, Korea (4, 6), Harunotsuji site, Iki, Nagasaki Prefecture (1, 5), (Jinju National Museum, 2016).

It is also likely, therefore, that these merchants crossed the Genkai Sea, bringing back new cultural practices and goods with them from their travels to the Asian continent. So, what would have been the differences between the merchants, whose main purpose was to engage in trade, and the rulers of the day, who could be likened to today's powerful politicians?

Of course, there would also have been times when politicians acted as merchants. However, the job of a merchant is a specialized profession, requiring business acumen and some degree of proficiency in foreign languages. Without at least rudimentary Korean or Chinese language skills the merchants who travelled to the continent would not have been able to engage in commercial activities.

Of course the use of interpreters would have been one way to overcome this challenge. However, another requisite for international trade would have been the skills to build and repair ocean-going ships. These various factors demonstrate how it was no easy matter to become a trader or merchant. As a group, merchants would have passed down the abovementioned prerequisite knowledge and skills from generation to generation, and there is

evidence for the existence of merchant groups at the time in both Japan and Korea.

Wu Zhu, which were ancient Chinese coins, have been excavated from sites close to present-day Incheon International Airport and Neukdo close to Busan in Korea. They have also been found at sites in Fukuoka and on Iki (Fig. 2). These coins would suggest that they were used in trade back in ancient times.

There has previously been some debate about how Wu Zhu were used, and whether they were used for monetary or ceremonial purposes. The recent consensus is that they were actually used as money and as a means of exchange at the time.

One of the main reasons that the merchants of Wa made the effort to cross the ocean to the Korean Peninsula was to acquire a commodity they prized more highly than any other, namely iron.

Iron was produced in all regions of Korea at the time, but the largest production region and the destination for the Wa merchants on their trading missions was Geumgwan-Gaya, in the vicinity of modern-day Busan and Gimhae. Iron was imported by Wa from the Yayoi period onwards, much of it from the region then known as Byeonhan.

The reason for these large-scale imports of iron is that on the Japanese archipelago at the time there were no technologies capable of smelting and producing good-quality iron that could be used in the production of weapons and armor. This was why the people of Wa had no choice but to seek to import high-quality iron from the Korean Peninsula.

In this type of trade, if the vessel on which iron was loaded were to go adrift or sink, it would entail catastrophic financial and material losses. On the outward journey vessels would be loaded with the special products and goods of Wa to be sold on the Korean Peninsula, the proceeds from which would be used to purchase iron. However, if on the return journey the vessel were to founder in the stormy waters of the Genkai Sea, the loss would be immense to the merchant. Rituals were therefore one means by which groups of merchants sought to avoid disaster and protect their trade missions from danger. The practice of offering prayers to the *kami* is one of the reasons why the rituals on Okinoshima became so popular, which will be explained later.

The merchants of Wa voyaged across the sea in search of iron materials, using Chinese coins as a means of exchange, but also bringing with them products of Wa for the purpose of purchasing the valuable and strategic commodity that was iron. Like trade today, the transactions were not simply one way. The merchants brought goods with them to sell for money that they could then use to purchase iron materials.

Among the products that the Wa merchants brought with them were bronze whorl plaques (Fig. 3). The uppermost plaque in the Fig. 3 is one excavated from the Gimhae Daeseong-dong mounded tomb group. The bronze whorl plaques were not products themselves, but were decorative objects to be attached to shields or quivers, which would catch the light and make the objects they were attached to more alluring. The king of Gaya was said to like these objects and bronze whorl plaques have been found at royal burial sites associated with the kings of the Gaya Confederacy.

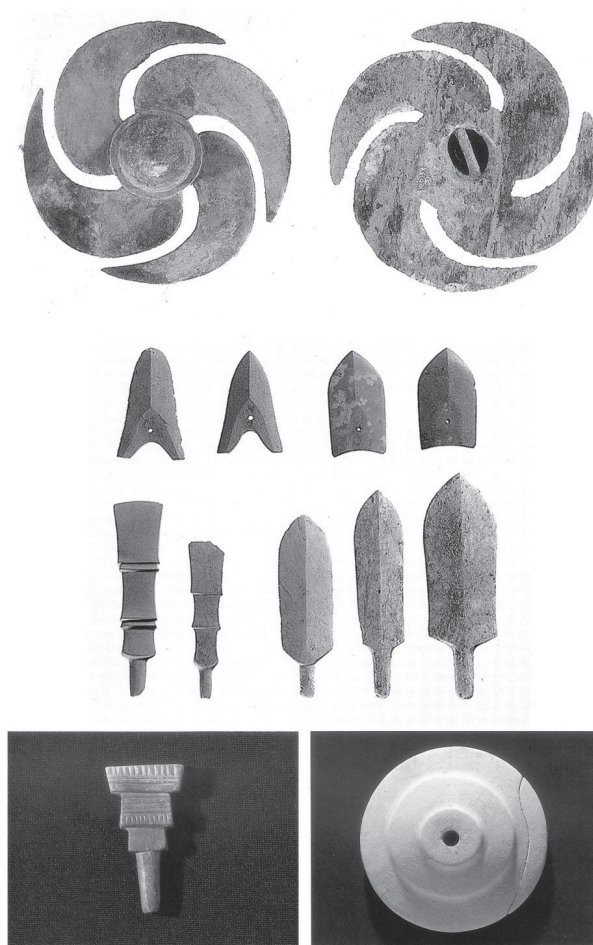


Fig.3 : Items imported to Korea from Wa, excavated from the Daeseong-dong ancient tomb group, Gimhae (Tokyo National Museum, 1992).

The stone arrowheads shown at the bottom of Fig. 3 is made of jasper. The arrowheads were also made of jasper, rather than bronze, indicating that they were not made for practical purposes, but rather were intended for ceremonial purposes, or to burnish the owner's prestige. It is these kinds of items that made their way from Wa to Geumgwan-Gaya.

In 1989 a model based on the ship-shaped earthenware vessels referred to above, was recreated of the ships that the Wa merchants would have used at the time. The recreated vessel was then put to sea in a test sailing that would take it from Osaka to Fukuoka and then on to Busan (Fig. 4). Looking at the photograph of the vessel that was used to recreate this sea voyage, it can be seen



Fig. 4 : Reconstruction of a Wa trading vessel from around the 5<sup>th</sup> century and an experimental voyage from Osaka to Busan (Osaka City Board of Education, Osaka City Cultural Properties Association, ed., 1989).

that it was somewhat larger than the actual vessels that sailed in the fifth and sixth centuries. The recreated vessel made a successful voyage all the way to Busan.

The recreated ships had no masts or sails. It was based on

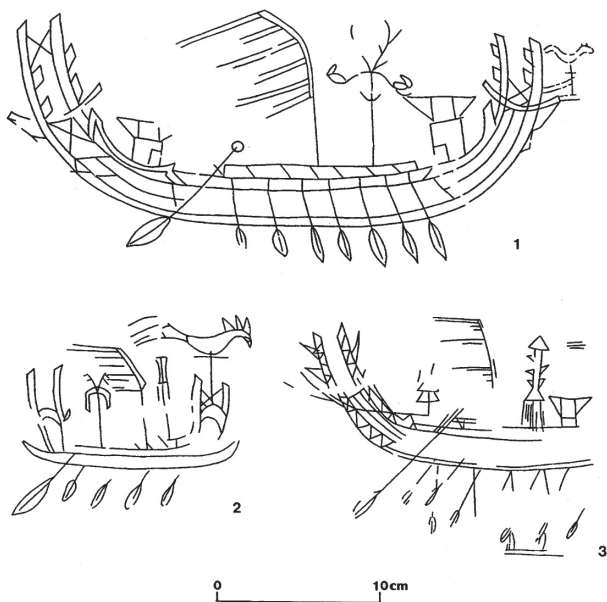


Fig. 5 : Three depictions of vessels excavated from Higashi-Tonozuka burial mound, Tenri City (Tenri City Board of Education, ed., 2000).

a ship-shaped drawings on *haniwa* cylindrical clay figures excavated from the Higashi-Tonozuka burial mound in Tenri City, Nara Prefecture (Fig. 5). These drawings feature no mast or sails, but only a banner or flag.

In their vessel the merchants of Wa travelled via Tsushima, and the first port they would have entered on the Korean Peninsula would have been at the mouth of the Nakdong River, close to the present-day port of West Busan.

It is assumed that the Wa seafarers would have charted a course aiming for a spot more or less equidistant between present-day Busan and Gimhae, which is actually visible on a clear day from Tsushima. Upon entering the port of West Busan the merchants would they have set about selling their wares brought over from Wa and purchasing Gaya iron, before returning to Wa.

## II. Deepening relations Wa and Baekje nurtured in the process of countering the threat of Goguryeo

Although this cross-sea commercial activity ran smoothly until the fourth century, a problem arose in the fifth century. It was in the early fifth century that the kingdom of Goguryeo started its southward expansion, invading Geumgwan-Gaya, in large-scale attacks.

Under threat of attack by Goguryeo or Silla, which followed the same policies as Goguryeo, the merchants of Wa found it extremely difficult to enter the ports of Geumgwan-Gaya. It could be assumed that the situation also had other effects, such as restrictions on exports of iron materials, or price surges.

The merchants of Wa had found trade with Geumgwan-Gaya to be very profitable until the fourth century, but once Goguryeo and Silla started to place pressure on their smaller southern neighbor, it is thought that income from trade would have been severely curtailed, although not entirely extinguished. It is likely that the commerce environment changed, resulting in export restrictions.

It was in response to this situation that the merchants of Wa headed to Baekje on the west of the Korean

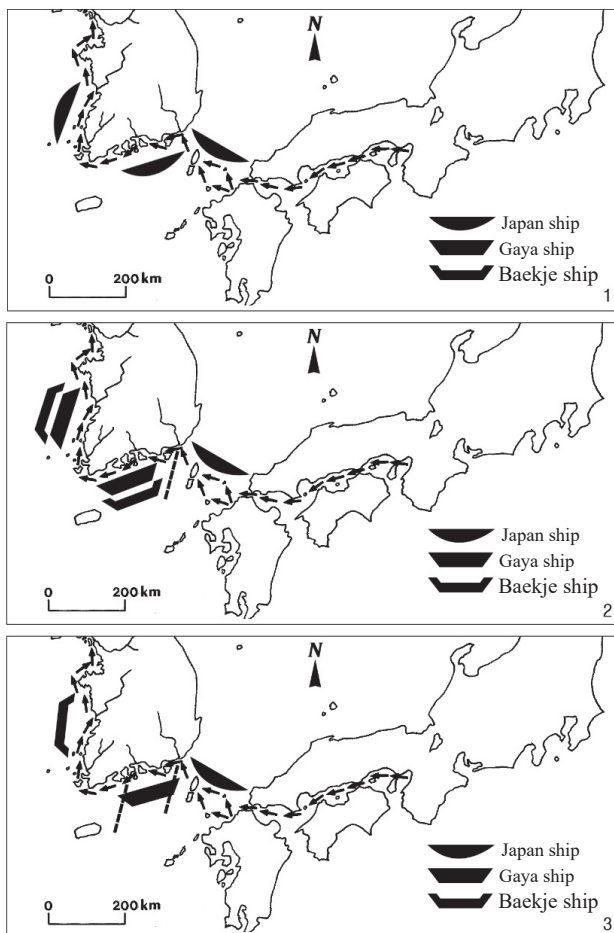


Fig. 6 : Three possible navigational routes from Wa to Baekje around the fifth to sixth centuries (Woo, 2018).

Peninsula. The first capital of Baekje was Seoul, followed by Gongju. The geopolitical situation on the Korean Peninsula therefore made it necessary for the Wa merchants to move the focus of their commercial operations from Geumgwan-Gaya, which was relatively close to the Japanese archipelago, to the western coast of the Korean Peninsula (Fig 6).

It is likely that there were cases in which the merchants of Wa would depart from Fukuoka and head to Seoul (Fig. 6-1), but that was a route that was fraught with danger. A safer way of making the crossing would have been to change to a Gaya or Baekje vessel in the present-day port of West Busan (Fig. 6-2). Another option could have been to change to a Gaya vessel in the lands under Gaya administration and then changed again upon reaching the lands of Baekje (Fig. 6-3). Although there were probably



Fig. 7 : Burial goods in royal tombs undergoing rapid change during the transition from the late 4th to early 5th century: Comparison of Tombs 93 and 94 at the Daeseong-dong ancient tomb group, Gimha. (Photo by author)

vessels from Wa that made the entire journey directly, the most likely route taken would have involved changing vessels as described above.

There is also evidence for the decline of Geumgwan-Gaya from the early fifth century onwards due to the expansionist invasion of Goguryeo. As shown in this photograph of the Daeseong-dong mounded tomb group, tomb no. 94 is to the right and tomb no. 93 is to the left (Fig. 7). The tomb on the right is that of the father, with the son's tomb on the left. Both of these tombs are of rulers of Geumgwan-Gaya, in other words the kings of Gaya.

If you examine the area around the stone base to the coffin of the father's tomb, you will notice flat iron ingots, or flat iron ingots. These flat iron ingots were used as money during the Geumgwan-Gaya era, as well as for weapons and armor. Around the father's tomb are 110 to 120 ingots. Some have likely been stolen over the course of the years, so it could be assumed that originally there were 180 to 200 ingots in place. This would indicate that the father was incredibly wealthy.

In stark contrast to the father's tomb, the tomb of the son, shown here after excavations had been carried out is almost devoid of any signs of flat iron ingots having been in place. This demonstrates the tremendous upheaval



Fig. 8 : Small Gaya-style earthenware excavated from Tomb No. 93 at the Daeseong-dong ancient tomb group, Gimhae. (Photo by author)



Fig. 9 : Small Gaya-style earthenware excavated from the Nonaka burial mound, Osaka (Takahashi, Nakakubo, eds., 2014).

caused by the large-scale invasion of Goguryeo, which brought about a change in burial practices. Where formerly a king's body was buried with many burial goods, subsequently these burial goods almost entirely disappeared.

Facing this new era of conflict and austerity, it would have been difficult for Geumgwan-Gaya to export iron to Wa. Thereafter the national strength of Geumgwan-Gaya gradually continued to decline, with the result that merchants from Wa had to travel further to Baekje.

However, the travelers from Wa did not immediately abandon the ties that had been built up over the course of centuries. There is proof to suggest that there was

hope for the resurgence of Geumgwan-Gaya. This proof was found in the tomb of the son described above. Fig. 8 depicts an earthenware item from the son's tomb, dating back to the early fifth century. Fig. 9 shows earthenware excavated from a site in Japan. As you can see, the two are identical. The earthenware from Japan was discovered at the Nonaka burial mound, located in a secondary position to the Hakayama burial mound, a royal tomb in Osaka Prefecture. This suggests that up until the early fifth century the kings of Wa and Geumgwan-Gaya were both secretly hoping for a revival of trade.

The Katsuura-minenohata mounded tomb in Fukutsu City, Fukuoka Prefecture is the tomb of a Fukuoka merchant who travelled between Wa and Baekje (Fig. 10). He was also a politician and what is interesting about the Baekje-style corridor-style stone chamber is that it uses Goguryeo-style pillars. This would imply that

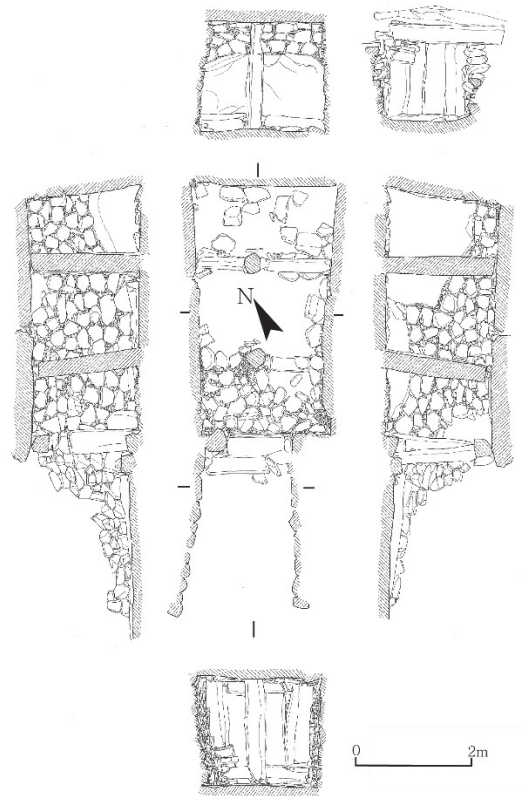


Fig. 10 : Baekje-style corridor-style stone chamber and Goguryeo-style stone pillars seen at the Katsuura-minenohata mounded tomb in Fukutsu City, Fukuoka Prefecture (Fukutsu City Board of Education, ed., 2011).

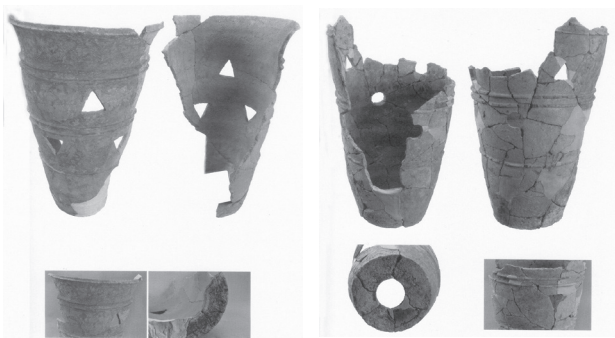


Fig. 11 : Wa-style cylindrical *haniwa* excavated from a square burial mound in southwestern Baekje, dating to the late fifth century: earthenware artifacts excavated from Yeongnam Okyari square burial mound (Naju National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, ed. 2012).

while adopting the Goguryeo-style in some respects, the merchants of the day maintained their friendly relations with Baekje and kept relations with Goguryeo to minimal diplomatic interactions.

This person was very astute, and it is this astuteness that enabled him to engage successfully in trade with Baekje as a merchant and also as a statesman.

### III. Maritime technologies of Wa, Gaya and Baekje in the fifth and sixth centuries

Some items that would suggest that enhanced trade between Baekje and Wa proved to be a success are the cylindrical earthenware artifacts excavated from Yeongnam Okyari square burial mound in what would have been southwestern Baekje (Fig. 11). These cylindrical items resemble *haniwa* from Wa, and are found in Baekje burial mounds from the end of the fifth century onwards.

Similar earthenware items are found in Baekje tombs from the late fifth century, which attests to how close relations had become by that time, as the adoption and utilization of funerary and tomb architectural styles suggests a friendly relationship between the two kingdoms. Although the earthenware items resemble *haniwa* found in Kyushu, the hole is a Baekje addition not found in Japan. The presence of *haniwa*-like figures



Fig. 12 : Tomb of a chief in the southwestern area of Baekje in the central Baekje-style, decorated with cylindrical earthenware imitating Wa-style cylindrical *haniwa*, dating to the late 5th century, (Naju National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, ed. 2012).

demonstrates the affinity between Baekje and Wa that had developed by the fifth century. Fig. 12 shows *haniwa* incorporated into traditional Baekje tombs.

Changes become apparent from the sixth century, during the reign of King Muryeong of Baekje, who is purported to have been born on Kakaranoshima, and island in Tsukushi Province.

It is my belief that the *haniwa* found at burial sites in Korea were influenced by Wa, but some scholars believe them to have been the result of local influences in the Baekje region (Fig. 13). However, since its shape is similar to that of Japanese *haniwa*, I believe that the hypothesis for the existence of a Japanese influence to be correct.

There are stories and records that claim King Muryeong



Fig. 13: Local cylindrical earthenware from the Baekje area

1. Punggi-dong Apgol site, Asan
2. Chungdong site, Gunsan
3. Joongrang site, Hampyeong (Baekche Historical Museum, Chungcheongnam-do Institute of History and Culture, eds. 2011: Jeonju National Museum, ed. 2009: Gwangju National Museum, ed. 2000).



Fig. 14 : Photo of the interior of the tomb of King Muryeong, dating to the early sixth century: The finest Chinese Southern Dynasty style tomb, constructed by specialist craftsmen invited from Southern Dynasty China (National Museum of Korea, ed., 1999).

of Baekje was born in Tsukushi Province in Japan. King Muryeong commissioned himself a brickwork tomb in the style of the Southern Dynasty of China (Fig. 14 ). Recent excavations have proven that the tomb of King Muryeong was designed and built by Chinese artisans. However, it was during the era of King Muryeong that the tombs of chiefs and other leaders in the southwestern



Fig. 15 : A Wa-style keyhole shaped burial mound located in southwestern Baekje, with a small number of cylindrical earthenware vessels (cylindrical *haniwa*) embedded at the narrow point of the mound: Myeonghwa-dong burial mound in Gwangju (Gwangju National Museum, ed. 1996).

region of Baekje closest to Japan start to employ the distinctive “keyhole” shape. This is another element in addition to the *haniwa* mentioned above that attests to the closeness of relations between Baekje and Wa at the time. The Myeonghwa-dong burial mound in Gwangju (Fig. 15) is the tomb of a local chief for which the keyhole shaped tumulus was adopted, in addition to the use of *haniwa* figurines. Although not precisely the same as the tombs of Japan at the time, it is very similar. These *haniwa* were made during the era of King Muryeong, or the era of Emperor Keitai in Japan.

The Wa administration of Emperor Keitai also adopted elements from Baekje-style tombs. The stone chambers of the Gamil-dong Baekje tomb group in the Seoul region (Fig. 16) were created in the Baekje style that would become the blueprint for the Kinai-type corridor-style stone chamber with horizontal entrance of the Wa era (Fig. 16). The items depicted in the photograph were discovered close to Seoul.

The corridor-style stone chamber with horizontal entrance of the Inouchi-inarizuka burial mound in Kyoto Prefecture is depicted in Fig. 17. This is a stone burial chamber in the Baekje-style that was adopted by the kings of Wa. Accordingly it can be seen that Baekje adopted the keyhole shaped burial mound style of Wa, which in turn Wa adopted the corridor-style stone chamber with



Fig. 16 : Wa Kinai-type corridor-style stone chamber with horizontal entrance (Central Baekje-style) in its original form: Dating to around 4-5<sup>th</sup> century, state of excavation at Gamildong Baekje tomb group in the Seoul region. (Photo: the author)

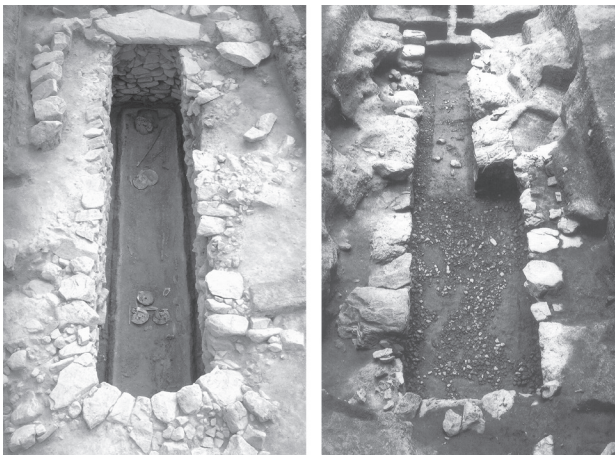


Fig. 17 : Transition from a corridor-style stone chamber to a Central Baekje-style stone chamber with horizontal entrance: Kinai-type corridor-style stone chamber with horizontal entrance, which spread from central Wa from the early 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

(Left) Pit-style stone chamber at the Yukinoyama burial mound in Shiga Prefecture (Research Team for the Yukinoyama Excavations, ed., 1996).

(Right) Horizontal entrance stone chamber at Inouchi-inarizuka burial mound in Kyoto Prefecture (Osaka University Research Group for Inarizuka Tumulus Excavation, ed., 2005).

horizontal entrance style of Baekje.

In addition, one of the materials most often traded by the merchants of Wa was Japanese umbrella pine (*Sciadopitysverticillata*). The coffin of King Muryeong



Fig. 18 : Coffin made of Japanese umbrella pine (*Sciadopitysverticillata*), dating to early 6<sup>th</sup> century. Wooden coffins of King Muryeong and his queen, made of Japanese umbrella pine brought by Wa emissaries and merchants via maritime routes. It is highly probable that Wa emissaries and merchants also participated in the Jungmak-dong rituals in which Wa-style rituals were performed. After selling umbrella pine and other special Wa produce and goods, the merchants of the time would likely have purchased valuable strategic materials and luxury prestige goods in Baekje. (Photo: the author)

(Fig. 18) was made using Japanese umbrella pine imported from Wa. Japanese umbrella pine was used for the coffins not only of the kings of Baekje, but also regional leaders and chiefs in Baekje. The merchant vessels of Wa would therefore load up with Japanese umbrella pine for the outward journey to Baekje, where they would sell their precious cargo of lumber.

#### IV. Peak in coastal-based rituals in line with the expansion of maritime exchanges between Wa and Baekje

Among the items that were often purchased by Wa merchants from Baekje were multi-colored glass beads. These beads have been found in burial mounds in various regions of Japan, and also at the ancient ritual sites of Okinoshima, which have been a focus for my research (Fig. 19).

Among the various beads, the yellow and green ones

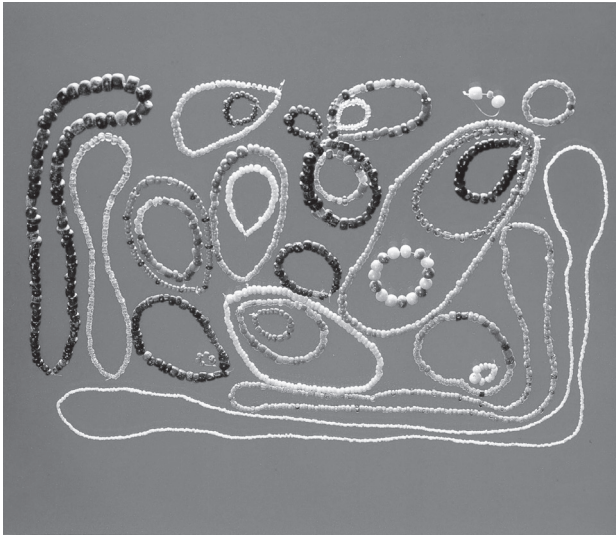


Fig. 19 : Baekje-style glass beads in yellows and greens, dating to the 5-6<sup>th</sup> centuries, excavated at the Okinoshima ritual site No. 8 (Munakata Taisha Cultural Properties Management Office, ed., 2003).



Fig. 20 : Coastal cliff of Jungmak-dong ritual site of Baekje, where open-air Wa-style rituals were also held from the late 5th to early 6th centuries.(Photo by author)

were imported from Baekje. There is a similar site located in Baekje that is important when evaluating the Okinoshima ancient ritual sites. It is the Jungmak-dong ritual site, located on the west coast of Korea. As in the case of Okinoshima, the Jungmak-dong ritual site was developed on a precipitous cliff (Fig. 20), at a high place where the maritime routes of the time would have been visible. This is something that is shared in common with

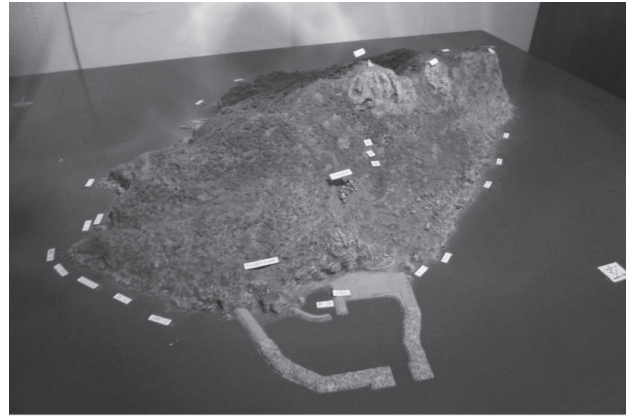


Fig. 21 : Stone-made copies in the Wa-style excavated from the Okinoshima ritual sites and a model of Okinoshima. (Photo by author)

the ancient ritual sites of Okinoshima.

Interestingly, artifacts common to those used in the ancient rituals of Okinoshima (Fig. 21) were also found at the Jungmak-dong ritual site (Fig. 22). These similarities would suggest that the merchants of Wa, who conducted rituals on Okinoshima, also participated in the rituals of Jungmak-dong in Baekje. They could in actual fact be termed as a joint ritual, shared between the two sites.



Fig. 22 : Traces of participation of Wa emissaries and merchants in the Jungmak-dong rituals of Baekje: Stone-made copies in the Wa-style excavated from the Jungmak-dong ritual site and reconstruction of a scene from the rituals.

This clearly demonstrates the closeness and depth of the ties that were shared by Baekje and Wa at the time.

In summary, although it may appear that the Okinoshima ancient ritual sites took place on a lone island located in the midst of the Genkai Sea (Fig. 23), in actual fact Okinoshima was a highly internationalized ritual site with close links to the Jungmak-dong ritual site, which itself held national importance for Baekje.

The main purpose of the rituals held on Okinoshima was to pray for the safety of the passage of trading ships operated by merchants who also participated in the rituals at Jungmak-dong. If a ship, loaded with valuable goods, foundered in the stormy waters of the Genkai Sea on its return journey to Wa, the losses to the merchants would have been immense. Even with these rituals, however, it

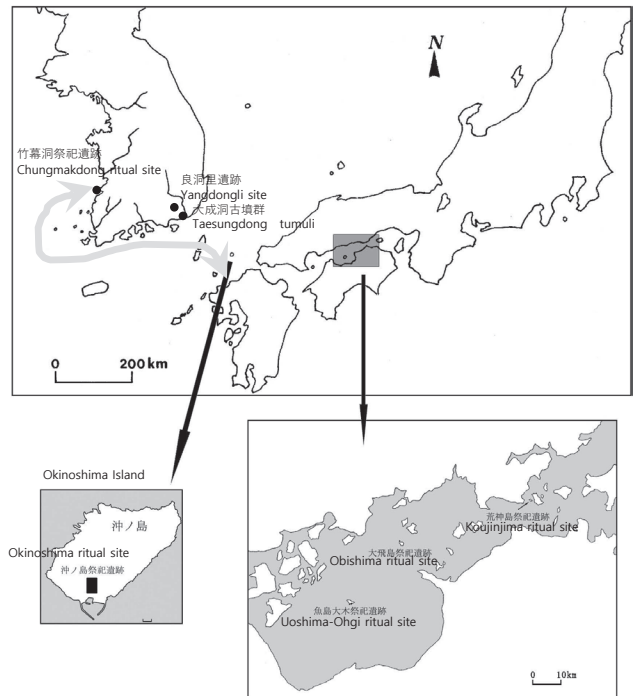


Fig. 23 : Location of the Jungmak-dong and Okinoshima ritual sites, where Wa-style rituals were conducted by emissaries and merchants of Wa (Sata, 1988, Kamei, 1988, Woo, 2010).

was evitable that some ships would sink or go adrift.

Another function of Okinoshima, therefore, would have been as a location where ships that had gone adrift may be saved by floating on the current, become being washed ashore on Okinoshima. This is something that has since been confirmed by aerial research. If a vessel went adrift between Iki and Tsushima islands, unless it was washed ashore on Okinoshima it would have been lost for good, with all people and cargo on board. It is my contention that due to the people who had been saved by the fortuitous location of Okinoshima, it gradually came to be known as a “Sacred Island.”

As noted above, at their peak the ancient rituals of Okinoshima were conducted in an international environment, and Okinoshima was considered to be the most important ritual site of the Wa kingdom.

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# Sea routes in Japan-Korea negotiations during the Kofun period: Focusing on analysis of ancient Japanese materials from the south and west coast regions of the Korean Peninsula

TAKATA Kanta

## Introduction

Having first conducted rituals on Okinoshima for safety of navigation, how did the people of ancient Japan (Wa) set out for the Korean Peninsula? Fig. 1 displays the ancient routes that were taken, emanating out from Okinoshima. Recent archaeological studies, particularly those focused on the western and southern coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula have uncovered in extremely specific detail just how those ancient people of Wa lived. It is the outcomes of these recent studies that are introduced in this paper.

Fig. 2 shows the regional networks that linked the Japanese archipelago in ancient times. It bears noting that the route from Okinoshima to the Korean Peninsula was not exclusively one way in nature, and that there were mutual visits, with visitors from the Korean Peninsula crossing the sea to ancient Japan.

This paper introduces four main topics. First is a Wa-

style burial mound (kofun) that fully adopts the style of Wa tombs of the Kofun period, and of which a number have recently been confirmed along the western and southern coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula. Second is archaeological sites relating to ports that once operated along the western and southern coasts. Third relates to the Buan Jungmak-dong ritual site, and who the people were who engaged in rituals at the site. Finally, the paper covers the status of use of steatite objects of Wa-style ritual implements as used by Wa people on the Korean Peninsula, a practice that has been gradually confirmed in recent years.

## I . Wa-style burial mounds in the western and southern coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula

From the 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, governance of the Korean Peninsula was split among various political entities. It was along the western and southern coastal regions that

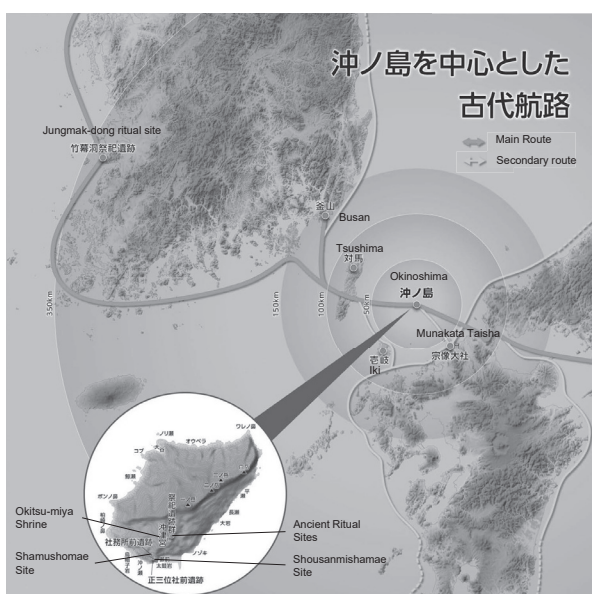


Fig. 1 : Ancient maritime routes focused around Okinoshima.

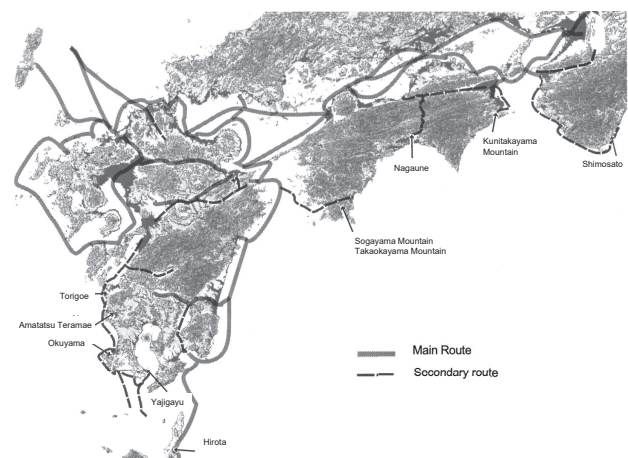


Fig. 2 : Pre- and Middle Kofun Period Interregional Exchange Routes in Chugoku and Shikoku (Hashimoto, 2010).

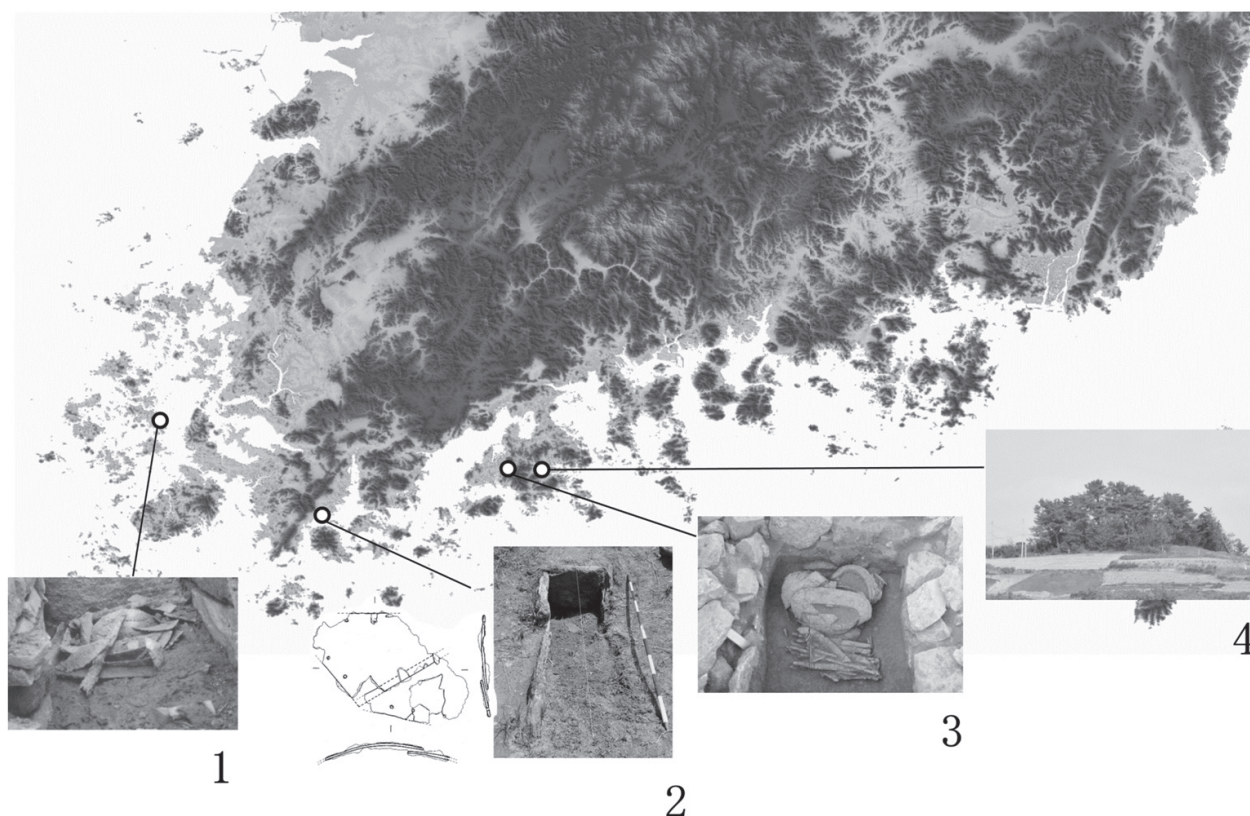


Fig. 3 : Major “Wa-style burial mounds” dating to the early fifth century on the western and southern coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula.

- 1.Sinan Baeneolli tomb No.3    2.Haenam Oedo tomb No.1  
3.Goheung Yamak tomb    4.Goheung Gildu-ri Andong tomb

many of the abovementioned Wa-style burial mounds have been confirmed. The main four such burial mounds are: the Baeneolli burial mound in Sinan County, the Oedo burial mound in Haenam County, the Yamak burial mound in Goheung County, and the Gilduri-Andong

burial mound, also in Goheung County (Fig. 3).

These burial mounds were all constructed very close to the sea, the most representative example being the Yamak burial mound (Fig. 4). In terms of what is unique about this burial mound, not only are the sides of the



Fig. 4 : Panoramic view of Goheung Yamak tomb (Naju National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage).



Fig. 5 : Distant view of Goheung Gildu-ri Andong tomb.

mound covered in *fuki-ishi* stones, the tomb in the center is very similar to those of northern Kyushu, and, as will be introduced later, there are also many burial goods originating from Wa that have been found buried in the tomb.

Next is the Gilduri-Andong burial mound (Fig. 5). The bay was originally known as Haechangman Bay and was once very close to the burial mound (Fig. 6).

Oedo Tombs No.1 and 2 in Haenam County are now connected to the mainland after land reclamation, but originally they were constructed on a small island (Fig. 7). Baeneolli Tomb No.3 in Sinan County is still located right in front of the ocean, indicating that the tomb was built on what was a small island (Fig. 8). At Yamak too,



Fig. 6 : Goheungman Bay viewed from Yamak tomb (upper photo) and Haechangman Bay viewed from Andong tomb (lower photo).



Fig. 7 : Distant view of Haenam Oedo Tombs No.1 and 2 (left photo) and the box-shaped stone coffin of Tomb No.1 (right photo).

the sea is just a short way north of the burial mound.

The left side of Fig. 9 shows the tomb of the Wa-style Yamak burial mound, and the right side shows the tomb of the Tanabataike burial mound in Fukuoka Prefecture. As can be seen from the photograph, both tombs are characterized by a very wide stone surround around



Fig. 8 : Sinan Baeneolli tomb No. 3 (upper photo) and the sandy beach directly in front of it (lower photo) .

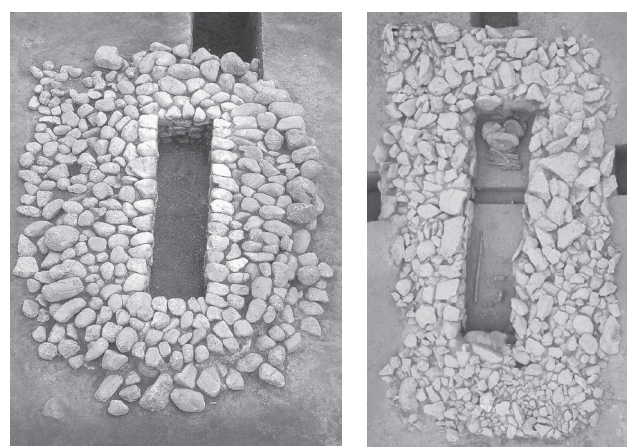


Fig. 9 : Burial places at Yamak tomb and Tanabataike burial mound.

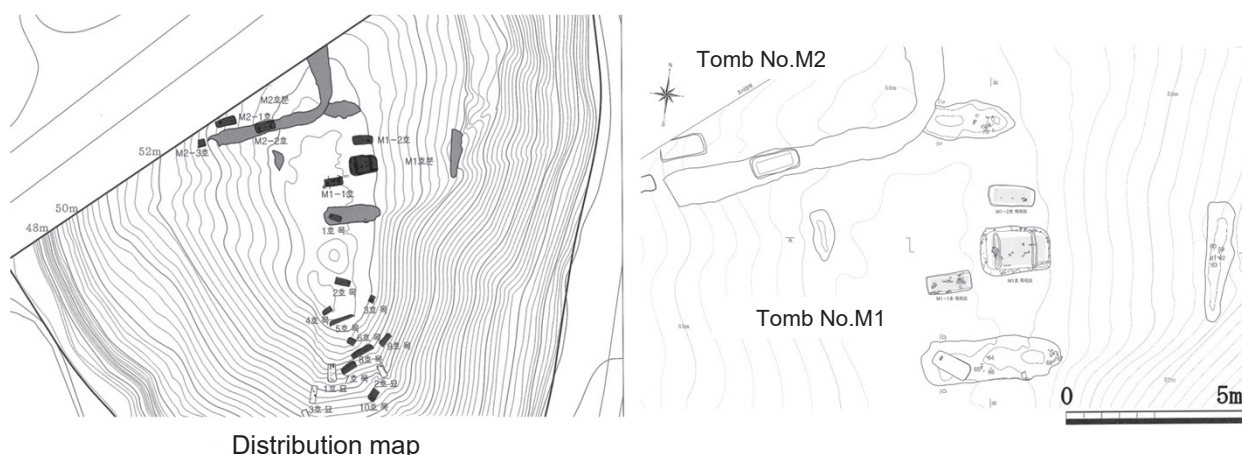


Fig. 10 : Jangdeok-ri Jangdong site, Goheung

the burial space for the deceased. Although each burial mound has its own detailed features, the tombs most similar to that of the Yamak burial mound are the pit-type stone chambers found in northern Kyushu.

At the Yamak burial mound the burial goods in the tomb include Chinese mirrors and mirrors made in Wa. In the western and southern coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula there was basically no tradition or custom of burying people with mirrors. It is from such characteristics that we can see that these Wa-style burial mounds incorporate aspects of actual Wa burials.

Combs are also found among the burial goods, and on the Korean Peninsula there are at most only two or three examples to date of combs being included among burial goods. Wa-style armor and weapons are also among the burial goods, and that armor is almost certainly more likely to have been produced in the Japanese archipelago than on the Korean Peninsula.

With regard to the iron arrowheads also found in the burial goods, it is natural to consider that these too were produced not in the Korean Peninsula, but rather in northern Kyushu or the Kinai region.

Among the burial goods are also artifacts that have links to the southern Kyushu region. Examples include a serpentine sword and an iron arrowhead with line engravings excavated from the Berunori Tomb 3.

Since the center of distribution of such stylized swords and iron arrowheads is currently considered to be the southern Kyushu region, it is possible that people from this region were involved in the construction of the Wa-style burial mounds in some form or another.

So, what kind of people originally lived in the area where the Wa-style burial mounds with these various characteristics are located? When considering this question, the burial mounds built by the local people provide an important source of information.

An example of a tomb built by local people is the Jangdeok-ri Jang-dong site in Goheung County. It is basically a burial mound with multiple tombs constructed inside and surrounded by a trench (Fig. 10). This style of burial mound and tomb was typical of those constructed and used by local people.

Another feature of the tomb is the many burial goods that originate from other regions, indicative of the active exchanges that took place, given its close proximity to the sea. For example, the earthenware on the left in Fig. 11-2 is thought to be from the Geumgwan-Gaya region. There is a high possibility that the pot on the upper left in Fig. 11-1 is from Sogaya, given its fine detailing. There are also iron ingots among the burial goods that are thought to have been brought from the Gaya region (Lower part of Fig. 11-1). Judging from the characteristics of these

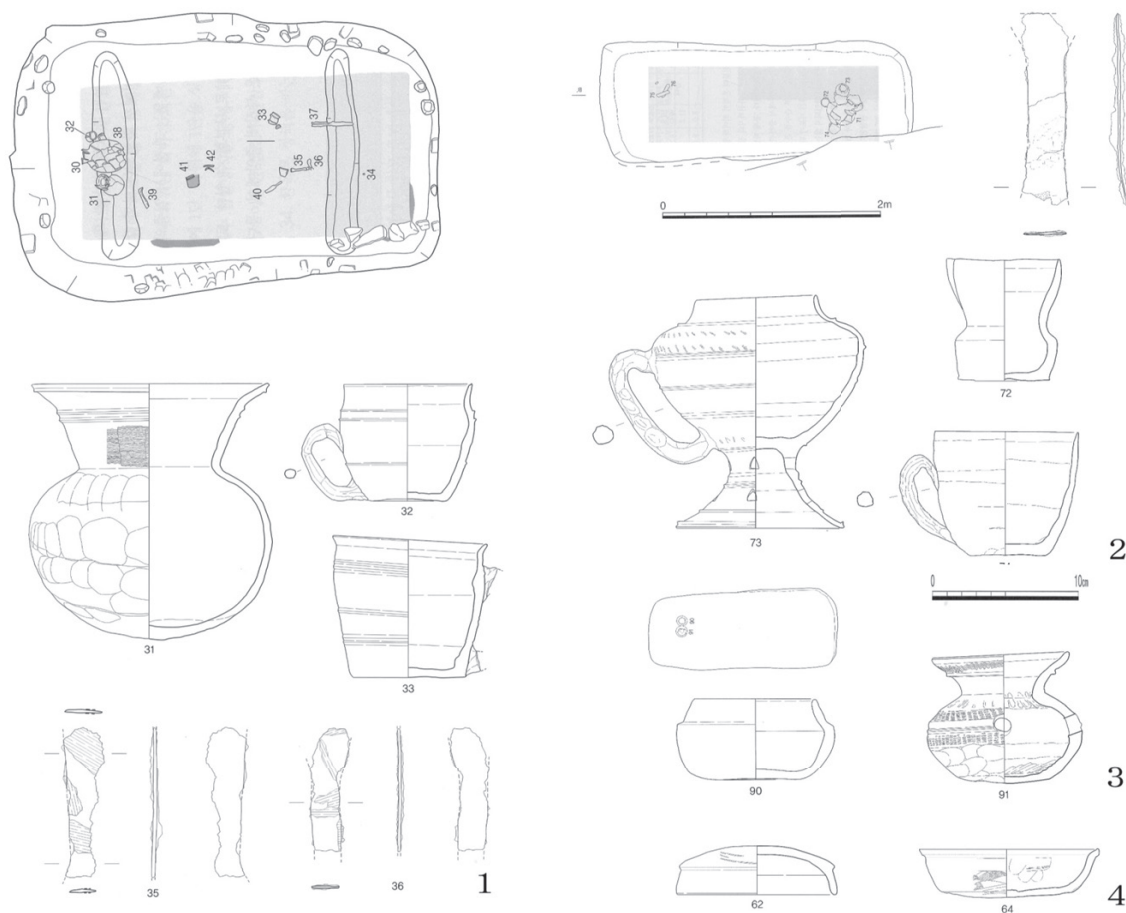


Fig. 11 : Burial places at the Jangdong site and artifacts

1. Wooden burial chamber No. M1
2. Wooden burial chamber No. M2-1
3. Artifacts from Wooden burial chamber No. 1 (separate individual chamber)
4. Artifacts from Moat surrounding the tomb No.M1

burial mounds it is thought the western and southern coastal region was once home to scattered groups that engaged actively in sea-borne trade with other regions, and that these groups were linked by a network. It is thought that the people of Wa used this regional network, deepening interactions with the people of the Korean Peninsula, travelling to Baekje and the Yeongsan River basin region, and constructing Wa-style burial mounds. An excavated item that enables us to take a different angle in hypothesizing about the character and position of the persons buried in Wa-style Japanese burial mounds is a Baekje crown hat that was among the burial goods in the Andong burial mound (Fig. 12).

The fact that a crown hat of Baekje's superior quality is included among the burial goods suggests that the people buried in the Andong burial mound and other Wa-style burial mounds, or the group that constructed them, had connections not only with the Kingdom of Wa, but also the Kingdom of Baekje. This suggests that these people of Wa origin served as intermediaries in mutual interactions between Wa, the Yeongsan River basin area, and Baekje.

As described above, the persons buried in the Wa-style burial mounds and the groups that constructed them must actually have been the ones responsible for exchanges between the societies of Wa, Baekje, and the Yeongsan



Fig. 12 : Baekje-style crown excavated from the Andong tomb, Goheung (Chungnam National University Museum)

River basin, participating as they did in the network that formed along western and southern coastal regions. These people may also have used ports along the maritime route as ports of call, or requested local groups whose livelihoods depended on trade (arrow fishing) to guide them on their voyages. This situation would suggest that groups of Wa people settled for a certain period in the locality, “mingling” with local groups, where they constructed Wa-style burial mounds.

## II . Introduction to port-related archaeological sites

Next, let us take a look at a number of port-related archaeological sites along the western and southern

coastal region of the Korean Peninsula.

Firstly, there are the port-related sites in the Gimhae and Geumgwan-Gaya regions that were also the arrival point on the Korean Peninsula for ships plying sea routes from Iki and Tsushima. These are the Gimhae Gwandongri and Sinmunli sites. Here, remains of wharves and warehouses, etc., have been identified and are now preserved as historic sites.

At these sites, earthenware of a type brought from Wa, or made locally by people from Wa, has been excavated (Fig. 13). In addition, people came from the Yeongsan River basin region, bringing earthenware with them, or making it once they arrived. These sites offer a glimpse of a port city that once brought people from diverse regions together.

Next is the Ajudong site on Geojedo Island. A number of square pit dwellings and earthenware, which are commonly found in the Yeongsan River basin region, have been confirmed, and *hajiki* earthenware has also been uncovered (Fig. 14).

Moreover, at the Yonggari-Sokcheong site in Gwangyang, Wa-style *hajiki* earthenware, together with Gaya-style earthenware, particularly Ara Gaya earthenware, as well as locally produced earthenware goods have been excavated from the same pit dwellings. From this we can appreciate that the port-related sites were places where people from various locations came together (Fig. 15).

Furthermore, remains of a pier-like structure have been confirmed at the site at Naju Wolyang-ri Guyang Site, together with traces of roads and waterways. Given



Fig. 13 : Earthenware *hajiki*-style vessel, excavated from the Sinmun-ri site (Foundation of East Asia Cultural Properties Institute).

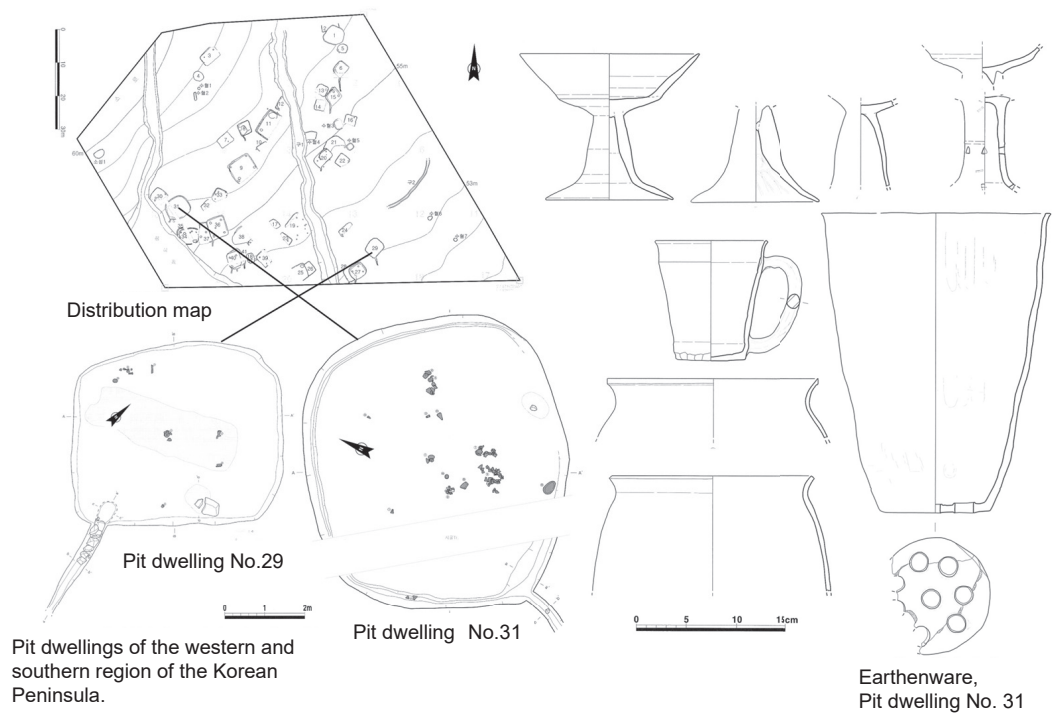


Fig. 14 : Geoje Aju-dong site (Area 1485).

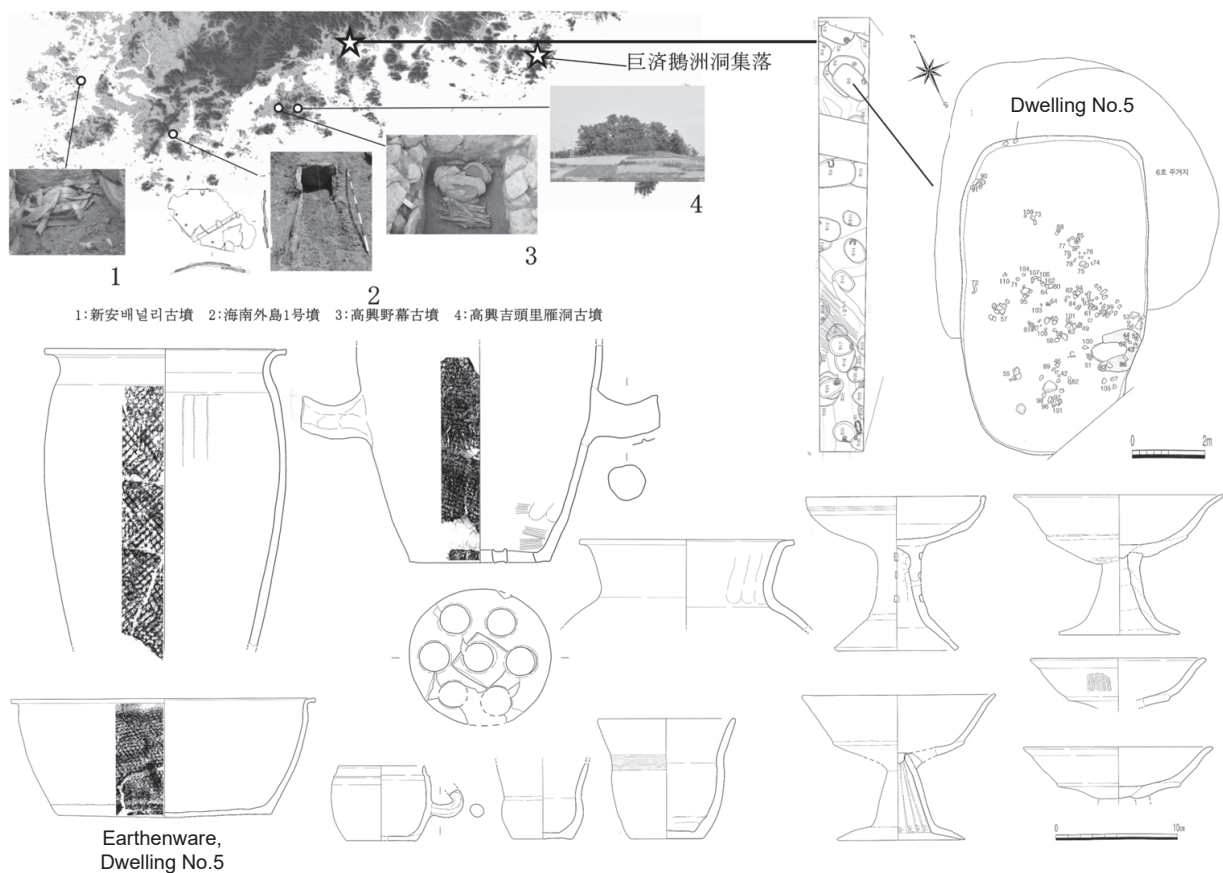


Fig. 15 : Gwangyang Yonggang-ri Seokjeong Site

its waterfront position, it can be surmised to be a port-related historical site. It is in this place that Wa-style *hajiki* earthenware and *haniwa* have been excavated (Fig. 16).

Immediately north of the Yamak burial mound, one of the Wa-style burial mounds mentioned above, is a site that was a port-related settlement (Fig. 17), named Handong-Bangsa. Here too Sue-ware and miniature comma-shaped beads mounted (*komochi magatama*) are among the artifacts that have been excavated.

As described above, archaeological materials are gradually revealing the existence of Wa people as they traveled along the western and southern coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula. The prime example of a ritual site where these people from Wa would pray for safe passage across the ocean is the Buan Jungmak-dong ritual site.

### III. Jungmak-dong ritual site and the spread of steatite objects of implements and items

The Jungmak-dong ritual site is considered to be a national ritual site that was administered by the Baekje

Kingdom. While this is by no means mistaken, it should not be taken to mean that it was only the people of central Baekje who engaged in such rituals. This is something that can be inferred to some extent from the production sites of the earthenware used as ritual implements.

Although it is certainly the case that most of the earthenware used in rituals was from the Gyeonggi region in central Baekje, judging from the fine detailing of the earthenware it can be judged to be from the Yeongsan River basin region (Fig. 18-2 to 18-4 and 18-6), with an estimated production date between the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century and 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Next, in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, Baekje's central administration was strengthened by the use of ritual implements that shared aspects in common with central Baekje burial goods. However, the horse pendant (leaf shaped) is more characteristic of Daegaya (Fig. 18-8 and 18-9).

The earthenware shown in Fig. 18-7 is a bowl-shaped vessel stand from the Gochang region, slightly to the south of Jungmak-dong.

The steatite objects shown in Fig. 19 further underscore the involvement in the rituals of people from Wa. Of

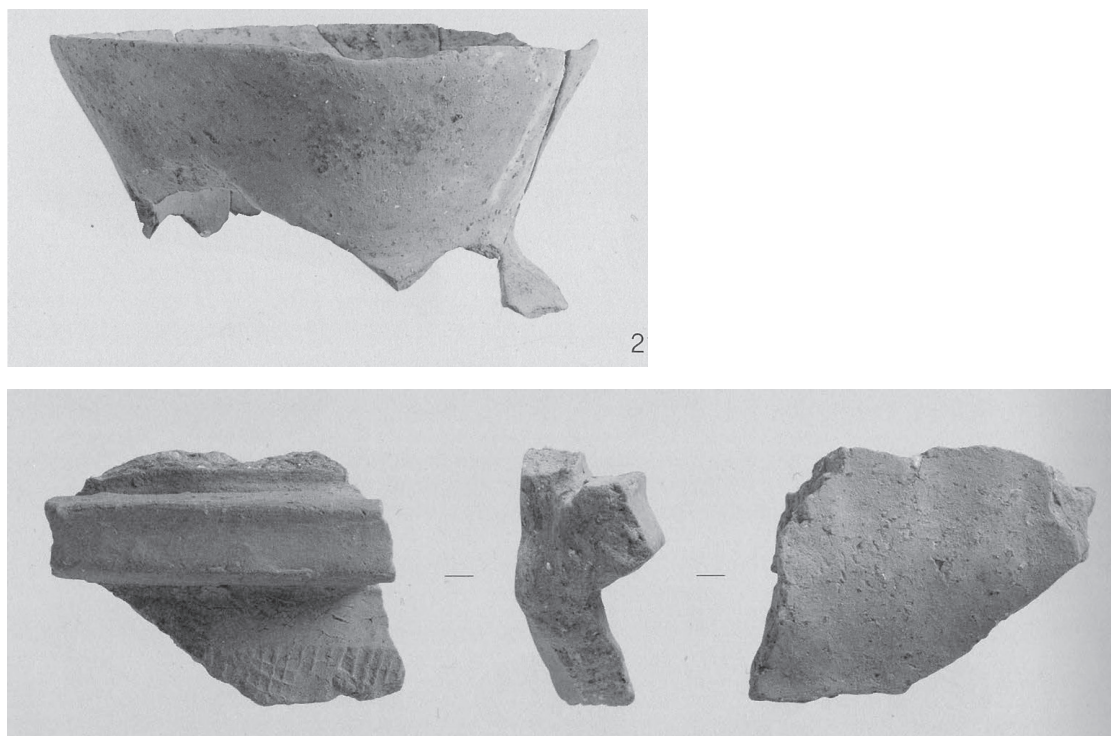


Fig. 16 : *Hajiki*-style earthenware and *haniwa* fragments excavated from the Naju Wolyang-ri Guyang site.

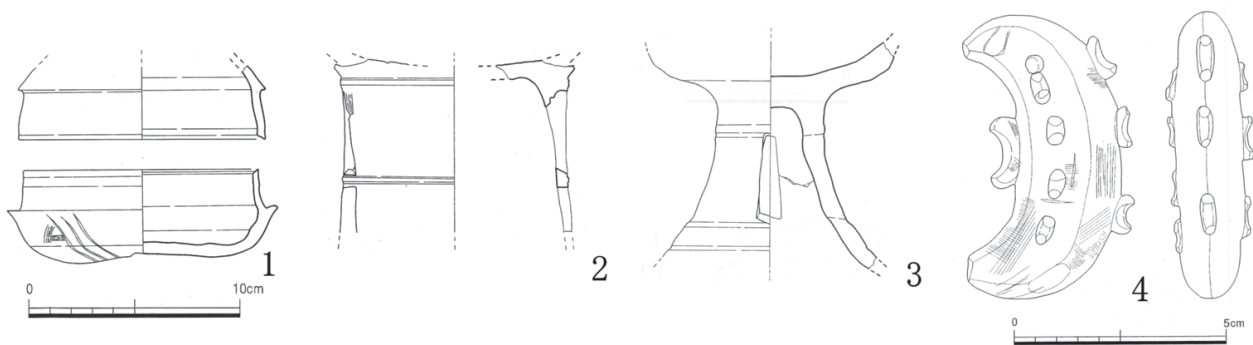


Fig. 17 : Artifacts excavated from the Handong and Goheng Bangsa Sites

1. Handong Residence Site No. 18   2. Handong Residence Site No. 21  
3. Bangsa Residence Site No. 18   4. Bangsa Residence Site No. 39-4

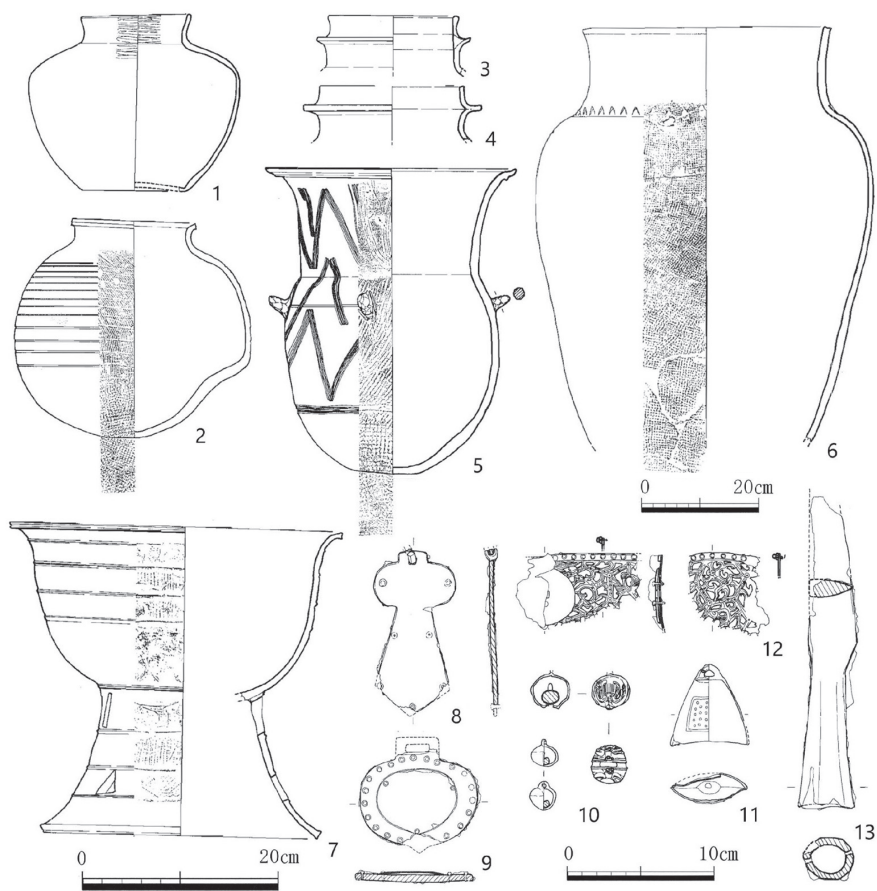


Fig. 18 : Artifacts excavated from the Jungmak-dong ritual site.

particular note is a stone-made copy of armor (Fig. 19, upper right). Six similar examples have been found in the Japanese archipelago, one of which was excavated from the Nakadono of the Shimotakamiya site of Munakata. The other examples are concentrated in eastern Japan. This is a strong indicator of the links that existed between the Okinoshima-Munakata region and Jungmak-dong. There is also a possibility that it indicates some kind of relationship with people from eastern Japan.

As described above, while the Jungmak-dong ritual site was a national ritual site of the Baekje Kingdom, it can also be seen to have been a site visited by people of Gaya, Wa and the Yeongsan River basin, who also engaged in rituals or festivities there. This demonstrates the tremendous diversity of exchanges that took place there.

Previously there were hardly any materials relating to

steatite objects excavated on the Korean Peninsula. However, recent studies and digs are gradually finding more and more examples of implements used in Wa-style rituals, including steatite objects and *komochi magatama*. By tracing their provenance, it is now becoming possible to infer from the archaeological record the actual sea routes that were taken back then.

Specifically, the distribution of steatite objects and *komochi magatama* shows that they have been excavated from settlements and ritual-related sites at ports and also at locations a little way inland from ports, as seen at Gimhae, Neukdo, Suncheon, Gwangyang, Goheung, Beoseong, Sinan, and Naju, and also at the Jungmak-dong ritual site (Fig. 20).

To reiterate, these steatite objects and other artifacts are distributed on maritime routes along the western and southern coastal region of the Korean Peninsula, up to

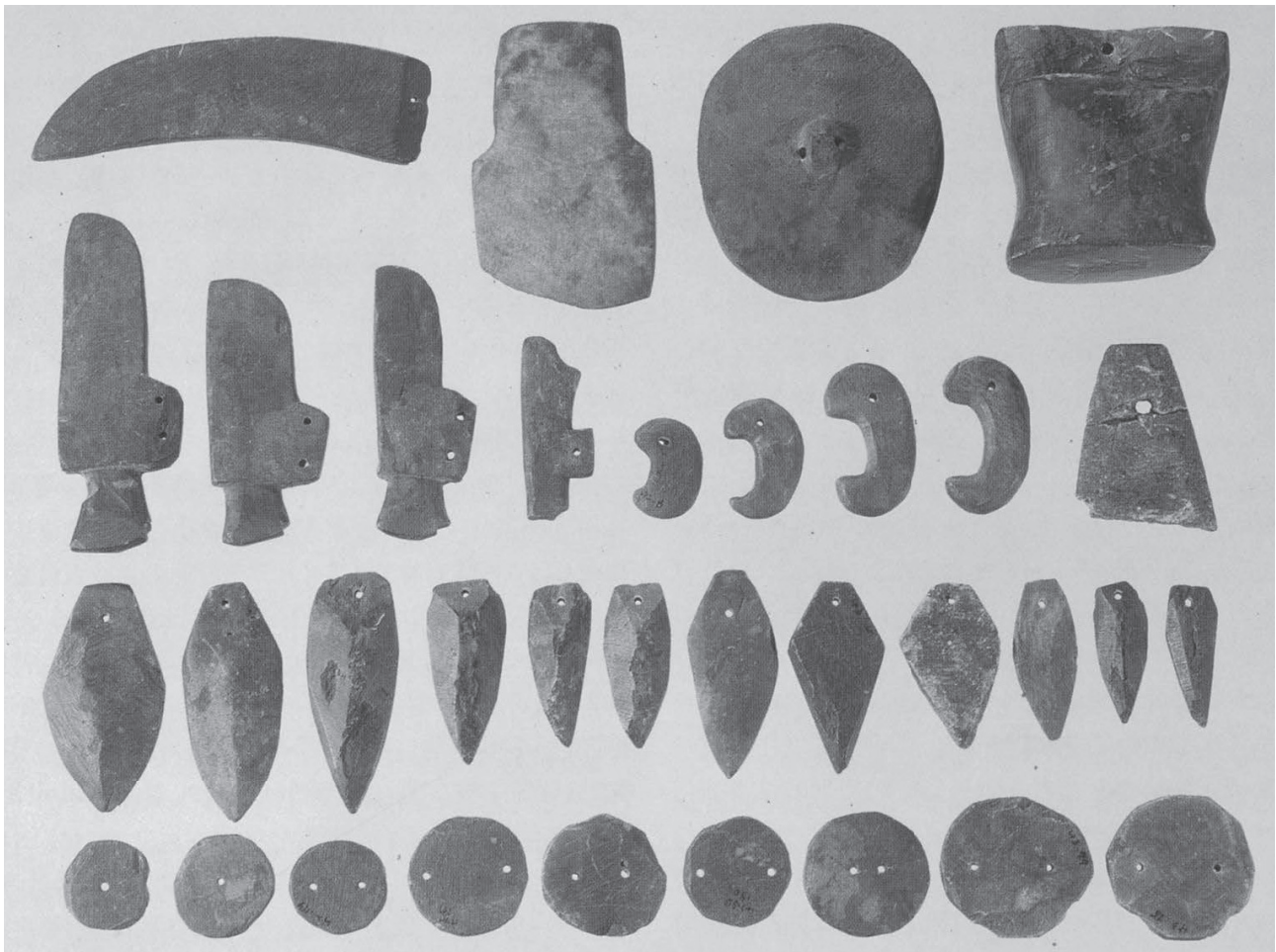


Fig. 19 : Steatite objects (Jeonju National Museum)

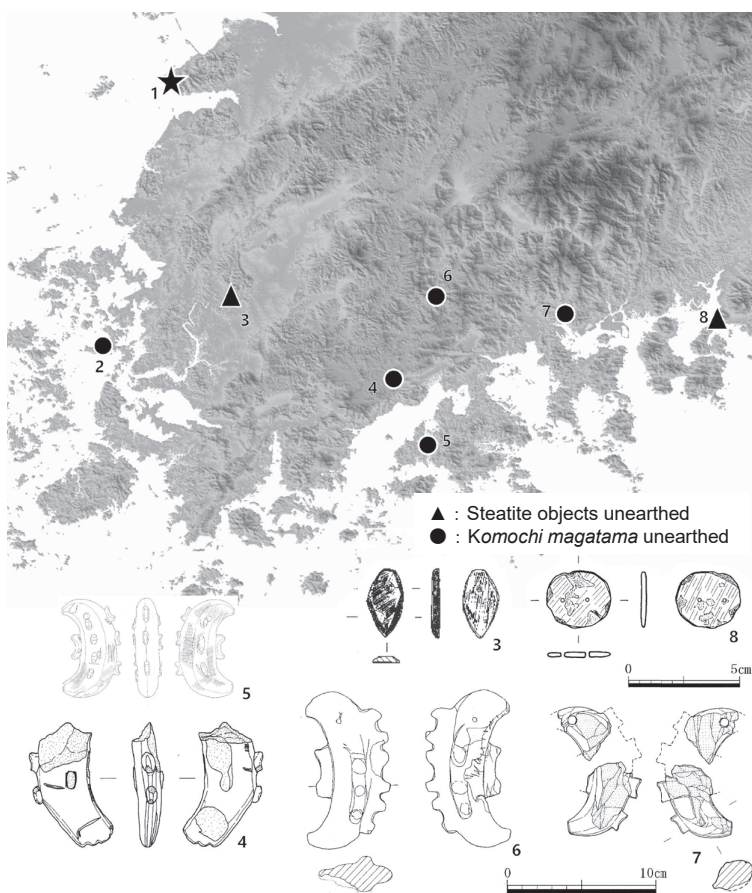


Fig. 20 : Steatite objects and *komochi magatama* miniature beads from the Korean Peninsula.

the Yeongsan River basin in the direction of Baekje, and have been excavated from sites that are close to the sea and presumably related to ports, where foreign pottery has also been excavated. They have also been excavated on islands, and from places that are assumed to have been ritual sites located somewhat distant from the sea.

Although it is anticipated that further materials and artifacts will be discovered in the future, it could be reasonably hypothesized that groups from Wa that traveled between Wa, Baekje, and the Yeongsan River basin held rituals to pray for safe passage, while staying for short periods at port-related sites around the region, as they waited for favorable winds and tides.

## Conclusion

To conclude, there is another archaeological site that can be introduced. This paper has focused on introducing sites along maritime routes, in the western and southern

coastal regions, the region from Gimhae to the Yeongsan River basin, and the Jungmak-dong ritual site. However, it is also conceivable that there was a route that ran from Okinoshima up the eastern coast of the Korean Peninsula. However, there are far fewer excavated artifacts along this eastern route compared to the western and southern coastal regions that would suggest a relationship with Wa. What there is, though, is an important burial mound at Gijang, on the way up the eastern coast from Gimhae, which provides clues to the existence of an eastern route. That is the stone chamber tomb No. 12 at Dongbaek-ri III district in Gijang County.

Although much of the earthenware buried in the tombs can be appraised as having been produced locally in the Silla style, the nine fitted covers for earthenware dishes as depicted in the upper left of Fig. 21 are all Sue ware. It is thought that they were made in Wa and brought to Korea. There is little room for doubt that people from Wa were involved in some way or another when the tomb

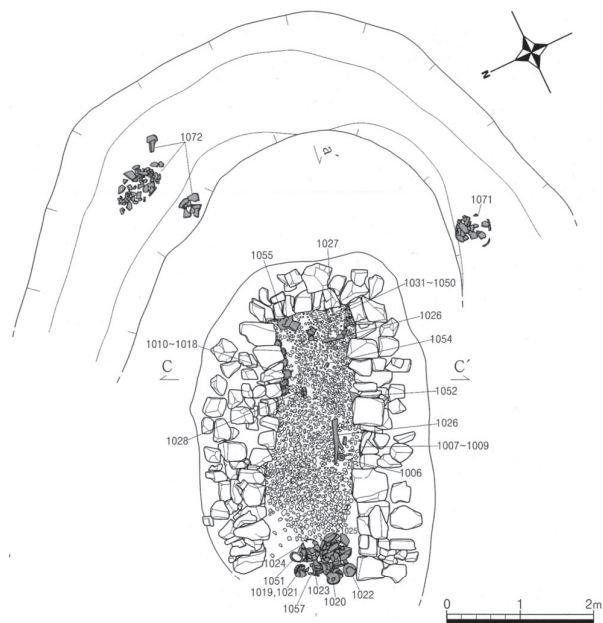
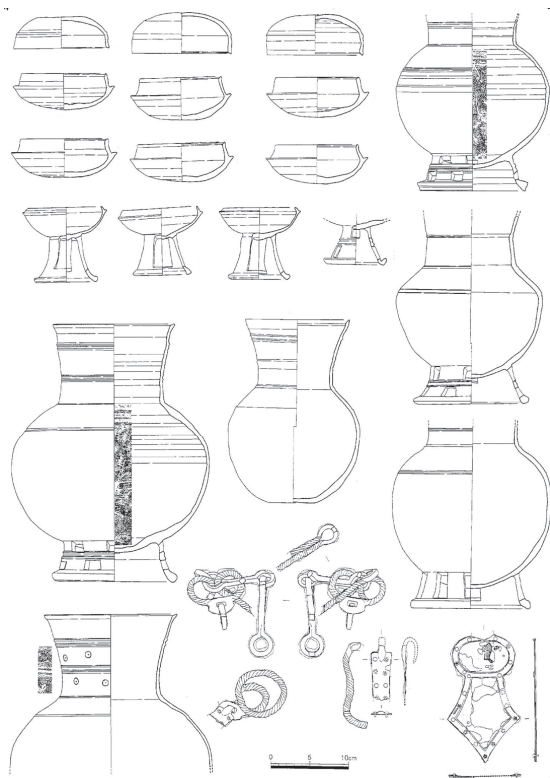


Fig. 21 : Stone chamber tomb No. 12, Area III, Gijang Dongbaek-ri site.

was being constructed.

The tomb itself is a side-opening stone chamber often seen in the region, indicating a low likelihood that the person being buried was from Wa. However, the point that as many as nine artifacts among the burial goods are Sue ware is an important one. There is also a possibility that in addition to the Sue ware, the horse pendant (leaf-shaped, lower left, Fig. 21) was made in Wa.

It is thus highly likely that people crossing from Wa to the Korean Peninsula were travelling in multiple directions and that voyages at the time were basically made in sight of land, meaning that interaction with local people at ports and other locations was likely to have taken place.

That the Okinoshima and Jungmak-dong ritual sites played an important role as a place to pray for safe passage, tells us just how closely the people of the Japanese archipelago and the Korean Peninsula were contact with each other. It is to be hoped that archaeological studies will shed further light on the realities of this history of

interaction.

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# The Hata clan and the deities of Munakata: Seeking clues from the Hata-shi Honkei-cho

TANAKA Fumio

## Introduction

Prior to the seventh century Japan was known as Wakoku, or the Land of Wa. The history of Munakata and Okinoshima during this Wa period is often referred to in the context of international sea routes that connected the Japanese archipelago and the Korean Peninsula. However, there are hardly any references in ancient texts or other documents that clearly indicate the existence of such sea routes. It is for this reason that in this paper I would like to shift perspective slightly to focus on the historical document “Hata-shi Honkei-cho,” which records the spread of belief in the Munakata deities, and in so doing reconsider the significance of the Munakata maritime region in the context of transportation in ancient times.

## I . Considerations from the perspective of the Iwai Rebellion

### 1. Iwai Rebellion

Often-used routes for international interactions during the Wa period were the maritime lanes linking Hakata and Karatsu bays in northern Kyushu with the southern coastal region of the Korean Peninsula, via Iki and Tsushima islands. However, the Japan-Korea exchange route via Okinoshima (the Okinoshima route) was different to these. The rituals performed on Okinoshima are known to have served an important role in the Munakata region. It is for this reason that the general Okinoshima route is thought to have been the route from Munakata via Okinoshima to Tsushima and the Korean Peninsula. This route does not call at places such as Hakata or Karatsu bays, or Iki (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 : Estimated external transportation routes of Wa in fifth century

On the other hand, archaeological studies in recent years have uncovered evidence that rituals on Okinoshima were initiated by the Kingdom of Yamato (the Kingdom of Wa) from the middle of the fourth century. This was a period during which Wa had a heightened involvement with what was an increasingly tense situation on the Korean Peninsula. Some people contend that from the latter half of the fourth century onwards, the Kingdom of Yamato (Kingdom of Wa), for which direct negotiations with the Korean Peninsula had taken on greater importance, focused on the Okinoshima route as an independent negotiation route with the Korean Peninsula, distinct from the Hakata Bay-Iki route, which was dependent on powerful northern Kyushu elites. I would question such a hypothesis, however, not least because of the Iwai Rebellion.

The Iwai Rebellion, which took place in Tsukushi in the first half of the sixth century, was a rebellion led by a powerful local clan that questioned the control of the Yamato kings over the archipelago. Details of this

uprising are recorded in the *Nihon Shoki*, as summarized below.

In 527, Lord Omi no Kena, having received a command from the Emperor, was about to head for the Korean Peninsula with an army of 60,000 men to rebuild the southern region of Gaya, which had been defeated by Silla. However, when Silla learned of this, they secretly bribed Iwai, the governor of Tsukushi Province, who had been plotting rebellion for some time, and encouraged him to prevent the army of Lord Omi no Kena from making the passage to Korea. Iwai extended his influence to include the two provinces of Hi and Toyo, preventing them from serving the Yamato Kingdom and blocking sea routes to Korea, instead inviting envoys from Goguryeo, Baekje, Silla, and Mimana to Japan, thereby preventing the advance of the army of Lord Omi no Kena. In other words, the Yamato Kingdom found its sea routes blocked by Iwai, meaning that they were neither able to negotiate with the Korean kingdoms, nor dispatch armies to the Korean Peninsula.

## 2. Significance of Kasuya-no-miyake

In response to this rebellion Emperor Keitai dispatched Mononobe no Arakabi. In 528 Arakabi fought the armies of Iwai in Mii District in Tsukushi and Iwai was slain in battle. Iwai's son Kuzuko, fearing that he would be held responsible for the crimes of his father offered the Kasuya-no-miyake to the victorious Yamato Kingdom, thus evading the death penalty.

A “miyake” is the term for a fief, or a base for regional management and local control of a kingdom. Some of these miyake subsequently developed into counties (gun), which later became local administrative districts under the Ritsuryo system. These miyake are thought to have been positioned in various parts of the Japanese archipelago following the Iwai Rebellion. I believe that this process of development began shortly after the establishment of Kasuya-no-miyake, when miyake were placed predominantly in western Japan, which was a strategic region in terms of the kingdom's external routes,

and this process then expanded out to various other regions. One of the most likely candidates for being the place where the Kasuya-no-miyake was located is the Shishibu-Tabuchi site in Koga City, Fukuoka Prefecture, which is adjacent to the sea, between Munakata and Hakata Bay.

Incidentally, judging from the subsequent development of chieftain's tombs, archaeological studies suggest that Munakata, which possessed similar influence and military might as Iwai in northern Kyushu at the time, did not support Iwai's forces (Shigefuji, 2011). Therefore the navy of Lord Omi no Kena should have been able to reach the Munakata maritime region from the Seto Inland Sea via the Kanmon Straits. Just beyond there is Kasuya, which was under the control of Iwai forces, which is why it is considered that it was Kasuya that was the location where Iwai closed off the sea route. When viewed from the perspective of the Yamato Kingdom, Kasuya lies before Hakata Bay, meaning that Lord Omi no Kena's military vessels would not have been able to travel any further west than Hakata Bay, which would also suggest that the envoy ships of the Korean kingdoms coming via Tsushima and Iki also experienced difficulty in communicating with the Yamato Kingdom (Fig. 2). It is thought that Iwai's son, Kuzuko, offered the land of Kasuya as a miyake because this had served as the



Fig. 2 : Diagram depicting the development of the Iwai Rebellion

base for Iwai's maritime blockade, a symbolic site of the rebellion itself, and a key maritime staging point connecting the Hibiki Sea and Munakata maritime region with Hakata Bay and the Genkai Sea (Tanaka, 2018).

### 3. Distinctive features of Nanotsu-no-miyake

Later, along the shores of Hakata Bay, the Nanotsu-no-miyake, which later developed to become the regional government of Dazaifu, was established. The *Nihon Shoki* records the following Imperial decree concerning the Nanotsu-no-miyake, in the first year of Senka (around the fifth month of 538).

“Given that the province receives tribute from foreign countries, Tsukushi has always stored rice and grain to prepare for bad harvests and for welcoming guests. Here, orders were given to bring the grain from the various miyake, and to build a government warehouse at the mouth of Nanotsu (Hakata Bay). The miyake of Tsukushi, Hi and Toyo were scattered across the region, making transportation inconvenient and making it difficult to prepare for emergencies. So let this grain be shared and gathered together at Nanotsu-no-kuchi, so as to be ready for any emergency (abridged).”

From the above it can be appreciated that Nanotsu-no-miyake on the shores of Hakata Bay had important external functions, and that all the miyake of the Kyushu region were integrated here, with rice and grain from Hi, Tsukushi and Toyo provinces being amassed at this one place. In other words, the Nanotsu-no-miyake of Hakata Bay can be seen to have functioned as something of a regional control center for the Yamato Kingdom, where supplies and materials from all miyake in Kyushu were gathered together.

Given the above, it is thought that following the Iwai Rebellion, rule in Kyushu proceeded in the following manner.

i) After the suppression of the Iwai Rebellion, a miyake was established in Kasuya, and land at the entrance to Hakata Bay was brought under the control of the Yamato Kingdom.

ii) Miyake were established in various locations, mainly in the Seto Inland Sea region and Kyushu, for the purpose of securing external transportation routes.

iii) The Nanotsu-no-miyake was located specifically in Hakata Bay, a hub for external traffic, to oversee miyake in all regions of Kyushu.

As can be seen from the above, when considering the events of the Iwai Rebellion and subsequent developments it can be appreciated that the Yamato Kingdom was intensely focused on controlling transportation routes in and around Hakata Bay, as a strategic hub for external exchange. Given that the armies of Yamato were able to advance as far as Munakata at the time of the Iwai Rebellion, even if the sea route beyond that point was blocked, they could have been expected to use the Okinoshima route, but they did not and could not. If the waters west of Hakata Bay were controlled by Iwai, this meant that the envoy ships from the Korean kingdoms could not find passage for negotiations with the Kingdom of Wa. This would therefore suggest that the main international route for the Yamato Kingdom was predominantly from Hakata, via Iki and Tsushima (Tanaka, 2018).

This raises the possibility that Munakata's significance to the Yamato Kingdom in terms of external transportation routes was not simply as a key point on the north-south route connecting it to Okinoshima, but also as a strategic way point on the east-west route connecting the Hibiki Sea and Genkai Sea. This indicates that Munakata was important because it was also a place that had to be passed through in order to reach Hakata Bay from the waters off the main island of Honshu. This raises a further question: how is the issue of maritime transportation reflected in the belief in deities in the Munakata region?

## II. Considerations from the perspective of the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho”

### 1. What is the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho”?

In order to consider the various matters set out above, I would like to concentrate on the historical document known as the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho.” This is a work that is quoted in the *Honcho Gatsurei*, a chronicle of annual court events in the earth 10<sup>th</sup> century, which records the following, with the statement, as detailed in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” (Fig. 3).

The shrine of Matsuo no Okami, one of the most senior-

ranked among all shrines, was established when Nakabe (中部) no Okami, the kami enshrined in Munakata in Tsukushi, descended on the third day of the third month of the Year of the Earth Dragon to Matsuzaki-no-Hio (also called Hisaki-no-Mine), and in the first year of Taiho (701), Hata no Imiki Tori, a son of Kawabe invited the kami from Hisaki-no-Mine to Matsuo, where the kami was further enshrined. Furthermore, Hata no Imiki Chimarume, a daughter of Taguchi was the first to raise up offerings to the deity, and so it was that the child of Chimarume, Hata no Imiki Tsugafu, perpetuated the rituals of worship from the Year of the Earth Horse (as priest) and since then the descendants of Hata no Imiki have continued to worship the kami. From then until today, the third year of Gangyo (879), a total of 244 years have passed.

In the *Honcho Gatsurei* it is recorded that the deity enshrined and worshipped at Matsunoo Shrine in Yamashiro Province was originally the “Nakabe (中部) no Okami” of Munakata in Tsukushi Province. It is thought that the “be” (部) of Nakabe should be “tsu” (都), and the deity being referred to is “Nakatsu no Okami.” In other words, this ancient document is a valuable text that specifically describes how the deity of Munakata was accepted in a region other than Munakata itself. However, there are various theories about how to interpret the contents of this document, and a definitive theory has yet to be determined. Particularly problematic is the question of precisely when the events that the document refers to took place. Although many specific dates in the form of years appear in the text, other than era names such as the first year of Taiho (701) and the third year of Gangyo (879), the document also refers to Chinese zodiacal years, such as the Year of the Earth Dragon and the Year of the Earth Horse. As zodiacal years repeat in a 60-year cycle it is impossible to know for sure which year is being referred to in the western calendar. It is for this reason that there are various interpretations as to precisely when the text is referring.

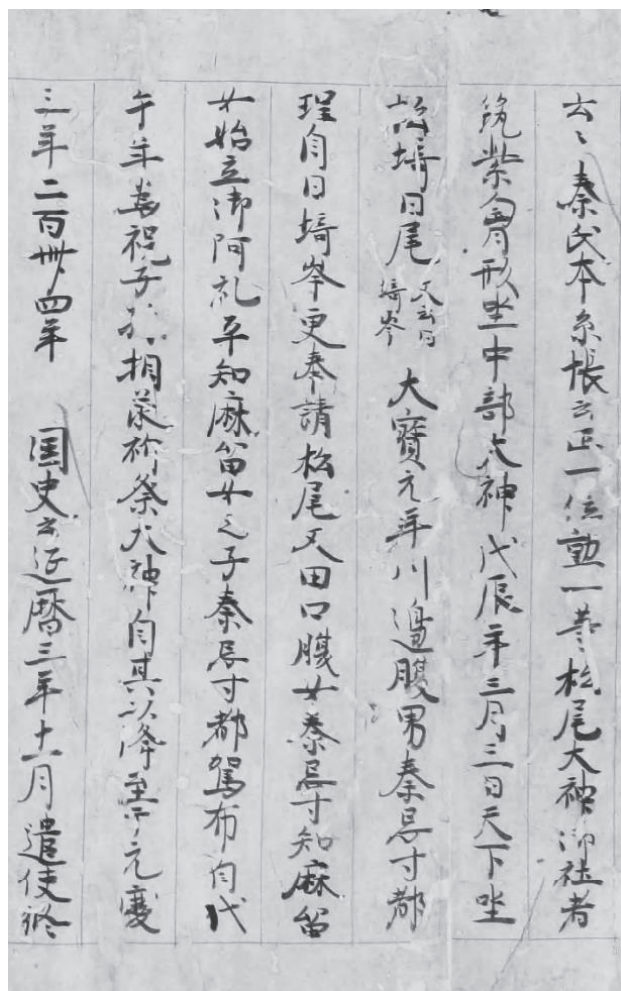


Fig. 3 : “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” quoted in the *Honcho Gatsurei*, formerly in the possession of the Kujo family.

(From the cataloging and image access system for the Archives and Mausolea Department of the Imperial Household Agency)

## 2. Matsunoo Taisha and the Hata Clan

The “Matsuo no Okami” shrine as recorded in the Hata-shi Honkei-cho is none other than present-day Matsunoo Taisha in Arashiyama, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto. The deities worshipped at this shrine are Oyamagui-no-kami and Ichikishimahime-no-Mikoto, one of the three female deities of Munakata. Oyamagui-no-kami is believed to be a deity that was enshrined in this area before the deity of Munakata came to be worshipped in Yamashiro. In addition, the area where the deity of Munakata is said to have descended is thought to be located near the “iwakura” rock “dwelling place,” where the shrine deities were worshipped prior to formalization of shrine rituals, that is to say, close to the summit of Mt. Matsunoo, which stands behind Matsunoo Taisha (Hojo, 1997).

Three statues of deities from the early Heian period, designated as Important Cultural Properties, are also on display in the current Statue Hall of Matsunoo Taisha (Fig. 4). Of these, the two male figures depict Oyamagui-no-kami, and the female figure is thought to be the depiction of the female deity that descended from Munakata. This statue of the deity may be one of the oldest existing wooden statues representing the female deity of Munakata.

According to the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho,” in the Year of the Earth Dragon the deity of Munakata descended to “Matsuzaki-no-Hio,” after which in the first year of Taiho it was Hata no Imiki Tori, “son of Kawabe (Kawabe-no-hara)” who invited the deity to Matsuo, where it was enshrined. According to Hata no Imiki Tori, who is recorded in the *Shinsenshojiroku* (Newly Compiled Record of Clan Names) in the domains of Yamashiro Province, the suffix “xx-no-hara” (lit. “from the loins of xx”) refers to the Hata Clan lineage, which is divided into various groups, according to residence and office. It is believed that the “Kawabe-no-hara” referred to in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” is the Hata Clan based in Kawanobe village, in Kadono Country, Yamashiro Province (Saeki, 1983). As the subject of the sentence is



Fig. 4 : Carved images of deities in the possession of Matsunoo Taisha (Statue Hall of Matsunoo Taisha)

“the shrine of Matsuo no Okami,” it is thought that this part of the story concerns the founding of the Matsunoo Taisha shrine buildings.

The “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” goes on to describe how Hata no Imiki Chimarume, who was descended from the “Taguchi-no-hara” branch of the Hata Clan, distinct from the “Kawabe-no-hara” branch, was the first to raise up offerings to the deity and how, in the Year of the Earth Horse, her son Tsugafu perpetuated the rituals, which were then passed down and carried forward by subsequent generations of the family. The text also describes the passage of time and how “since then” 244 years have passed up to the third year of Gangyo (879).

## 3. Mysteries of the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho”

However, there are various points in the abovementioned text that are open to question. The first is when exactly the “Year of the Earth Dragon” was when the deity of Munakata descended to Matsuo. The shrine buildings of

Matsunoo Taisha were first constructed in the first year of Taiho, so therefore the “Year of the Earth Dragon” would have to be prior to 701. However, as the Chinese zodiacal calendar runs in sixty year cycles, it is unclear as to whether the year referred to is 668, 608, 548, or earlier. Next is the matter of the sentence that reads, “From then until today, the third year of Gangyo (879), a total of 244 years have passed.” The “then” referred to in the text is 244 years before 879, which would equate to 635. This would be the seventh year of Jomei in the Imperial era naming terminology and in the Chinese zodiac it would be the Year of the Wood Goat. However, in the *Honcho Gatsurei* the only years that refer to a time prior to the third year of Gangyo, are the “Year of the Earth Dragon,” “the first year of Taiho,” and the “Year of the Earth Horse.” It is therefore impossible to pinpoint what kind of event the “then” as written in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” is referring.

The *Gunshoruiju* which contains the *Honcho Gatsurei* refers to “244 years” as being “234 years.” There has been much debate as to where to place the 234 years prior to the third year of Gangyo, as it appears in the *Gunshoruiju*. However, all of the extant manuscripts refer to “244 years,” so the timing should be considered as being 244 years prior to third year of Gangyo (Shimizu, ed., 2002). Incidentally, even if the “234 years” notation were to be used, there are no corresponding records for such a year in the *Honcho Gatsurei*.

One point that bears consideration here is that the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” is thought to be a historical document created around the time of the third year of Gangyo (879), which is the last specific year to be recorded in the document. The era of Gangyo was a time when the central government of Japan was engaged in an attempt to control shrines nationwide by requiring all shrines to submit the family chronicles (honkei-cho) of their priests (*Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku* (True History of the Three Reigns of Japan) 26<sup>th</sup> day of the third month of the fifth year of Gangyo; *Ruiju Sandaikyaku* (Collection of Laws and Ordinances from the Three Reigns), vol 1, 26<sup>th</sup> day

of the third month of the fifth year of Gangyo, issued by the Daijo-kan Council of State). As priests were exempt from paying taxes, the government was trying to tighten regulations concerning the appointment of priests, and thereby prevent tax evasion by people using the priesthood as a loophole (Kawahara, 1997). The “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” also records the roots and lineage of the priests of Matsuo Shrine, so it can be assumed that it was originally compiled in relation to this government policy.

### III. Chinese zodiacal year terminology and Imperial era year terminology

#### 1. Setting events in chronological order

Another point that requires attention in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” is that it mixes both Imperial era year terminology with Chinese zodiacal year terminology. Bearing this point in mind, the events as detailed in the document can be arranged as follows.

With regard to the shrine of Matsuo no Okami, (1) the Nakabe no Okami that was enshrined in Munakata in Tsukushi descended to Matsuzaki no Hio on the third day of the third month of the Year of the Earth Dragon, and (2) in the first year of Taiho, Hata no Imiki Tori, a son of the Kawabe lineage, invited the kami down from the Hisakinomine to Matsuo, where the kami was enshrined. (3) Also, Hata no Imiki Chimarume, a daughter of the Taguchi lineage was the first to raise up offerings, and (4) the son of Chimarume, Hata no Imiki Tsugafu became a priest himself, after which his descendants continued to perpetuate and pass down the tradition of venerating the kami. (5) Since that time, 244 years have passed until the third year of Gangyo.

Of the above events, (1) and (2) relate to the establishment of the shrine (buildings) of Matsuo no Okami by the Hata Clan of Kawabe lineage. Also, in (3) and (4) it is explained that the Hata Clan of the Taguchi lineage became priests at the shrine. In other words (1) and (2) are a different story to (3) and (4). The lineage (as

described by use of “...no-hara”) of the Hata Clan involved in each event is also different. That is why it is thought that between the stories of (1) and (2) and those of (3) and (4) there is the character “mata” (叉), indicative of something separate, or additional. Of course, the story relating to Matsuo no Okami begins with the descent of the deity of Munakata, therefore (1) is the first historical event. However, given that (3) and (4) are on a different narrative trajectory to (1) and (2) it is not necessarily the case that they occurred after the events of (2). Also, (5) is linked to (3) and (4). Therefore, with regard to the point of origin for “since then, until the third year of Gangyo” described in (5), the most natural way to read this would be as the time from when the Hata Clan of the Taguchi lineage first started making ritual offerings.

Based on the above understanding, 244 years before the third year of Gangyo brings us to the year 635 (the Year of the Wood Goat), which would be the year when Hata no Imiki Chimarume first began making ritual offerings. Following this, the next Year of the Earth Horse would be 658 (the fourth year of Saimei). It is natural to consider this period as the time during which the children of Chimarume were active and between 635 and the first year of Taiho (701) it is the only candidate among the 60-year Chinese zodiac cycle. Given that it is from the era of Taiho that era names came to be consistently used, the Chinese zodiacal years that feature in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” are thought to have been used as a notation describing the year an event happened prior to the establishment of era names.

That is to say, the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” seeks to undergird the historical legitimacy of members of the Hata Clan of Taguchi lineage, as having served as priests of the Matsuo Shrine for 244 years. As noted above, this assertion was entirely in response to the government’s policy at the time of obliging all shrines throughout the country to submit the family lineages of all their priests, in an attempt to control the priestly classes serving at shrines around Japan.

## 2. The descent of the “Nakabe (Nakatsu) no Okami” of Munakata

The next question requiring attention is when it was that the deity of Munakata was invited to Yamashiro and enshrined there. From the considerations set out above, it is clear that (1) the “Year of the Earth Dragon” was (2) prior to 635. The question remains, however, whether this was 608, 548, or earlier.

To start with a conclusion, my contention is that it was most likely 608. In 602 the Wa Kingdom had fully introduced the calendar system of Baekje and thereafter its use can actually be confirmed domestically in Japan (Tanaka, 2019). At the same time, prior to this introduction, the year 548 corresponds to the era of Emperor Kinmei in the *Nihon Shoki*. However, this year is even older than the time of the arrival of the *Reki Hakase* (Chief Court Calendar Maker) from Baekje, as recorded in the second month of the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Kinmei (554) in the *Nihon Shoki*. The “Hata-shi Honkei-cho,” which is quoted in the *Honcho Gatsurei* refers in a separate passage about the era of Emperor Kinmei, but this is simply a reference to the “Era of Emperor Kinmei being marked at the palace of Shikishima.” It is therefore reasonable to assume that the “Year of the Earth Dragon” as described in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” is 608.

This raises the next question, as to why the deity of Munakata was invited to and enshrined at Yamashiro in 608, or the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Suiko.

What I would focus on here is that the deity of Munakata is given to be the “Nakabe (Nakatsu) no Okami.” The deity actually enshrined by the Hata Clan of Yamashiro was not all three of the female deities of Munakata, but only “Nakabe (Nakatsu) no Okami.” It is naturally to assume that “Nakabe (Nakatsu) no Okami” refers to Nakatsumiya-no-Okami, or in other words the female deity of Oshima (Fig. 5). So why did the Hata Clan choose only to worship the female deity of Oshima? This question relates to the issue of miyake, which has already been touched on above.



Fig. 5 : Nakatsu-miya of Oshima (photo taken by the author)

#### IV. *Miyake* transportation, external conflict and the Hata Clan

##### 1. The Buzen *miyake*, the Hata Clan and Oshima

Looking beyond Munakata to the surrounding areas, people of the Hata Clan were distributed in Buzen Province, to the southeast of Munakata, overlapping with “Munakatabe” (according to the “Buzen Province Family Register” of the second year of Taiho). Another similar overlap between the “Hata-be” and “Munakata-be” was to the west of Munakata in Shima County, Chikuzen Province, or in other words, on the Itoshima Peninsula (according to the Kawabe Village Family Register, Shima County, Chikuzen Province of the second year of Taiho). Of these, it has been noted that the Hata Clan of Buzen were involved in operation and management of the *miyake* (Kato, 1998, etc.). As noted above, Buzen and the other *miyake* of Kyushu were basically all obligated to transport rice to the Nanotsu-no-miyake, and it is

generally considered that the Hata Clan were most likely engaged in a daily basis on transporting *miyake* supplies from Hakata Bay to Nanotsu-no-miyake. If transporting by sea, the route heads towards the Hibiki Sea and Genkai Sea, along which lies Oshima island. What is more, in ancient times, the sea area encompassed by Kanesaki, Jinoshima and Oshima in Munakata, which bordered the Hibiki Sea and Genkai Sea, was renowned as a perilous place for ship navigation. Volume 7-1230 of the *Manyoshu* poetry anthology features a poem that expresses thanks to the deity of Shika for granting safe passage across stormy seas to a boat sailing along the seas off Kanesaki. Shika refers to Shikanoshima located in the north of Hakata Bay, and it is believed that this is a reference to the deity of Shikaumi Shrine. This poem therefore relates to the east-west passage of ships across the Hibiki Sea and Genkai Sea. Here we can ascertain the conditions under which the Hata Clan of Buzen venerated Oshima as an object of worship.

In other words, it is thought that from the latter half of the sixth century, the Hata Clan of Buzen, deepened their ties with the Munakata Clan and the religious beliefs associated with Oshima, through the translation of *miyake* supplies and goods.

##### 2. Wa’s military pressure on Silla

So why would it be that people of the Hata and Munakata clans were also to be found on Itoshima, a short journey across Hakata Bay from Buzen? What is worth noting here is the general situation that prevailed from the latter half of the sixth century to the early seventh century, when Wa was placing Silla under military pressure.

According to the *Nihon Shoki*, from the fourth year of Sushun (591), the government of Wa sought to restore the state of Mimana (Geumgwan-guk), which had been annexed by Silla, and stationed a large army in Tsukushi in an attempt to exert military pressure on Silla. They attempted to get the materials that should have been supplied by Gaya to be provided by Silla instead as “tribute from Mimana.” This most likely indicates that

because the materials that were caused to be brought from the Gaya region had a great deal of symbolic political meaning for the Kingdom of Wa, the loss of such materials due to the annexation of Gaya by Silla would have been considered a serious matter that brought the legitimacy of royal authority into question.

It was for this reason that in 591, an army headed by Lord Ki-no-Omaro-no-Sukune comprised of more than 20,000 troops was mobilized and dispatched to Tsukushi. This army continued to be stationed in Tsukushi until the third year of Suiko (595). Next, in the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Suiko (602), Prince Kume-no-miko was made general of an army to attack Silla, mobilizing a force of 25,000 men, including priests (*kanbe*) and court officials (*kuninomiya*suko and *tomonomiya*suko) force, which once again headed to Tsukushi. The *Nihon Shoki* recounts how, at the beginning of April that year, Prince Kume-no-miko arrived in Tsukushi, where he stationed his troops in Shima County, gathering vessels there, which brought in food supplies for the war effort. This deployment was probably devised with the route from the Itoshima Peninsula to the Korean Peninsula via Iki and Tsushima in mind.

The deployment is also probably related to the fact that the Hata and Munakata clans were also distributed throughout Shima County. The Hata clan of Buzen transported materials from their own miyake to the Nanotsu-no-miyake, with the help of the Munakata clansmen and divine assistance of the deity of Oshima, but when military action against Silla was stepped up, Shima County was added to their transportation destinations. For the Hata Clan the importance of the deity of Oshima would only have continued to increase.

Later, in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Suiko, Prince Kume-no-miko died in Tsukushi. Even then the Yamato Kingdom did not give up. In the fourth month of the same year, Prince Tagima-no-miko, the older brother of Prince Kume-no-miko, was appointed to head the army to subdue Silla. However, in the seventh month, just as the Prince had reached Banshu Province, word came that his wife had died, and he turned back, leaving the military plans in

disarray.

However, Kume-no-miko and Tagima-no-miko were in actual fact brothers of Prince Umayado-no-miko, better known to history as Prince Shotoku. Prince Umayado-no-miko was very deeply involved with the Hata Clan of Yamashiro. In particular, Hata-no-Kawakatsu was one of Prince Umayado's primary retainers. Also in light of the fact that two of Prince Umayado's brothers headed the armies stationed in Tsukushi, it is my belief that the Hata Clan of Yamashiro was deeply involved in this through the Hata Clan of Buzen.

### **3. Various stages in the relationship between the Hata clan of Yamashiro and the deities of Munakata**

Based on the above, the following can be considered with regard to the various stages of the relationship between the Hata Clan of Yamashiro and the deities of Munakata. The Hata Clan grouping in Buzen deepened their relationship with the Munakata Clan and religious belief in the female deity of Oshima due to the need to pass frequently through the perilous waters to the south of Oshima, when transporting materials from their miyake to the Nanotsu-no-miyake. Based on the development of the miyake fief system in Kyushu, centered around Nanotsu-no-miyake, as explained earlier, the stationing of Wa Kingdom troops developed from the late sixth century to the early seventh century, with an eye on keeping Silla in check.

In particular, Prince Kume-no-miko, who led a large army of powerful clans from central Japan, stationed his forces in Shima County, where he accumulated large quantities of materials via sea transportation. At that time, the Hata clan, which was responsible for the management of the miyake in Buzen, was also responsible for transporting supplies not only to the Nanotsu-no-miyake, but also to the Itoshima Peninsula. That is why for the Hata Clan the seas around Oshima became ever more important. What is more, it is likely that the Hata Clan of Yamashiro were also deeply involved in the area, through

their interactions with the Hata Clan of Buzen. That is why it is plausible that in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Suiko (608), or in other words the Year of the Earth Dragon, the female deity of Oshima was invited to Matsuo in Yamashiro and enshrined there.

Incidentally, the first time that the *Nihon Shoki* mentions “Tsukushi-no-Omikotomochi,” which is considered to be the forerunner of the Dazaifu government, is the following year, the 17<sup>th</sup> of Suiko (609). It is possible that this “Tsukushi-no-Omikotomochi” was located at the Nanotsu-no-miyake, and I believe that here too there was the influence of the large-scale military presence in Tsukushi that began from the end of the sixth century onwards.

#### **4. Sharing and compounding of beliefs brought about by the influence of overseas conflicts**

The impact of the large military force dispatched from Yamato on religious beliefs in Kyushu was not limited to issues relating to Munakata. For example, in the text about Mononobeno Village in Mine County in the *Hizen-no-kuni Fudoki* (Gazette of Hizen Province), it is recounted how the shrine dedicated to the Mononobe deity Futsunushi-no-kami was first built in the village during the reign of Emperor Suiko, and was begun when Prince Kume-no-miko, who had assumed leadership of the army to quell the forces of Silla, arrived in Tsukushi, whereupon he dispatched Wakamiyabe, who was affiliated to the Mononobe Clan, giving instructions to erect a shrine. As noted above, the army of Prince Kume-no-miko also included priests, who were responsible for conducting rituals to honor the kami, and the story of Wakamiyabe is one that is thought to be related to such priestly members of the army. This shrine remains to this day as Mononobe Shrine in Miyaki County in Saga Prefecture (Fig. 6). This demonstrates the significant impact the stationing of Yamato military forces had on religious beliefs and practices in Kyushu.

As explained above, from the late sixth century to the early seventh century the large-scale stationing of



Fig. 6 : Mononobe Shrine, Miyaki-gun, Saga Prefecture (photo taken by the author)

Wa military forces provided the impetus for a sharing and compounding of the faith Kyushu with that of the centrally located powers of the Kingdom of Yamato. Although space limitations mean that further details cannot be provided here, the influence of the Wa military presence during this period can be seen in the Orihata Shrine in Munakata and the Hachiman faith that originated at Usa.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has set out an argument detailing how the “Nakabe (Nakatsu) no Okami” of Munakata, which appears in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho,” is the female deity of Oshima, which was invited to and enshrined at Yamashiro in 608, and that these events were influenced by externally-oriented military activities of the Wa Kingdom that took place in Tsukushi around the beginning of the seventh century, based on the miyake system. In northern Kyushu, which had become a base for international exchange and interactions of the Wa Kingdom, the miyake system and the military deployment based around the miyake had a major impact on social relations and religious beliefs and practices in the region. These historical developments underscore the importance of the religious faith of Munakata in Oshima, as part of

ancient maritime traffic not limited to and distinct from the Okinoshima route. This, I believe, has important implications when considering the positioning of Munakata. This is because it suggests that the Munakata region held an important position in the history of foreign exchange, not only through its relationship with Okinoshima linking north and south, which has been the primary focus of attention to date, but also in terms of the east-west route running from the Hibiki Sea to the Genkai Sea. The historical spread of belief in the deities of Munakata should therefore be reevaluated from just such a perspective.

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# The significance of ancient rituals in Okinoshima in Munakata region and their transformation through to the medieval period

SASO Mamoru

## Introduction

This paper will discuss three broad themes. First is the question of why people think about and believe in divine beings, and the significance of rituals. This question will be reconsidered from the perspective of cognitive religious studies based on recent cognitive functions of the human brain. The task of this theme is to position the rituals of Okinoshima in Munakata region and the “view of the divine” in terms of the way in which *kami* (deities) are perceived, in the context of the whole of human history. (Fig. 1)

The second point is that from around the latter half of the seventh century, rituals changed to use large quantities of earthenware and steatite objects. The second theme of this paper is therefore to consider the significance behind the change in the ancient rituals.

The third point is that from the late ninth to tenth centuries remains from ancient rituals at Okinoshima in Munakata region cease to be found, indicating that the practice came to an end. The third theme of this research is therefore to assess why the rituals came to an end at that particular time and how this led to beliefs and rituals practiced at Munakata Shrine in the medieval period, including some



Fig. 1 : Okinoshima (Photo: the author)

historical background.

## I . Human cognitive functions and the notion of the goddesses in the Munakata region and Okinoshima rituals

### 1. Why do humans believe in deities and worship them?

Firstly, let us attempt to consider the question, “Why do humans believe in deities and worship them?”

From the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new movement within the study of religion has been developed in the field of the cognitive science of religion. This field seeks to approach religious study based on the cognitive functions of the human brain. According to the results of this research, humans intuit the actions of “agents” as being the cause of certain movements and phenomena, and at the same time, they also intuit that these agents have a will or mind of their own. This is a basic cognitive function of the brain that humans have acquired in the course of their evolution as a means of survival. This observation has been made by multiple researchers of the cognitive science of religion, including Pascal Boyer. This “agent” with a will or mind of its own becomes a “deity” or similar presence capable of causing and controlling particular phenomena (e.g. sunlight, rainfall, springs and water supplies, safety or danger of travel and transportation, etc.).

A further important observation has been made by Stewart E. Guthrie, concerning the “attribution of human characteristics to agents in non-human phenomena.” Since humans intuit it, their gods or deities have been imagined and personified in human form since ancient times. Based on this premise, it is necessary to consider

the way in which gods or deities are perceived, or the “view of the divine.” Neuroscientist E. Fuller Torrey observes that approximately 40,000 years ago the brain of proto-humans (*homo sapiens*) was finally ready for complex thought. Accordingly, our ancestors intuitively perceived and were aware of the presence of invisible beings such as gods or deities and spirits back during that time.

If we consider gods or deities in this way, the next issue is how to consider rituals. If the agent of a specific phenomenon, i.e. a god, is intuitively perceived in human form, then the relationship between God or deity and man is likened to a relationship between persons. We intuit that if humans provide precious goods and delicious foods, the agent of the phenomena (God or deity) will express, maintain, and expand the desired phenomena in return. In other words, this relationship, namely the process of exchange between the divine and humans, could rightly be called a “ritual.”

At the same time, the intuition that if you are rude to someone, that person will be angered is also applied to rituals. For this reason, humans intuit that any disrespect or impurity (*kegare*) in the exchange (ritual) between gods or deities (agents) and humans will serve to only enrage the gods or deities, leading to disaster. This is the reason why divine festivals place emphasis on *saishiki*, the structure and etiquette of rituals that do not cause disrespect to the deity, and *harae* (purification) to ensure and maintain purity in festivals.

This perspective is extremely useful when considering the view of the divine throughout the Japanese archipelago as being intuited from the workings of the natural environment, and this ancient view of the divine is concretely illustrated by the expression “here stays (坐), resides (居), or exists (在) the *kami*” as seen in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon Shoki*, and *Engishiki*. It is perceived that the *kami*—the agent behind the workings of the natural environment (phenomena)—“resides (stays)” in the place/environment where these phenomena of the natural environment manifest. Therefore, the place or

environment where the works of *kami* appear is the place where God resides (stays), and is accordingly the place where rituals are performed.

## 2. The workings of Okinoshima and Oshima and rituals

The focus of this paper are the three goddesses of Munakata, which according to the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* are described as *kami* (divine beings) staying (or resides) in Okitsu-miya (Okinoshima), Nakatsu-miya (Oshima), and Hetsu-miya (the seashore around the Tsurikawa River mouth). It could well be said that the basis for the divine nature of and the rituals relating to the three goddesses of Munakata can be found in the workings of the islands and seashore environment.

If that is the case, then what was the function of the three goddesses of Munakata? In the first addendum in the sixth paragraph in the first volume of the *Nihon Shoki*, the sun goddess (Amaterasu-omikami) is recorded as having instructed the three goddesses to “descend to the road and help the descendants of Amaterasu and be worshiped by the descendants of Amaterasu ” In the second addendum in the sixth paragraph it is also written that, “the three goddesses...currently resided on the road north of the sea.” From these descriptions in the *Nihon Shoki* we can understand that the three goddesses of Munakata are therefore considered to reside along the “road north of the sea,” or in other words, the maritime route linking Kyushu and the Korean Peninsula, that they help the descendants of Amaterasu (the emperors of Japan) and that the emperors of Japan worship them. The presence and workings of the three Munakata goddesses are thus spoken of in relation to the shipping routes and maritime traffic to the Korean Peninsula. So it is that the workings of the environments on and around Okinoshima, Oshima and the seashore (at the mouth of the Tsurikawa River) in the maritime traffic of the Genkai Sea are directly connected to the three Munakata Goddesses.

Let us take a more detailed look at the workings of maritime transportation in the context of Okinoshima.



Fig. 2 : Ichinodake, Okinoshima

Okinoshima is an isolated island lying in the middle of the Genkai Sea, and can be seen in the distance even from Tsushima. Recent studies have found that the rocks that make up this island are not quartz porphyry, but white tuff. The highest mountain on Okinoshima shown in Photo 1 is Ichinodake, which is comprised of huge white tuff rocks. The white rocks rise up out of the blue waters

of the Genkai Sea, reaching an elevation of 243.1m. This is why it can be viewed from afar on a clear day and why one of its workings (roles) was to act as a navigational guide point on the route between Kyushu and the Korean Peninsula (Fig. 2 : Ichinodake, Okinoshima). Travelling from Tsushima, heading south towards Okinoshima by boat, once Okinoshima is passed the next maritime marker is Oshima, where the goddess of Nakatsu-miya resides. From there it is possible to reach the mouth of the Tsurikawa River of Munakata on Kyushu. The most prominent maritime guide point on Okinoshima is Ichinodake, the island's highest peak.

Looking at the relationship between Ichinodake and the ritual site on the island, the oldest ritual site is located directly below Ichinodake on the flat surface of the southwestern flank of Okinoshima (Fig. 3 : Map showing positing of Munakata and Okinoshima ritual sites). The oldest ritual sites are sites 19 and 17 and within these sites, in the vicinity of Rock I, which is at the highest elevation, it is possible to gaze upon

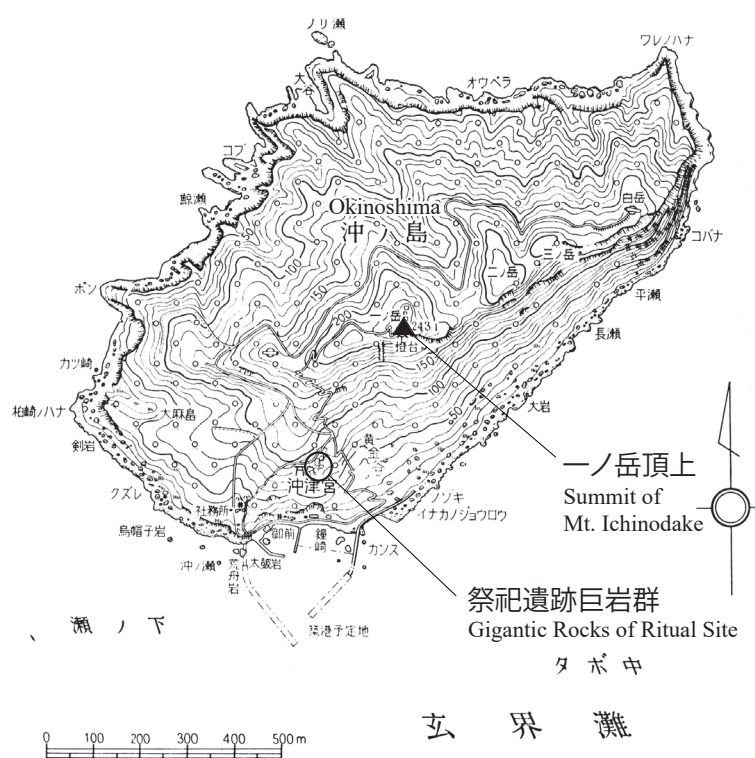


Fig. 3 : Positing of Munakata and Okinoshima ritual sites  
(Additions to the map in “Okinoshima Island (1958)”)

Ichinodake directly above. Based on their location, it can be inferred that the objects from the oldest group of ritual sites, comprising a large number of copper mirrors and iron weapons, were likely presented in offering towards Ichinodake. This makes the assumption possible that rituals on Okinoshima began as offerings to the mountain (Ichinodake) itself. In the sixth paragraph of main chapter in the first volume of the *Nihon Shoki*, the goddess said to reside on Okinoshima is given the name of Ichikishima-hime-no-mikoto, signifying that this is the *Itsukishima-hime-no-mikoto*, or in other words the “goddess of the purifying island” (*Itsukishima* refers to an “island of purification”). It could be said that the island itself was thus recognized as a divine being. The route linking Kyushu with the Korean Peninsula was an important maritime transportation route for the Yamato Kingdom. The character and workings of Okinoshima and Ichinodake, performing a role as a navigational guide point, could have been intuited by sailors to be a goddess guiding them on their journey through the stormy waters of the Genkai Sea. Mt. Mitake-san, the highest peak on Oshima, where resides the goddess of Nakatsu-miya, had the same role of acting as a maritime guide point. Ritual sites dating from the late seventh century onwards are also located at the summit of Mt. Mitake-san.

### 3. Notion of the goddess at Hetsu-miya and location environment

The continuation of the line that links Ichinodake on Okinoshima and Mt. Mitake-san on Oshima leads to the mouth of the Tsurikawa River in Munakata on Kyushu, where Hetsu-miya is located. The goddess that dwells there, just like Okitsu-miya and Nakatsu-miya, is presumed to be directly related to the workings of the environment in which it is located, therefore, when considering the character of the goddess that is enshrined there, it is necessary to think in terms of the ancient environment in the vicinity of Hetsu-miya, particularly the ancient topography. Fig.4 shows a detailed topographic map created using Kashmir 3D to give a

sense of the topography around Hetsu-miya used to look (Fig.4 : Recreation of the shoreline in the vicinity of the Tsurikawa River mouth in Munakata). Looking at this map we can see that to the north of Hetsu-miya is a broad low lying area, to the north of which at the boundary with the shoreline there are three rows of beach ridges (sandy heaps deposited on the beach) stretching from east to west. The current mouth of the Tsurikawa River was created in 1791 during the “Tsurikawa Dredge,” when the two northernmost beach ridges on the ocean side were cut through to form the mouth of the river. Prior to that time the mouth of the Tsurikawa River had been blocked by the two rows of beach ridges on the ocean side and had instead meandered eastward before emptying into the sea.

A clue to reconstructing the ancient coastal topography is provided by the Hamamiya shell midden, located on the innermost (southern) of the three rows of beach ridges. Archaeological excavations at this site have confirmed remains and artifacts dating from the late 5<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> century of the Kofun period, and in addition to fishing tools (iron multi-pronged fishing spear) and Genkai Sea-style salt making pottery, fish bones including those of shark and snapper, and shells such as turban shells and abalone have been uncovered, indicating that this area was a fishing settlement, where people engaged in fishing and salt-making activities. Given these discoveries, due to its character it is natural to assume that this settlement was located on the sea shore, and that the ancient shoreline can be estimated to have been in the vicinity of the northern edge of the beach ridge where the Hamamiya shell midden is located. Next, if we trace the elevation of the estimated ancient shoreline around the mouth of the Tsurikawa River, we can reconstruct the ancient shoreline as it would have appeared during the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, as shown in Fig.4.

Looking at this topographic map it is possible to reconstruct the topography of a large lagoon that stretched out directly north of Hetsu-miya. The lagoon was separated from the rough waters of the open sea by the beach ridges

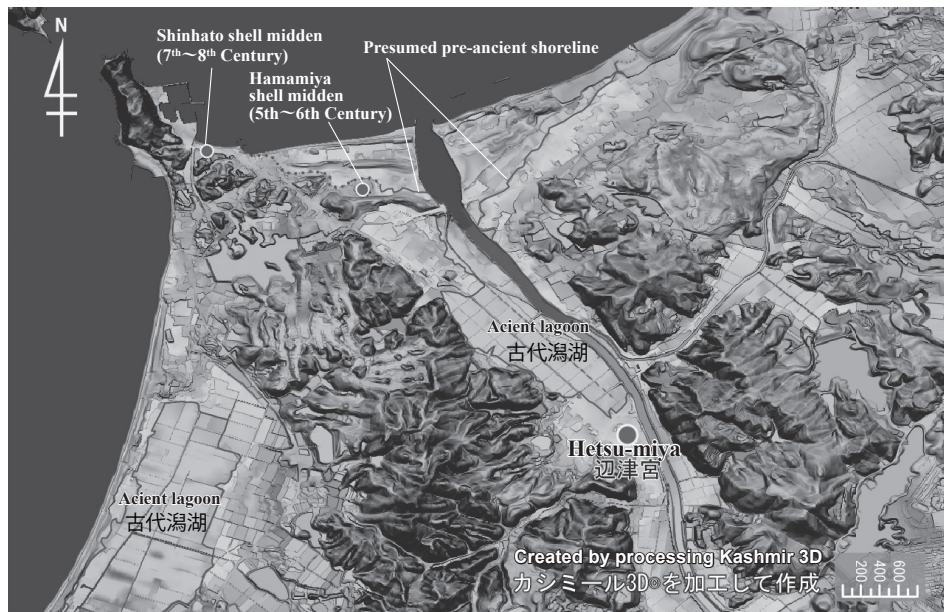


Fig. 4 : Recreation of the shoreline in the vicinity of the Tsurikawa River mouth in Munakata

and likely served as a quiet harbor, where ships could dock. The role of this lagoon in providing safe harbor to ships from the open sea was thus intuited to be the workings of a goddess, and the enshrined goddess resided at Hetsu-miya.

Fundamental to the perceived divinity of the three goddesses of Munakata were the workings of Okinoshima and Oshima as maritime transportation routes and navigational guide points that were so important to the Kingdom of Yamato, as well as the role of the lagoon that lent itself as a harbor at the mouth of the Tsurikawa River. Therefore, in the environment where these workings (phenomena, roles and functions) manifested it was thought that goddesses resided and in turn these became the place where rituals were conducted.

## II . Changes in rituals in ancient Okinoshima in Munakata region

### 1. Development of a system for conducting rituals and the establishment of *shingun*

The ancient rituals of Okinoshima in Munakata region started around the late fourth century, but underwent

significant change in the late seventh century. This change was characterized by a shift to using large volumes of Sue ware (unglazed stoneware pottery fired until hard in a kiln). Some Sue ware is perforated before firing, such as the perforated pottery (Sue ware) shown in the photo (Fig. 5 : Perforated pottery from Site 1). This perforated pottery is not practical and cannot be used for alcohol or other beverages due its holes. It can therefore be surmised that this Sue ware was made purposefully and solely for ritual use. This indicates that a system for making ritual tableware, including Sue ware specifically for the purpose of rituals, had been established by the late



Fig. 5 : Perforated pottery from Site 1 (Collection of Munakata Taisha Shrine)



Fig. 6 : Salt-making pottery from Site 1 (Collection of Munakata Taisha Shrine)

seventh century.

In the Munakata region there is the Munakata Kiln Complex (including remains of Sue ware kilns) dating back to the end of the fifth century. The production of Sue ware for ritual purposes had developed against a background of Sue ware production since the Kofun period onwards. The same situation can also be confirmed in ancient rituals performed at Ise Grand Shrine, as recorded in the *Kotai-jingu Gishikicho* (a register of ceremonies of Kotai-jingu shrine, established in 804). The production of Sue ware and Haji ware (unglazed earthenware) there has a tradition that dates back to the sixth century, and it is thought to have been prepared and incorporated into rituals in the seventh century.

Another important point relates to the discovery of Genkai Sea style salt-making pottery uncovered at Sites 1 and 5 on Okinoshima. This fact would imply that salt was brought from the salt production sites to the ritual sites (Fig. 6 : Salt-making pottery from Site 1). According to the *Kotai-jingu Gishikicho* a person had a role known as “Misaki monoimi,” which was to bake salt for rituals, and this specially baked salt would be offered in rituals. Given the existence of salt-making pottery, it can be assumed that at the time of Sites 1 and 5 on Okinoshima, that is to say, from the late seventh to eighth and ninth centuries, in a similar way to Ise Grand Shrine salt was offered in rituals on Okinoshima.

A structure similar to that developed to support the rituals

of Ise Grand Shrine was therefore probably developed for the ancient rituals of Okinoshima in Munakata region around the late 7th century. According to the *Kotai-jingu Gishikicho*, at Ise this structure was developed in the mid 7th century during the reign of Emperor Kotoku, and for the purpose of supporting the Ise Grand Shrine and its rituals *miyake* (administrative offices) were established in Watarai and Take districts. These *shingun* (district for deity), or districts supporting the Ise Grand Shrine, were the progenitors of Watarai-gun and Taki-gun. In the case of Munakata Taisha too, it can be confirmed that Munakata-gun was similarly designated a *shingun* in the early 8th century. This is confirmed by the “Dajokan Shobun (Grand Council of State Disposition)” of November 16, 723, as cited in the *Ryonoshuge* (which set out an exceptional provision approving the concurrent holding of the position of *Gunji* (administrative official) of a *shingun* by a family within the third degree of consanguinity). This indicates that after Ise grand shrine, in the late 7th century Munakata-gun (district) was established as *shingun* for Munakata Taisha. It can be inferred from the Sue ware and salt-making pottery at Sites 5 and 1 on Okinoshima that this designation was in parallel with the development of rituals.

## 2. Character of steatite objects and changes in rituals

Along with the establishment of the *shingun*, another change in ritual practices in the latter half of the 7th century was the appearance of the new steatite objects. Many such steatite objects have been excavated from Site 1 on Okinoshima. According to the excavation report *Munakata Okinoshima*, a total of 1,140 objects were found, including 68 human-shaped objects, 40 horse-shaped objects, 108 boat-shaped objects, and also comma-shaped beads (*magatama*), beads (*usudama*) and disc-shaped objects with holes (imitations of mirrors) (Fig. 7 : Steatite objects excavated from Site 1, Okinoshima). The production of steatite objects in the Munakata region dates back to around the 5th century,

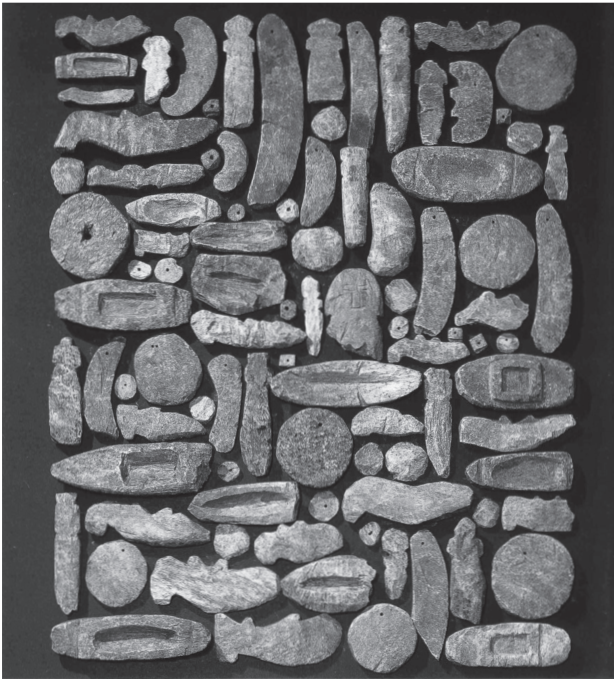


Fig. 7 : Steatite objects excavated from Site 1, Okinoshima  
(Collection of Munakata Taisha Shrine)

where examples have been uncovered at the Fujiwarakamiyazaki site in the middle reaches of the Tsurikawa River. This tradition led to the production of a large number of steatite objects, and around the late 7th century new combinations of these steatite objects were added, including human figurines, horses and ships.

Combinations of human figurines, horses and ships have also been found at the Aoya-yokogi site in Tottori Prefecture. Archaeological excavation at this site have discovered remains of the ancient San'in Road, along which wooden imitations have been unearthed from the site of the ancient ditch and river. The era in which these were made is the same as for Munakata, dating from the late 7th century to the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and upwards of 22,500 items have been discovered. Among these there are 748 human figurines, 1,747 horse figurines, and 72 ship-shaped steatite objects have been discovered.

With regard to the character of the human and horse figurines of the eighth and ninth centuries, KANEKO Hiroyuki linked them to the Oharae purification rituals of the Nara period and the Onmyodo-harae (Yin-yang) purification rituals of the Heian period, hypothesizing that

they served as ritual purification tools. This interpretation subsequently became mainstream. However, the character of the Oharae purification ritual in the eighth century, in which precious items were offered to atone for sins, is different from that of the Onmyodo-harae purification ritual in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and thereafter, which was performed for the purpose of warding off calamities and prolonging the life of individuals. In particular the human figurines used in the Onmyodo-harae purification ritual trace their origins ceremony for the purification of *Yamato and Kawachi no Humibe* (immigrant families) conducted at the imperial palace for the emperor, which in turn were derived from the Chinese Taoist scripture *Sekishoshi-shoreki*, and were used as figurines to pray for the good fortune and long life of the emperor. It is for this reason that the metal and wooden human figurines that appeared in the latter half of the 7th century have been understood as purification tools based on Taoist beliefs to remove personal sins and uncleanness.

However, we cannot simply perceive of these human figurines as merely ritual purification tools. As demonstrated by the earthenware figurines excavated from the lower levels of the Myogajima No. 5 tumulus in Shizuoka Prefecture, examples of such figurines date back to the first half of 5th century, and earthenware human and horse figurines from the 6th century have been found at the Narai site in Osaka Prefecture. Wooden imitations of ships dating back to the 5th century has also been excavated at the Yamanohana site in Shizuoka Prefecture. There is no doubt, therefore, that human and horse figurines and ship-shaped steatite objects were used as ritual objects with a history that can be traced back to the Kofun period and thereafter.

A story that is helpful in examining the character of these human and horse figurines can be found in the *Hizennokuni Fudoki*, a report on the province of Hizen dating back to the early eighth century. In the chapter of this *fudoki* describing Saga district, it is related how a raging *kami* in the upper reaches of the Sagakawa River would kill half the people who passed by and let the

other half live, but that when the *kami* was worshipped using human and horse figurines made of clay, the *kami*'s raging subsided. This shows that the clay figurines were not ritual tools, but offerings to calm a wrathful *kami*. If we apply the content of this story, we can see that the same type of clay human and horse figurines were used as offerings to the gods as early as the fifth or sixth centuries, and that the same can probably be said for the ship-shaped steatite objects, examples of which can be found as far back as the fifth century and thereafter.

If we then consider the location of the Aoya-yokogi site, we see that it was adjacent to a river crossing on the ancient San'in Road, lying on the east side (right bank) of the Hiokigawa River that flows into the Sea of Japan. At the Zendabojigasaki site on the opposite (left) bank, similar wooden human and horse figurines have been found in large quantities. If we combine the environment of these archaeological sites with the story of the raging *kami* on the Sagakawa River as related in the *Hizennokuno Fudoki*, we can see that the human and horse figurines and ship-shaped steatite objects were *nusa*, or offerings made by people, who intuitively perceived dangerous phenomena at challenging areas on a journey or at river crossing points to be a "raging *kami*." In the late seventh century, the San'in Road was constructed as the official road of the Ritsuryo State, and it is thought that the ritual of offering a human and horse figurines or ship-shaped steatite objects, etc., at difficult way points along the road also began at this time.

Examples of offerings of human and horse figurines can also be confirmed in iconographic materials of the Heian period. Photo 5 is a scene from Imamiya Shrine in the *Nenju-gyoji-emaki* (picture scroll of annual events; copy from Kyoto City University of Arts), the original of which was established in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, depicting a lively scene in the shrine precincts during a festival. An enlarged view of the three main shrines standing side by side shows multiple *ema* (votive picture tablet) hanging out in front. Enlarging the picture still further we can see that there are two types of *ema*, one depicting

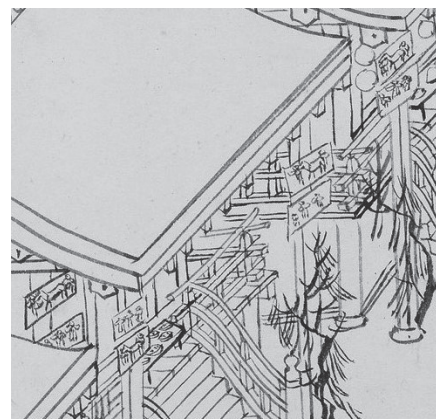


Fig. 8 : *Nenju-gyoji-emaki*, Human and horse figurines at Imamiya Shrine (Kyoto City University of Arts, Model Books)

a horse and the other a human figure (Fig. 8 : *Nenju-gyoji-emaki*, Human and horse figurines at Imamiya Shrine). From their iconography, these can be judged to be ancient human and horse figures and horses in plate form, and given that they are located at the front of the main shrine building along with the sacred ritual offerings, they cannot be considered to be purification tools for the purpose of removing sins and uncleanness. It is therefore reasonable to consider that they were hung before the *kami* as offerings. Given this reality, as previously observed by OBA Iwao, the steatite objects of human figures, horses and ships that have been excavated in considerable numbers from Ritual Site 1 on Okinoshima, were in all likelihood not purification tools, but rather *nusa* (offerings) made to the *kami* at ritual sites on maritime transportation routes. Given that numerous ship-shaped steatite objects at Site 1 on Okinoshima have

been discovered, it is likely that the rituals were related to maritime transportation.

The overall transition that occurred at ritual sites on Okinoshima can be clearly seen through the remains at the various sites there, from the late 4th century (Sites 17, 18 and 19), to the mid-5th century (Site 21), and the 6th century (Sites 7, and 8). At these ritual sites, precious and luxurious items such as bronze mirrors, iron weapons, armor and tools, as well as highly decorative horse harnesses and armors have been excavated, which were presumably offerings from the Kingdom of Yamato. Each of these ritual sites is thought to have corresponded to a special ritual associated with a national external event of the Kingdom of Yamato, such as exchanges with the states of the Korean Peninsula, or even in response to international tensions and military actions, or the dispatch of envoys to imperial China.

However, from the late seventh century rituals changed to include the use of large volumes of Sue ware fired in the Munakata region and steatite objects that had been produced locally. It was in the late seventh century that the *shingun* was established and a structure developed whereby ritual tools and offerings could be produced and supplied locally. At this stage, it is clear that the rituals of Okinoshima were in character rituals for regular maritime traffic routes, and it is possible that the Munakata goddesses also became objects of worship for the local people. What was so symbolic of these changes in the nature of the rituals on Okinoshima was the use of large quantities of Sue ware for sacred victual offerings and the many steatite objects that were offered as *nusa*.

### **III. From the demise of ancient rituals through to the medieval period**

#### **1. Changes to the environment and landscape in the vicinity of Hetsu-miya, Munakata Taisha**

Finally, let us examine how belief in and rituals related to the ancient three goddesses of Munakata were passed

down to the medieval period. Closely involved in this transition is the physical changes that took place to the environment and landscape in the vicinity of Hetsu-miya. As noted above, prior to the “Tsurikawa Dredge” in the late of the Edo period, the mouth of the Tsurikawa River meandered significantly eastwards, and traces of the old river road still remain today. This was due to the formation of two additional rows of beach ridges on the seashore after ancient times, which led to the sedimentation of a broad lagoon facing Hetsu-miya and the beginning of the formation of the present topography in the vicinity. As a result, the function of the lagoon as an ancient port for the region was ultimately lost. This then raises the question as to when the two rows of beach ridges were formed. It is my contention that the timing is most likely to be around the 10<sup>th</sup> century, for the following reasons.

Similar topographical changes can be confirmed in various regions throughout the Japanese archipelago around the 10<sup>th</sup> century. On the seashore of Tsuruga in Fukui Prefecture on the Sea of Japan, the ancient shoreline can be estimated from the location of salt manufacturing sites dating back to the ninth century, and it can be assumed that Kehi Shrine was established facing to the beach. In the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, the western approach to Kehi Shrine became marshy and muddy, so a monk of the Jishu sect, Taa Shonin Shingyo, renovated the western approach by carrying sand from the seashore using the “*osunamochi*” (sand-carrying) technique. This is hypothesized to be because by the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a new beach ridge had been formed on the north side of the ninth century shoreline, with the western approach to the shrine becoming a low-lying hinterland (Fig. 9 : Topography of Tsuruga and position of remains and the shrine). Also, at the Jike site at Hakui in Ishikawa Prefecture, the remains of an ancient settlement related Keta Shrine and its ritual-related remains have been discovered on a dune on the beach. These remains were buried at some point between the end of the ninth century and the early 10<sup>th</sup> century due to the movement of the

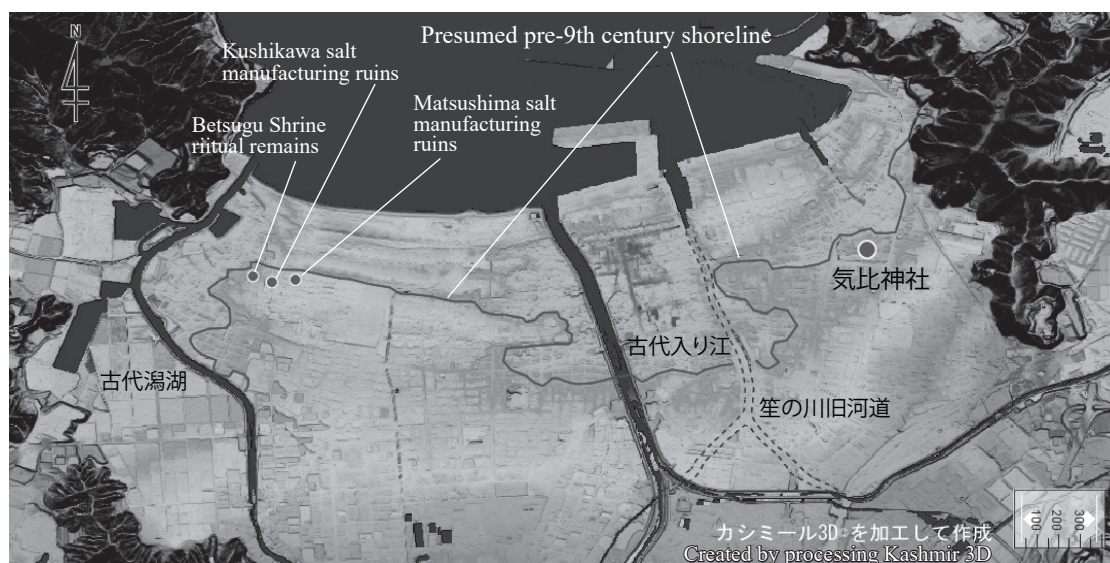


Fig. 9 : Topography of Tsuruga and position of remains and the shrine

large sand dunes on the shoreline.

In addition, at the Shitsuko site on the northern shores of Lake Biwa in Shiga Prefecture, fine sand and clay soil were deposited on the remains of the ancient harbor from the late 9th to the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and the water level of Lake Biwa changed during the same period, with the result that the ancient harbor seems to have become submerged. Furthermore, it has been confirmed that the riverbed of the Kamogawa River in Kyoto Prefecture, adjacent to Heian-kyo (ancient Kyoto), was lowered in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, forming a two-meter-high terrace along the river. This may have been due to erosion caused by flooding and other factors.

Similar phenomena have also been discovered along the shores of Tokyo Bay in the southern Kanto region. At the Kitsunozuka and Isamudai sites in Chiba Prefecture, from 10th century onwards settlements located on the seashore had become covered with a layer of sand. In addition, in the middle reaches of the Koitogawa and Obitsugawa rivers, which flow into Tokyo Bay, the migration of tributary river channels and the siltation and erosion of surrounding waterways indicate that the riverbed level lowered after the 10<sup>th</sup> century, which was once again most likely due to flooding or other erosion. It can be assumed that in floods vast quantities of earth and sand would be

eroded away and flow from the river mouth into the sea, causing a rapid buildup of sediment along the shoreline. Across the nation Japan's rivers are susceptible to sudden and violent flooding events, and it is in this way that the topography of rivers and shorelines came to change. The 10<sup>th</sup> century was just such an era.

Corresponding to this is the analysis of climate change using tree-ring cellulose oxygen isotopic ratio, as discovered by NAKATSUKA Takeshi. His research reconstructs summer rainfall trends from year to year based on the ratio of oxygen isotopes in the cellulose of tree rings. According to this research, the 10<sup>th</sup> century was the driest period for 1,000 years before and after a peak in 948. Conversely, in the late 9th and 10th centuries, there were some years that were particularly wet, including 867, 896, 913 and 992 (Fig. 10 : Rainfall trends by year from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries). In other words, from the latter half of the 9th century to the 10<sup>th</sup> century, while there were years with a strong tendency toward dryness and a high risk of drought, there were also years with extremely wet conditions and long rains and floods. These years coincide with the droughts, long rains, and flooding recorded in the *Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku* and *Nihon Kiryaku*. Given such circumstances, the topography of the rivers and beaches throughout the Japanese archipelago changed,

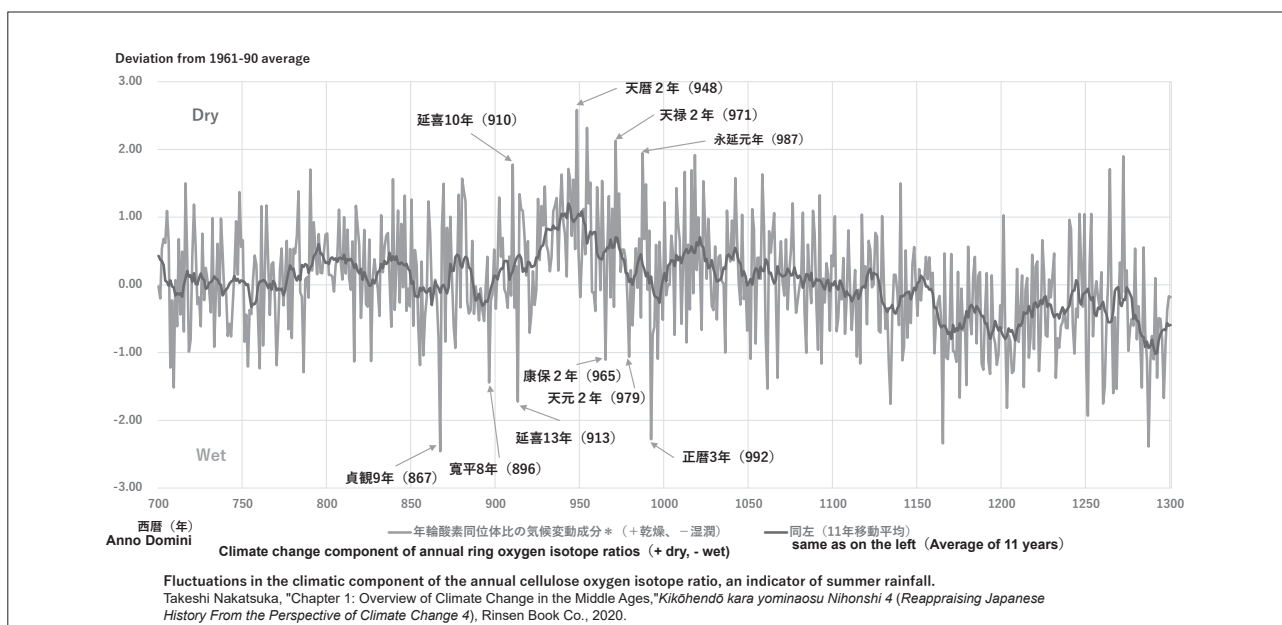


Fig. 10 : Graph “Rainfall trends by year from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries”

and the formation of new beach ridges and the silting up of the lagoon around the mouth of the Tsurikawa River in Munakata region are thought to have progressed around this time.

## 2. Response to disasters in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and the influence of Buddhism in the notion of the divine and rituals

During the 10<sup>th</sup> century, drought, long rains and flooding were among the frequently occurring natural disasters and together with these phenomena disease became endemic. As a religious response to these disasters, the Imperial Court made offerings to the *kami* and dispatched envoys to imperial mausolea, as well as implementing *Ninnoe* ceremonies.

Among these *Ninnoe* was a Buddhist service in which the contents of the *Ninnogyo* (Humane King Sutra) are read aloud and praised in order to protect the nation from disaster and bandits. The *Ninnogyo* was brought to Japan from Tang Dynasty China in 806 by the Buddhist monk Kukai, and was the most recently completed translation of the *Ninno Gokoku Hannya Haramittakyo Sutra* by the Tang Dynasty monk Amoghavajra (Fuku in Japanese) following the An-Shi Rebellion that plunged the Tang

Dynasty into turmoil. Then, in the first half of the 9th century, during the reign of Emperor Junna, a “Great Once-in-a-Generation *Ninnoe*” was held to pray for the peace of the country following the emperor’s accession. In the fifth chapter (*Gogoku-bon*) of the *Ninno Gokoku Hannya Haramittakyo Sutra* there is this interesting passage.

*Within each of the lands of the Great King, there are many gods(deities), each of whom is followed by many dependents. If the gods(deities) and their dependents listen to the Ninogyo, the lands of the Great King shall be protected by the gods(deities) and their dependents.*

If you replace “Great King” with “Japanese emperor” and “land” for “Japan,” the “many gods(deities) throughout the land” can be given to mean the *kami* of Japan. This passage adds a new Buddhist interpretation to the *kami* of Japan, noting that if the *kami* were made to listen to the *Ninnogyo* they would protect the lands of Japan. In addition, the intensification of natural disasters and the spread of disease through the 10<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the outbreak of large-scale civil disturbances during the Johei and Tengyo Rebellions, are consistent with the teachings of the *Ninogyo* Sutra regarding bandits, great

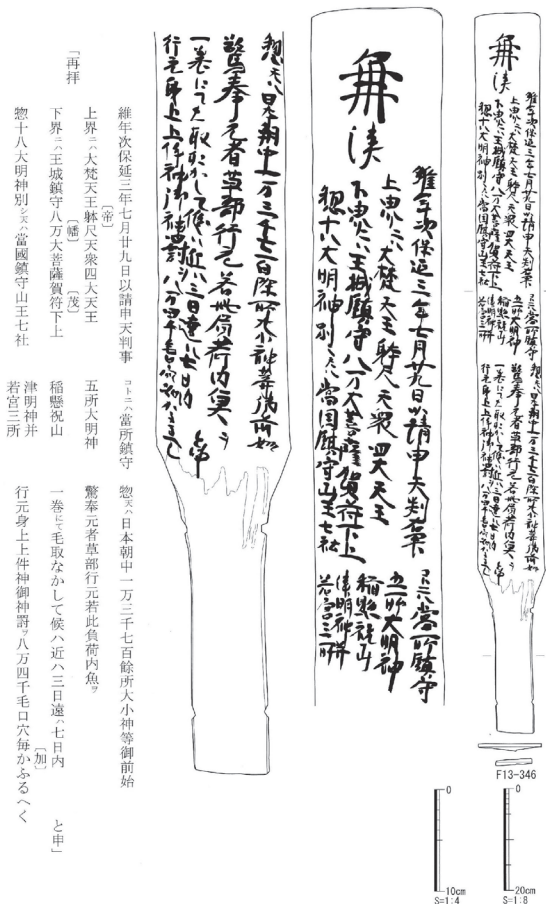


Fig. 11 : Wooden invocation table from the Shiotsuko site

fires (drought), great floods (heavy rain and floods), and typhoons. The *Nihon Kiryaku* relates how in the 10<sup>th</sup> century shrines actually performed the reading of the *Ninnogyo* at times of epidemics and droughts. The result was that the *kami* of Japan's shrines became national guardian deities through the fact of having listened to the *Ninnogyo* and the image of *kami* as “guardians of the Kingdom” came to be established. Thus it was that, as described above, ancient Japanese deities were given a Buddhist interpretation in the transition to the medieval period.

According to the *Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku* offerings were also made to the three Munakata goddesses in 870, in response to plundering by pirates from Silla on the Korean Peninsula, and by the late 9th century, their role as *kami* protecting national territory had become

discernible, and by the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the notion of the divine *kami* of Munakata and related rituals had become one with Buddhist practices. The details behind this transition are recorded in detail in Chapter 1 of the *Ruiju-fusensho* (a *kanpu*, or compendium of laws and ordinances and other official documents), concerning the order for the appointment of the *Daiguji* (chief priest) of Munakata Shrine, dated 14 February 979. According to this document, once the Tengyo Rebellion had been quelled, the goddesses of Munakata were awarded the highest court title of senior first rank, but at this point the goddesses of Munakata made a divine revelation indicating that they sought the rank of “Great Bodhisattva” and were duly accorded that rank. The same official document also clearly states that this was the occasion for a change from the traditional rituals whereby hunted animals and caught fish were offered to the three Munakata goddesses, to Buddhist practices and rituals. By the 10<sup>th</sup> century we therefore see that the notion of the goddesses of Munakata and associated rituals had become Buddhist in their practice. In this way, the character of the three Munakata goddesses changed from being deities residing in a specific environment derived from the workings of the ancient natural environment to become nation-protecting deities, who were of the Great Bodhisattva rank and for whom Buddhist prayers and rituals were performed.

Japanese deities (*kami*) also became the object of Buddhist *kanjo*, or invocations to pray for the coming of the *kami*, in which people chanted names of deities and invited the divine spirits in. As noted by UEJIMA Susumu, the oldest example of a *kami* being invited to a Buddhist ritual dates back to 1002 and the *Saishoko*. Thereafter, by the 12<sup>th</sup> century *kami* of locality had also become the object of such invocations, as evidenced by a wooden religious oath in writing tablet writing the date 1137 excavated at the remains of a shrine at the Shiotsuko site in Shiga Prefecture. In addition to Buddhist devas such as Brahma, Śakra, and the Four Devas, the *kami* of Hachiman, Kamo, and the Sanno



Fig.12 : Map showing the relationship between Hetsu-miya, Takata-maki and Konpon-Jinryo

seven shrines are also included in the list of devas to be invoked (Fig. 11 : Wooden invocation table from the Shiotsuko site). Around the same time Soja shrines were established to invite in and enshrine the important *kami* of each province near the ancient provincial government offices, and in the 12<sup>th</sup> century the *Kokunai-jinmyocho* was compiled, containing a list of the names of the *kami* who were to be invoked.

As noted above, the character of the ancient deities (*kami*) of Japan, including the three goddesses of Munakata, was based on the special features and workings of the natural environment. Therefore, the place/environment where their workings manifest and the places for rituals were closely related. However, the deities that were invoked eventually became independent from the place and environment where they had been enshrined since ancient times, coming to be worshipped as the guardian deities of the nation or provinces. A representative example of this is the Shinto *kami* and shrines that were invoked as guardian deities in medieval domains, manors, and fiefs, and the landscape of the precincts of the medieval

Munakata shrines came to be deeply connected with the invocation of the three Munakata goddesses.

### 3. Transition to medieval Munakata Taisha

So how did the Munakata Shrine of antiquity change as time progressed to the medieval period? In addition to natural disasters and environmental changes, another element that is also strongly linked to the transition of the shrine is overseas trade.

From the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards a new beach ridge was formed on the seashore, and the sedimentation of the lagoon facing Hetsu-miya progressed to the extent that the harbor functions of this lagoon were greatly reduced. However, to the west of Hetsu-miya lie the Tsuyazaki tidal flats. The formation of the beach ridge here would have created a large lagoon, isolated from the open ocean, which would have enhanced the location's function as a safe harbor (Fig. 12 : Map showing the relationship between Hetsu-miya, Takata-maki and Konpon-Jinryo). At the entrance to the Tsuyazaki tidal flats is the Arajinishinoato Site, where large amounts of Chinese



Fig. 13 The stone *shishi* and *komainu* (guardian lion and dog) of Munakata Shrine's Teisangu pavilion (Collection of Munakata Taisha Shrine)

ceramics used in trade have been excavated. HATTORI Hideo has observed that the writing of “Takata” in ink on one of the white porcelain plates excavated there, coupled with the fact that the place name of Tobo (lit. “Chinatown”) is recorded, would suggest that this site was the center of Takata-maki(pasture), a hub for Japan-Song Dynasty China trade.

The *bokushi* (proprietor of pasture) of Takata-maki included people such as Munakata Myochu, who had also served as the chief priest of Munakata Shrine. According to the *Shoyuki*, the diary of Fujiwara Sanesuke, in 1025 Munakata Myochu made an offering to Fujiwara of Chinese goods, including two celadon vases and three tea urns and jars, which would indicate that already by the 11<sup>th</sup> century Takata-maki had become a hub for Japan-Song China trade. HATTORI Hideo has noted that this maritime trade route is thought to have passed by Iki and Orojima before arriving at Munakata and Tsuyazaki, with Tsuyazaki bypassing Hakata to become a direct overseas trading hub with Song Dynasty China. The chief priest of Munakata Shrine was deeply involved in this trade. The stone *shishi* and *komainu* (guardian lion and dog) of Munakata Shrine's Teisangu pavilion (Fig. 13), which came from Song Dynasty China and were passed down to present-day Munakata Taisha, symbolize the deep relationship between the Japan-Song China trade and

Munakata Shrine at that time.

The maritime route linking Song China with Munakata that follows a course via Iki and Orojima to Munakata and Tsuyazaki actually misses out Okinoshima. This would suggest therefore, that Okinoshima had, by this time, come to be a place symbolic as the residing place of a deity since ancient times, and as a sanctuary and forbidden place where ordinary people were not allowed to set foot, with rituals no longer being performed as they had been in ancient times. This, along with the shift of rituals to Buddhism in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, is probably what led to the archaeological phenomenon of the demise of ancient rituals in Okinoshima in Munakata region.

In contrast to Okinoshima, Hetsu-miya, now closely associated with the new Japan-Song China trading hub at Tsuyazaki, become a central location for the rituals of medieval Munakata Shrine. In ancient times Hetsu-miya had faced out onto a lagoon that had served as a harbor and was known as the residing place of a goddess. However, from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, as the silting up of the lagoon progressed and the major trading port functions shifted to the tidal flats of Tsuyazaki, Hetsu-miya took on a central role as the location for rituals performed by the chief priest of Munakata, who was deeply involved in Japan-Song China trade. It was at this time that the three shrine pavilions enshrining the three Munakata goddesses, Teichigu (first shrine), Teinigu (second shrine), and Teisangu (third shrine), were built side by side to form the precincts of the shrine (Fig. 14 : Medieval painting depicting Munakata Tashima Shrine (Hetsu-miya)). The inscription on the *komainu* stone guardian dogs of the Teisangu reads, “donated and dedicated to the Teisan Pavilion of Munakata Shrine by Fujiwara-no-Edafusa, 1201,” which would definitely suggest that rituals were taking place already before 1201 in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Photo 7: *Komainu* guardian dogs of the Teisangu, Munakata Taisha, Figure 6: Rubbing of the inscription on the *komainu* guardian dogs of the Teisangu, Munakata Taisha).

According to the *Kenji-sannen Gochinza Shidai*

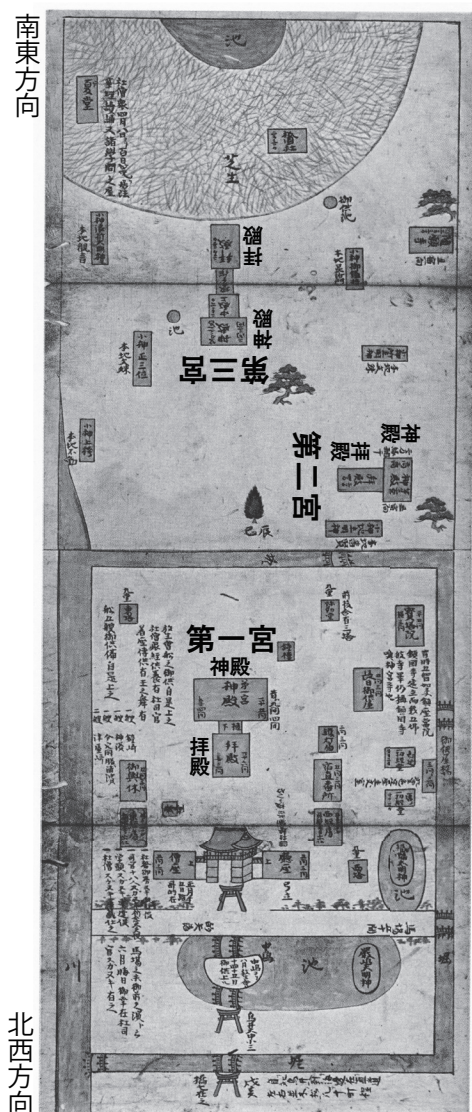


Fig. 14 : Medieval painting depicting Munakata Tashima Shrine (Hetsu-miya)  
(Collection of Munakata Taisha Shrine)

(Introduction of history of enshrinement of 1277) from the Kamakura period, the Teichigu was termed the Soja sansho, where in the central hall the Daiichi (first) Bodhisattva (Okitsu-miya) was enshrined, and the Teininigu was referred to as the Chuden, where in the central hall the Daini (second) Bodhisattva (Nakatsu-miya) was enshrined, and in the Teisangu the Daisan (third) Bodhisattva (Hetsu-miya) was enshrined in the inner sanctuary of the main hall as a *jinushi* landowner goddess. The Teichigu in particular is referred to as

Soja. This name (惣社 Soja) is the same pronunciation as 総社 Soja, a shrine to which *kami* from around the each province were invoked or invited near the each provincial government office, and regardless of the island or seashore environment, a new ritual space was established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century where all three Munakata goddesses were invited and enshrined within the shrine precincts of Hetsu-miya.

In recent years, from the perspective of cognitive religious studies, Ara NORENZAYAN has noted that when people from different environments and cultures engage in trade over a wide area, whether or not they have faith in a “Big God” (transcendental surveillant) is an important indicator to confirm the credibility of the trading partner. In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, when trade at the civilian and private level was active in East Asia, it is thought that the role of the “Big God” (transcendental surveillant) was played by the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and devas of Buddhism, which had spread as a common faith throughout East Asia. It was against this backdrop that wooden religious oath writing tablets such as those found at the Shiotsuko site were made, which promised the Buddhism devas and *kami* (deities) to faithfully transport goods, etc. It was also during this period that the character of the three Munakata goddesses as Bodhisattvas most likely came to be emphasized.

## Conclusion

This paper has taken a look at the concept of the Munakata goddesses and the character of their rituals, tracing their transition from ancient times to the medieval period, and looking at the changes and character of each period. During that time, the ancient beliefs and rituals relating to the three Munakata goddesses were influenced by domestic strife, natural disasters and environmental changes in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, after which, in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, they were incorporated into Buddhist faith and rituals as part of an East Asian trading bloc formed around the Song Dynasty, in turn creating the medieval

precinct landscape of Munakata Shrine.

On the other hand, some ancient traditions were also passed down. One such aspect is the existence of the Konpon-Jinryo, a shrine fundamental manor affiliated with and which supported Munakata Shrine in the medieval period. This manor is adjacent to a group of Sue ware kiln sites in the middle reaches of the Tsurikawa River (villages in the vicinity of Sue, Inamoto, and Tsuchi-ana), where Sue ware was actively produced from the fifth century onwards and particularly after the sixth century, according to a medieval document of Munakata Taisha. This manor, which had possessed various tradition since the Kofun period and supplied the instruments for rituals continued to be positioned as the Konpon-Jinryo from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards. It is probably due to the fact that there was a clear recognition of the history and tradition of the region that the area was referred to as “Konpon” (fundamental) Jinryo.

Belief in Munakata Taisha has subsequently continued from medieval times up to the present day. There is no doubt that the foundation for this belief lies in belief in the ancient Munakata three goddesses, and the places used for rituals, as well as the connections among the people who supported these rituals. This is a point that bears emphasizing.

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### **3. Afterword**



## Afterword

MIZOGUCHI Koji

This symposium was held on the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region, and other related World Heritage sites, with the aim of deepening understanding, through a wide range of specialist and in-depth discussion, about the history, function, and historical context of the Okinoshima rituals, or in other words, their role in the broader archipelagic and East Asian historical context. This symposium also referred to the global significance and importance of continuing to engage in research on Okinoshima and associated sites as a World Heritage property and deepen understanding about it. Here I would like to attempt to summarize the main findings in the following three points, also incorporating my personal views as an additional “auxiliary line” towards further deepening research, as well as to touch on prospects for future research (For more information about the specific details and basis for my personal views, see: MIZOGUCHI, Koji, “Okinoshima saishi no kino to henyō: Kodai higashi Ajia no kokai-koryū ni okeru saishi-shinkō he no approachi no kanten kara” [“Functions of and Changes in the Rituals of Okinoshima: From the Perspective of Approaches to Rituals and Beliefs in Ancient East Asian Voyages and Exchanges”], in *Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region Special Research Project Report*, (ed., Preservation and Utilization Council of “Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region”), 2023, pp. 165-178).

Firstly, the special research project has helped to coalesce a certain perspective pertaining to the question of why large-scale ritual activities were initiated on Okinoshima from the late 4th to the end of the 9th centuries. The reports and discussions at the symposium made it clear that the formation and development of a

network horizon known as “Wa” (Wakoku or Japan), in the China-centric world order of the time was closely related to the initiation of Okinoshima rituals in the “early state formation stage” of society on the Japanese archipelago, as part of a historical process of increasing social complexity and broadening. This network horizon constituted a mutually interdependent and mutually-reproducing system between the central government in the Kinki region and regional chiefdoms. It was characterized by the Kinki central polity establishing a position of leadership in negotiations with polities on the Korean Peninsula and Imperial China, and then maintaining this preeminent position through the distribution to the regional chiefdoms of various authoritative, symbolic, and distributive goods that had been acquired through these continental interactions. It is important to note that such interactions and negotiations would have been supported by a variety of maritime voyages and related technologies, as introduced in the Akimichi article, and that there would have been a category of people professionally involved in voyages and trading, who engaged directly in these interactions with overseas counterparts, as noted in the Woo article. In order to control the sharing of technology and the behavior of traders while allowing them a certain degree of freedom, as well as to sustain stable networks for the widespread distribution and circulation of goods, it was necessary to have an overall network order and a “transcendental normative reference point” to support it, capable of transcending the relationships among connected individual polities that functioned as the components within the network. The “transcendental existence” of the “body of the chief,” constituted and realized through the burial of the deceased chief in a burial mound based on certain stipulated rules constitutes

the formation of just such a “reference point,” and I believe that a similar background and mechanisms are involved in the creation of “personal gods” that became the object of rituals at the boundaries and key locations within the network horizon (Okinoshima being one such key location). From this perspective, fleshing out further details about the historical background and mechanisms by which “personal gods” were generated, as described in the Saso article, adds a direction for historical interpretation of the cognitive archaeological explanations pertaining to the mechanisms that gave rise to “personal gods,” as also described in the article.

Secondly, in terms of the “specific details of the meaning and function of the Okinoshima rituals,” what became particularly clear through the Special Research Project was the response and handling by “Wa” (and subsequently Japan) of the various risks involved in maintaining the network horizon were necessary for the continuation of the “Wa” polity, namely, the risk of crossing the Tsushima Strait itself, the risk posed by the political situation on the Korean Peninsula and its various upheavals, and behind all those risks, the risk posed by socio-political and -economic changes that took place in Imperial China, were the underlying factors that specifically defined the meaning and function of the rituals. The destabilization of relations with polities on the Korean Peninsula due to Goguryeo’s southern expansionist policy, and the frequency of conflict were the major risks that threatened the survival of the network horizon as “Wa.” Also, for the federation of chiefdoms that comprised “Wa” (or the Yamato Kingship/Paramount-Chieftainship), and also for the local chiefdoms that were involved in various ways in mutual negotiations with the peninsula polities, the question of how to deal with the situation became a major issue that constituted a matter of survival. As considered in great detail in the articles by Woo, Takata and Tanaka, that process involved a diverse range of political and strategic choices and actions. It is my belief that the rituals of Okinoshima may have been performed as a conceptual and symbolic expression and mediation

of such actions, and that the actual practice was not necessarily performed on a regular basis, but may rather have been performed as an “event intended to ensure the survival of the entire polity of ‘Wa’ which was in the incipient stages of state formation,” when a conceptual and symbolic response to the increased risks described above came to be of particular and imminent necessity. In that sense, in contrast to the regular observation and practice of (ancient state) rituals (the rituals of “Ritsuryo system Japan”) from the eighth century onwards and their prescribed and formulated contents, the contents of the ritual sites dating to before the seventh century and the assemblage of ritual tools, implements and votive objects excavated from such sites may reflect the specific details of the risks inherent to each ritual occasion, and the specific historical circumstances, including what was planned and prayed for on each ritual occasion. As presented in the Takata article, reconstruction of individual ritual episodes at the Jungmak-dong ritual site in Korea, based on the detailed investigation of the contents of the excavated artifact assemblages, will undoubtedly provide a great source of reference when advancing further studies on this particular topic.

Thirdly, from the above considerations it has become apparent that Okinoshima rituals were positioned on the boundary of the internal and homogeneous (or homogenization being aspired to as the ideal) domain of governance of ‘Wa / Japan,’ and functioned as a place for the expeditious and intensive handling of risks threatening the very existence and security of the network horizon of ‘Wa,’ and later Japan. As a part of the “boundary ritual” function of such a polity, the main risks that the Okinoshima rituals addressed and handled were political risks (including the risk of war as the most expeditious means of resolving political conflicts) arising from negotiations with the polities on the Korean Peninsula (and Imperial China) as mentioned. However, I would surmise that right from their inception, rituals and functions to pray for the “peace and security of the entire territory” of the network horizon of “Wa” and

later “Japan” were also incorporated. In that sense, the unification of the Korean Peninsula by Silla brought to an end one of the historical functions of the Okinoshima rituals, namely “responding to and handling the risk of negotiations with foreign powers,” and with the development of institutional and transportation structures within the national territory of “Japan,” their function transitioned to become “integrated risk response and handing for the entire national territory.” It could therefore be said to be a logical progression that the actual implementation of the rituals themselves would ultimately come to an end. In other words, the risks that the rituals sought to respond to and handle transitioned from risks arising from the political situation and developments in Imperial China and on the Korean Peninsula, to maintenance of the security of national territory as “Japan.” In this case, I would hypothesize that Buddhism, as a world religion that is based on a unified worldview and the functional requirement of overcoming risks that are universally and generally present in everyday life, became more functionally compatible with prayers for the peace and tranquility of a national polity, the ideological premise of which was internal homogeneity, in contrast to the “Ritsuryo rituals” as a system comprised of prayers to diverse personal gods. By the 10th century the “Ritsuryo”-style rituals of Okinoshima would ultimately peter out, and as the Saso article notes, one of the factors behind this demise was the shift from rituals for dealing with specific politico-economic risks to rituals for the maintenance of the well-being of national territory, the latter better served by Buddhism as a world religion. There is a growing need to engage in specific and multifaceted examination of

what occurred from the 11th century onwards, when the internal homogeneity of the ancient state collapsed and the focus shifted from the late antiquity to a medieval state, and to what degree the ritualistic activities that shifted in focus to Munakata Shrine inherited aspects from the Okinoshima rituals and what was changed in the course of transition.

As described above, the findings presented in this Special Research Project have significantly deepened our understanding not only of the Okinoshima rituals, but also about a wide range of research topics, including the origins of Shinto, its interrelationship with Buddhism, and its specific relationship with historical processes in East Asia. Furthermore, in the process of analysis and consideration, other previously unconsidered or unapparent topics for study have also emerged. The fact that many of these topics for study transcend the frameworks of Japanese and East Asian history and are directly interrelated with comparative research on the co-transformation and co-evolution of global state formation and religion could well be said to be one of the most significant outcomes of this symposium. It is my sincere hope that the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region Special Research Project, the results of which were summarized and reported in this symposium, will continue to develop and deepen our understanding and appreciation of history not only in the Japanese context, but in the broader East Asian context and even on a global scale, encompassing the ancient world to the present, and that the new questions raised by this project will in due course of time be answered and further outcomes produced that will contribute to creating a better modern society and world.



# Appendix



# 1. Overview of the Special Research Project

OKADERA MIKI

The Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region was inscribed in the World Heritage List at the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Krakow, Poland in 2017. Among its recommendations at that time, the Committee advised that Japan should give consideration to “Continuing and expanding research programmes on maritime exchanges, navigation and related cultural and ritual practices within the State Party and its neighboring countries.”

This recommendation reflected discussions that had taken place in the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on the value of the Property, with the outcome that in May 2017 ICOMOS had recommended that inscription should be limited to only the island of Okinoshima and its three attendant reefs. As a result of deliberations within the World Heritage Committee it was determined that all components of the property as nominated by Japan would be inscribed in the World Heritage List, but with the added recommendation as noted above that continuing and expanding research should be implemented.

It was in response to that recommendation that the Preservation and Utilization Council of “Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region” (Fukuoka Prefecture, Munakata City, Fukutsu City, Munakata Taisha) engaged in a five-year Special Research Project from FY2018 to FY2022. The Council was operated under the guidance of an Advisory Committee, and funded by a Cultural Arts Promotion Grant (Project to Promote Comprehensive Utilization of Local Culture) from the Agency for Cultural Affairs.

Due to the broad scope of the recommendation, a decision was made to proceed with the following issues, which represent a synthesis of the questions posed by ICOMOS at the time of inscription.

1. Maritime navigation: It is thought that the rituals of ancient Okinoshima were conducted to pray for safety of maritime navigation, so what was the reality of such ancient maritime voyages?

2. Exchange: Rituals were conducted against a backdrop of interaction and exchange with ancient East Asia from the fourth to the ninth centuries, so how did these interactions with different cultures influence the religious beliefs and rituals of Okinoshima?

3. Rituals: The location of ancient rituals and votive offerings changed over time, from the top of a giant rock to its base, and then to an open space away from the giant rock. Rituals were also performed not only on Okinoshima, but also on Oshima and the Kyushu mainland, where rituals were conducted in shrine pavilions that continue to this day. So, why did changes to the series of rituals occur and what do these changes tell us? What do the offerings made at each stage symbolize? How and when did belief in the three female deities of Munakata first emerge? Are there any other similar examples to be found in ancient East Asia of sacred islands and rituals relating to maritime navigation?

4. Continuity of faith: Can a line be drawn more clearly demonstrating the continuity between the ancient rituals on Okinoshima and the belief in the three female deities of Munakata?

The project was co-chaired by SATO Makoto (Chair of the Advisory Committee, Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo), and MIZOGUCHI Koji (Member of the Advisory Committee, Professor, Kyushu University). Commissioned researchers were AKIMICHI Tomoya (Director General, Yamanashi Prefectural Fujisan World Heritage Center), WOO Jae-Pyoung (Professor, Chungnam National University, Republic of Korea), TAKATA Kanta (Associate Professor, National Museum

of Japanese History), TANAKA Fumio (Professor, Waseda University), and SASO Mamoru (Professor, Kokugakuin University). A further research collaborator was WANG Haiyan (Professor, Zhejiang University).

Furthermore, three international review meetings and field surveys of related heritage sites were implemented, in order to advance a cross-sectional understanding of the issues. The international review meetings were held on three occasions on the following themes.

- “Okinoshima and the Munakata Region seen from Navigation in Ancient East Asia” (1<sup>st</sup> International Review Meeting, February 26-27, 2019, Innovation Plaza, Kyushu University)
- “Interchanges of Beliefs and Rituals in Ancient East Asia” (2<sup>nd</sup> International Review Meeting, January 12-13, 2020, SME Promotion Center)
- “Ancient Maritime Faith in Ancient East Asia and Okinoshima, Munakata” (3<sup>rd</sup> International Review Meeting, March 21-22, 2023, Daimaru Elgala Hall)

Each of these three meetings addressed the ancient rituals that were conducted on Okinoshima and associated sites from the fourth to the ninth centuries, seeking to coalesce current knowledge in each field of expertise and region of East Asia, and consider the background to the rituals and the specific characteristics of Okinoshima in the Munakata region. For each theme researchers from Japan and overseas were invited to engage in discussions. In total 23 researchers were involved in this Special Research Project.

Onsite field visits were undertaken to China and Korea, to sites that have a strong relation with the theme of the Special Research Project, and also to cultural sites and museums, etc., in Japan relating to maritime navigation, inter-cultural exchange and religious beliefs.

The field visit to China (Dec. 23-30, 2018) involved onsite studies in Zhejiang and Fujian provinces, covering a wide area from the Zhoushan archipelago to Macau.

The field visit to Korea (Aug. 19-26, 2019), with the kind cooperation of LEE Kang-Seung (Professor Emeritus, Chungnam National University), involved onsite visits

to cultural sites and museums relating to maritime navigation, inter-cultural exchange and religious beliefs from Heuksando Island to the west and south coasts of mainland Korea.

In Japan, field visits were conducted to the Jike site and other sites on the Noto Peninsula (Aug. 10-12, 2022), and to Tsushima (Nov. 4-5, 2022).

Based on these meetings, commissioned researchers compiled academic papers, and following discussions held at a general review meeting (ACROS Fukuoka, December 17-18, 2022), five papers were included in the Special Research Project Report (Note 1).

In “Okinoshima in prehistoric and ancient East Asian seas: Seafaring, Vessels and Maritime Networks,” AKIMICHI Tomoya covered the topic of ancient maritime navigation, and proposed a new Maritime World Heritage model. The study of voyages and exchanges with the Korean Peninsula from the respective standpoints of Korean and Japanese researchers was set out by WOO Jae-Pyoung in, “Exchanges between ‘Wa’ (Japan) and ‘Baekje’ (Korea) as seen from the ritual sites of Okinoshima and Jungmak-dong.” TAKATA Kanta’s paper was titled, “Sea routes in Japan-Korea negotiations during the Kofun period: Focusing on analysis of ancient Japanese materials from the south and west coast regions of the Korean Peninsula.” Furthermore, in “The Hata clan and the deities of Munakata: Seeking clues from the Hata-shi Honkei-cho,” from historical documents TAKATA Fumio studies the specific impact of exchanges with East Asia on the beliefs and rituals associated with Okinoshima and the changes in those rituals. In “The significance of the ancient rituals on Okinoshima in the Munakata region and their transformation through to the medieval period: From the perspective of human cognitive functions and environmental change,” from the standpoint of the interconnection between the geographical environment and the view of the divine and rituals, SASO Mamoru examines the continuity of belief between the ancient rituals of Okinoshima and belief in the three female deities of Munakata and changes in the

rituals, and by extension the transformation of rituals from ancient times to the medieval period.

At the meeting to report the outcomes of the Special Research Project, held on March 12, 2023, at Kyushu National Museum, in addition to reports on the five papers by commissioned researchers, other participants included the two co-chairs of the project, as well as OKADA Yasuyoshi (President, ICOMOS Japan) and SUZUKI Chihei (Senior Cultural Properties Specialist (World Heritage), Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan), all of whom took part in a panel discussion, titled “New horizons in research on Okinoshima.” The report meeting confirmed that the studies conducted over a five-year period under the auspices of the Special Research Project have served to broaden and deepen knowledge on all aspects relating to rituals, religious beliefs, maritime navigation and exchanges. In particular, Mr. Suzuki highly evaluated the fact that since the inscription of the property as a World Heritage Site, diligent efforts have been made to implement UNESCO’s recommendations, involving interdisciplinary research encompassing cognitive religious studies and other areas of expertise, and that the new body of knowledge about Munakata and Okinoshima is being disseminated widely, including plans for an English translation summarizing the outcomes. All panelists emphasized the necessity for further study in the future. Prof. Mizoguchi noted that the rituals that took place during the various stages of Okinoshima represent a condensed history of Japan’s struggle to establish itself as a nation and its maturation as an emerging power at the time, and that the project has real academic value that can provide insights into globalization and world systems

in ancient times. Prof. Sato highlighted the importance of continuing basic research and studies in local areas, including monitoring and reassessment of the items that have been excavated on Okinoshima. He also noted that the continuation and development of future research will reveal more about how reverence for the environment and nature has been cherished over the course of history, which will provide useful and timely suggestions about how we go about our own lives today in response to globalization. Mr. Suzuki stated that further research is needed to determine the continuity of faith not only from ancient times to the medieval period, but also how faith in the medieval period connects to our beliefs today, and how those ancient beliefs remain alive in us today. In addition to continuing to engage in research, Prof. Okada observed that the true essence of a World Heritage Site lies in how the objects there speak of their value, and he encouraged locally-led cooperative efforts in the preservation and management of the property to ensure that the condition of the site remains as it was at the time of inscription. Although this project came to a conclusion in FY2022, considerations are currently underway to see if it can be continued in a new format from FY2024 onwards.

(Note 1) Preservation and Utilization Council of “Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region,” *Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region: Special Research Project Report*, 2023. Available to download at the following site. <https://www.munakata-archives.asia/>



## 2. Overview of the study of Related Heritage in East Asia

OHTAKA Hirokazu

### Introduction

In implementing this Special Research Project, a comparative perspective was sought with related and similar properties dating back to ancient East Asia. It was in response to this requirement that a three-year program of field visits and surveys of cultural heritage related to maritime navigation, exchanges, and associated beliefs in China, Korea, and Japan was planned.

In China, the plan was to visit the Zhejiang and Fujian areas where the development of maritime culture was observed; in Korea, the plan was to travel to the western and southern coasts that were regions connected with Japan and China; and in Japan the plan was to visit Noto, Iki, and Tsushima, which share common aspects and characteristics with Okinoshima. The field trips in Japan were planned to take place during the third year of the project, but due to the impact of COVID-19 the schedule was delayed, and the field trip to Iki and Tsushima was scaled back to Tsushima only. The trip to Tsushima was originally planned in September 2022, but due to the effects of typhoon Hinnamnor it was further delayed to

November, with the outcome that many people who had originally intended to participate were unable to join. (Fig.1)

However, thanks to the efforts and cooperation of all participants and other persons involved the field visits all proved to be both memorable and fruitful, and their outcomes have been reflected into the research outcomes of this project, both directly and indirectly. The following is a summary of the various field visits and my personal impressions.

### I . China field visit (Fig.2)

The visit took place from December 23 to 30, 2018, with the following researchers participating: AKIMICHI

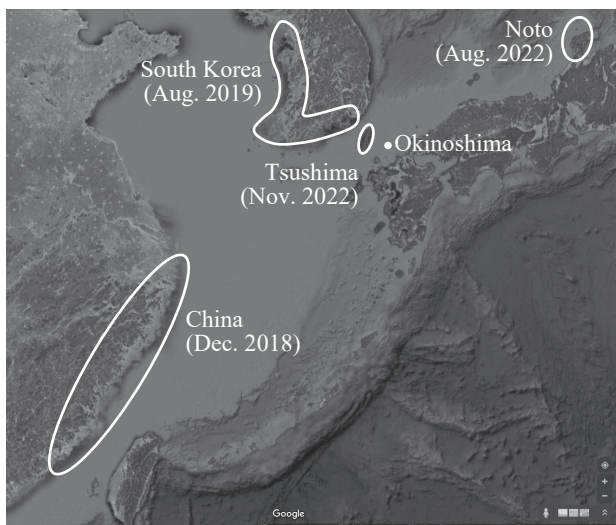


Fig.1 : Location of the visited site

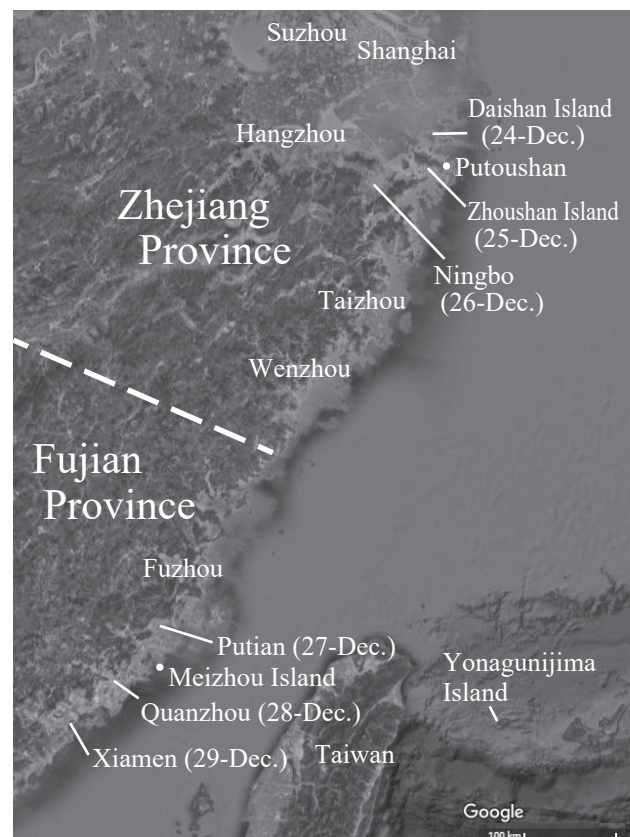


Fig.2 : Location of the visited site in China

Tomoya, SASO Mamoru, TANAKA Fumio, WOO Jae-Pyoung, LEE Kang-Seung, WANG Haiyan, OKADERA Miki (Fukuoka Prefecture), and OHTAKA Hirokazu (Fukuoka Prefecture). The field trip and study of related sites was greatly supported and enabled by WANG Haiyan (Professor, Zhejiang University; at the time a researcher at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto).

The areas visited during the field trip were the coastal areas of Zhejiang Province, including the Zhoushan Islands, where records survive concerning the arrival of Japanese envoys who travelled across the East China Sea to China, and the coastal areas of Fujian Province, which flourished in maritime trade from the Song Dynasty onwards and has many relics and artifacts related to maritime religions and beliefs, navigation, and international exchanges.

Needless to say, China is a large country, and this field trip only included a sampling of the major sites in the regions visited. In addition, there are only a limited number of historical sites related to maritime navigation and maritime-related beliefs that date to a similar period as the Okinoshima rituals, making it difficult to discuss the direct influence on the Okinoshima rituals. However, among the few sites that there are, there was a sense that there are some commonalities between Japan and China in the form of beliefs related to maritime navigation, in terms of such aspects as the topography of the sites, the conditions where they are located, and the surrounding natural environment.

Given these commonalities, it will likely be necessary to set out to examine the characteristics of the two countries and interactions between them. However, we need to identify and accumulate a broader variety of similar cases in order to discuss things in different time periods in parallel. It should also be noted that due to scheduling constraints it was not possible to visit the Shandong Peninsula and the Guangdong region, where maritime navigation developed in ancient times, so research in



Fig. 3 : Meizhou Island as seen from the top of Mazu Temple

these areas remains as an important issue requiring further attention.

## II . Korea field visit (Fig.4)

The visit took place from August 19 to 26, 2019, with the following researchers participating: SATO Makoto, AKIMICHI Tomoya, SASO Mamoru, TANAKA Fumio, WOO Jae-Pyoung, LEE Kang-Seung, WANG Haiyan, OKADERA Miki, OHTAKA Hirokazu, and IKENOUE Hiroshi (Fukutsu City). The visit was facilitated with the full cooperation of professors Lee and Woo.

The areas visited were the west coast of Korea, facing the Chinese mainland across the Yellow Sea (Korean name “West Sea”) and the south coast facing Japan across the Tsushima Strait (Korean name “South Sea”). These are regions and maritime areas characterized by their ria coast and multiple small islands, which were the scene for interactions and sea crossings by Japanese, Chinese and Korean vessels in ancient times.

The opportunity to visit similar cultural properties in Korea less than a year after the field visit to China proved to be a very stimulating experience for the purpose of considering the exchange of beliefs in East Asia. It is beyond doubt that a common spiritual foundation, couple with direct and indirect exchanges existed in ancient

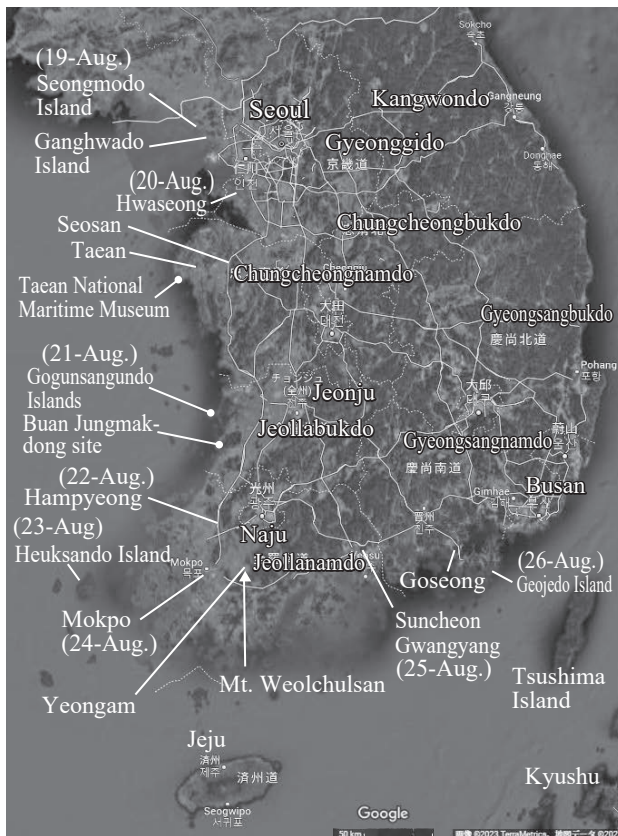


Fig.4 : Location of the visited site in Korea

times, and that the religious culture of each country (especially culture related to belief in the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva (Kannon; Goddess of Mercy) developed in the course of these exchanges. The site of Namhae-do, which looks out over where there used to be an inlet to the sea, is also very suggestive when one considers the locations where port-related deities were enshrined



Fig. 5 : Cliff adjacent to the Jungmak-dong ritual site

in the Japanese archipelago, but as there is no evidence that can link such practices to before the 10th century, it must remain purely as a source of reference. However, the Jungmak-dong ritual site is the only one that can be directly compared to the Okinoshima ritual site, and we await the discovery of similar sites and the progress of research in this area in the future.

The field visit team were fortunate enough to be able to visit Heuksando, an island which is believed to have been a strategic point of navigation between Japan, China and Korea. However, we were not able to engage in sufficiently detailed visits to sites along the southern coast of the peninsula, which has a complex coastline, numerous islands, and is also the site of various Wa (Japanese)-style burial mounds. Neither were we able to spend sufficient time visiting sites on the eastern coast of Korea, such as the Donghae Sanctum and Ulleung-do.

### III. Field visits in Japan

#### 1. Field Visit in Noto(Fig.6)

Field studies in Japan were split into two visits, to Noto and Tsushima. The visit to Noto took place from August 10 to 12, 2022, with the following researchers participating: SATO Makoto, AKIMICHI Tomoya, SASO Mamoru, TANAKA Fumio, WOO Jae-Pyoung, WANG Haiyan, FUKUSHIMA Makiko (Munakata Taisha Cultural Office), OKADERA Miki, OHTAKA Hirokazu, and IKENOUE Hiroshi. The areas visited extended from Hakui City, Ishikawa Prefecture, at the base of the Noto Peninsula, called Kuchi-noto, to Oku-noto (Wajima City, Suzu City, Noto Town and Anamizu Town in Hosu-gun), including the Hegurajima island. This region was a key location for maritime transportation in the Sea of Japan, and from the eighth to tenth centuries there were also interactions with Balhae in Northeast Asia. It seems that this region served as a boundary to the northern world beyond for the ancient state of Japan, and it shares many similarities with Munakata.

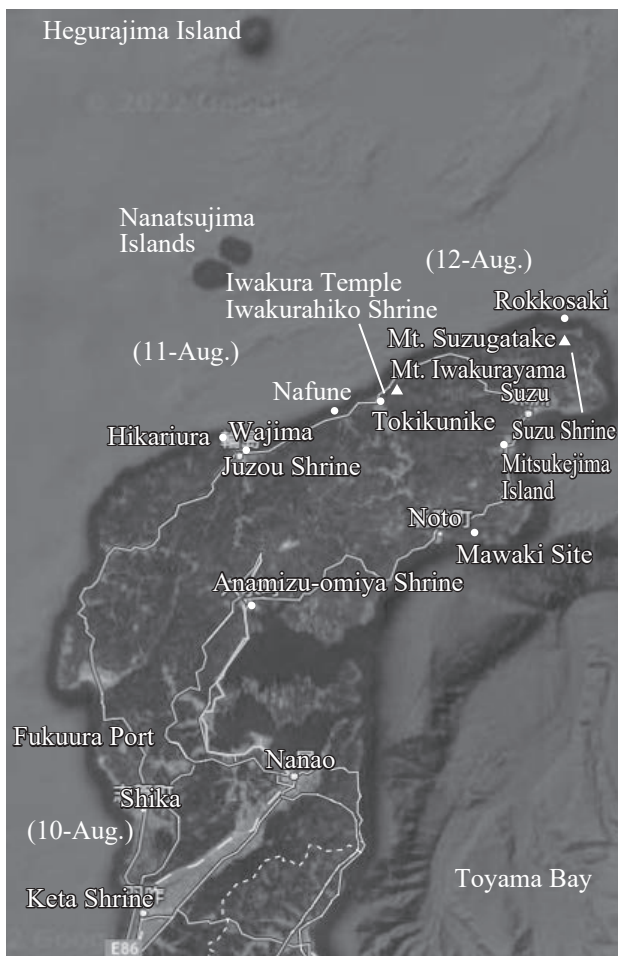


Fig.6 : Location of the visited sites in Noto



Fig. 7 : Northern Hegurajima, view westward from Konpira Shrine.

## 2. Field Visit in Tsushima(Fig.8)

The visit to Tsushima took place from November 4 to 6, 2022, with the following researchers participating: MIZOGUCHI Koji, AKIMICHI Tomoya, TANAKA Fumio, WOO Jae-Pyoung, OKADERA Miki, and OHTAKA Hirokazu. The area for the field visit encompassed all of Tsushima (Tsushima City, Nagasaki Prefecture), located west of the Genkai Sea, where it goes without saying that since the beginning of recorded history there have been records of external interactions, and it is considered that there are still many traces of ancient beliefs and how they were practiced. One purpose of the visit is to see the silhouette of Okinoshima from Tsushima.

The field visits to Noto in the Hokuriku region and Tsushima in the Genkai Sea close to the Korean

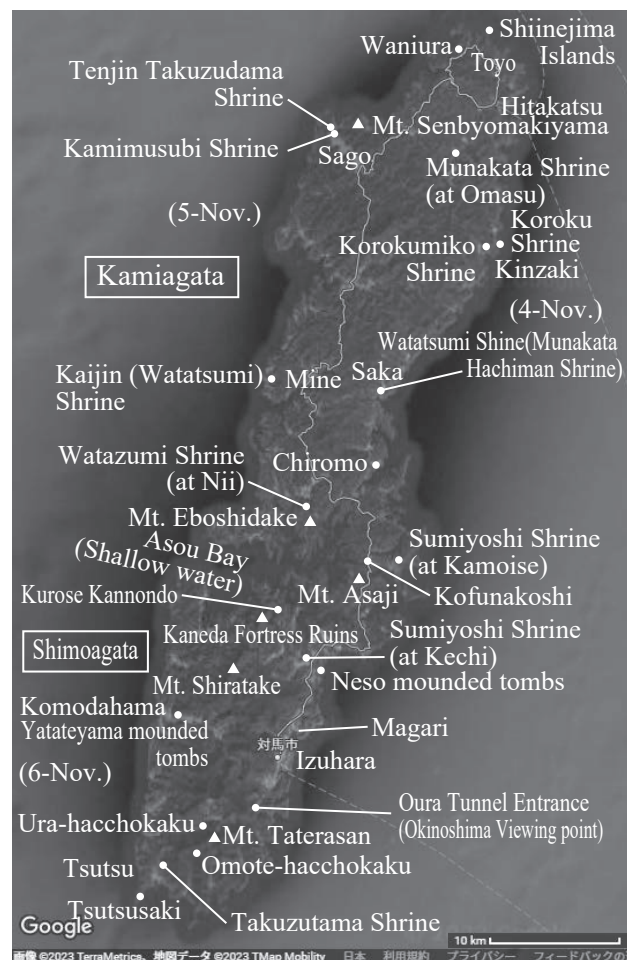


Fig.8 : Location of the visited site in Tushima



Fig. 9 : Okinoshima viewed from the entrance to the Oura Tunnel (Tsushima)

Peninsula took place in the midst of the global pandemic, and although this imposed some restrictions, such as many facilities being closed, the visits proved to be very informative. Particularly noteworthy experiences from a personal perspective were being able to visit Hegurajima in Noto, being able to make an almost full-circle trip around Tsushima from its southern to northern tips, visits to numerous sacred and revered places, and the “side” view of Okinoshima as seen from Munakata.

While all of these areas are considered to have well-preserved old forms of beliefs thanks to their remote location, conversely, they have yet to be fully researched and studied. Noto and Tsushima are also areas in Japan that nationally have a particularly large number of *shikinai* shrines (major shrines listed in the 10th century *Engishiki*), but since the Edo period there have been

many issues concerning their regulation and historical evidence for these shrines, meaning that today there some *shikinai* shrines of which no remains or traces exist, creating a barrier to further study about ancient beliefs and customs. Although this is an issue that cannot be easily resolved, I hope that further research will develop this area of study in the future, and also that the work completed through the Special Research Project on this occasion has made some small contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

## Conclusion

The above summarizes the various field visits that were made under the auspices of this project. I believe that organically linking and verifying these experiences on a deep level will be meaningful not only for this Special Research Project, but also for continuing research and study of the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region.

In terms of schedule and itinerary for the visits, we were perhaps too ambitious in including too many sites, which resulted in a heavy burden being placed on the participants. Even though the schedule was busy, there were still many places we should ideally have visited, but did not have the time to do so. I would like to conclude this overview by noting that such places should be considered as targets for future study or as areas for continuing research.



### 3. Summary of the International Review Meetings

#### I . The First International Review Meeting Summary of Report

##### Shipbuilding and Navigation Techniques of Japan from the 4th to 9th Century

MORITA Katsuyuki

Imashirozuka History Museum in Takatsuki City

The main points of reference used to study shipbuilding and navigation techniques in ancient Japan, from the 4th century to the 9th century, are historical materials such as “*Kojiki*,” “*Nihon Shoki*” and “*Manyoshu*,” as well as archaeological finds unearthed from various locations in Japan. The historical materials mainly comprise brief descriptions of the ships owned by kings of Wa and the Ritsuryo governments, or emotional expressions of poetry related to the ships. There has never been a systematic record devoted to the development of shipbuilding technology and the art of navigation in this area. Archeological materials, even if they were from the ships themselves, were mostly diverted for use as parts of other structures after dismantling of the ship. Other archaeological materials include miniatures of ship used in ancient tomb rituals (boat haniwa), as well as drawings found on containers and stone tomb chambers (ship paintings).

With these in mind, I would like to draw the history of the ship in ancient Japan based on fragmented information from the Kiki (the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*) and relevant archeological materials; from Junkouzousen (dugouts with ship planks), early “Kouzousen” (Kuribune equipped with chamfering strips and hinges on the ship bottom), and even to the “*Kentoshi Ship*”(used for a Japanese envoy’s Tang Dynasty) that held 120 people. I will explain how these large transport ships, which made

it possible to transfer so many people at once, came to be. This will help explain why I believe it was possible to dispatch by ship more than 60,000 soldiers, the largest such number of soldiers move in ancient history, which reminds us it as a trigger of the Iwai War. After the war, the utilization of these large transport ships enabled large-scale maritime transport, starting from Uto Port in Kumamoto, via the Shimabara Peninsula, through Nagasaki West Bank, Genkai-Nada, Kanmon Kaikyo, the Seto Inland Sea, and through the Yodo River to the Great King’s Tomb (eg. Imashiotsuka Kofun) and various locations in Kinai. The route is known as the one that the “An Experiment of the Historical ‘King’s Stone Coffin’ Transportation” followed in 2005 with a huge, crescent-shaped, four-ton plus stone coffin made of Aso Welded Tuff (ma gon stone).

##### Shipbuilding and Navigation, and Beliefs in the Southern World

GOTO Akira

Nanzan University

In this presentation, we will start with an overview of traditional shipbuilding technology and navigation techniques of the southern world. Then, I will discuss trading and religious activities that occurred where such voyages took place, as well as islands and ruins that are considered sacred sites. By doing so, I would like to provide comparative examples for Okinoshima.

Migration to the Oceania Islands began from South East Asia passing through Melanesia, and then through Micronesia and Polynesia. The shipbuilding techniques and navigation skills must have evolved during this migration time, as islands became smaller and the distance between them became longer.

In this presentation, we first provide an overview of the

various shipbuilding technologies (rafts, grass boats, bark ships, etc.) of Oceania, especially the characteristics of outrigger canoes used for trade and the double canoes that may have been used for migration.

Until now, Japan has already been introduced to what remains of the shipbuilding techniques in the Caroline Islands of Micronesia by Mr Tomoya Akimichi. For my presentation, I would like to discuss the recent years of research on the advanced shipbuilding techniques of Polynesia. I want to make it clearly known that oral recitation, passed down for generations that make the shipbuilding techniques, but also even myths played a big role in conveying the wisdom of ship building to its people. I would also like to mention myths that convey navigation skills such as the goddess that watches over the voyage.

In the last section, I will discuss the case of trade and religious activities (e.g., pilgrimages on the sea) as motivations for voyages. Examples of these include the Namador ruins on Pohnpei Island, the sacred ground of Yap Island (Terri), and the shrine of Raiatea Island in the Societe Islands. Through this, I hope to shed light on Okinoshima in relation to the southern world.

### **Shipbuilding technology and voyage to understand from the sunken ship**

SASAKI James Randall  
Kyushu National Museum

A shipwreck site is often called an “ancient time capsule.” This is because organic remains are often better preserved underwater compared to above ground, and it is a type of archaeological site able to show the environment as it was in the past. Europe was the center of underwater archaeological research, but in recent years, countries including Korea, China, and Thailand has established a specialized national research institute, fully equipped with conservation facilities, a research vessel, and maritime museums exhibiting shipwrecks that they excavated. On the other hand, the status of underwater

archaeological research in Japan has not seen a major development compared to other countries. In this paper, the author introduces the past maritime culture, focusing on the trade systems and the changes in shipbuilding technologies that became apparent through investigating shipwreck sites. Focus will be given to the ancient Mediterranean and comparative examples of research around the world. The author wish a growing number of similar research projects will be initiated in Japan.

### **Transition process of route and trade surrounding the ancient Korean Peninsula**

KWON Ohyoung  
Seoul National University

The history of ancient maritime exchange in East Asia has attracted considerable interest in South Korea and Japan, and the theme has been studied. Recently, though, limitations have been identified in the research methodology used. Among other things, no new findings or research methodologies have been developed to complement the previous of studies on navigation and ships. From this point on, I would hope that new research will be triggered by the recent registration of Okinoshima as a World Cultural Heritage.

This presentation covers the period from the early iron age in Korea to the early era of North-South Korea, and analyzes the distribution of glass beads to track the process of how the cultures of Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia connected. As a result of this approach, it was possible to obtain an overview of exchange and trade over wide areas of the Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia regions. During the early iron age, we can see there was a distribution network for blue glass beads that connected China, Manchuria, the Korean Peninsula and Kyushu. The distribution network expanded to areas in Northern Vietnam and Northeast Asia after the nine Ryonan states were established in the land of Nan-Yue (Nam-Viet) and four states were established in the lands of Wiman Joseon. From the 3rd century on, starting with bilateral

exchanges between East WU and Funan, full-fledged trade and exchange began between Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia. In addition to that, during the period of South-North Korea when Shilla and Bohai coexisted, it appears that exchange and trade with the Islamic world was achieved via the imperial Tang dynasty of China.

### **Sea Road for Japan-Korea Negotiations during the Kofun Period - Analysis of Japanese-style materials found in the southern and western coastal areas of the Korean Peninsula -**

TAKATA Kanta

National Institute of History and Folk Museum

The society of Wa during the Kofun period welcomed diverse cultural practices from the Korean Peninsula, which were assimilated and became established as Japanese culture. During that period, many Japanese would cross the sea to trade with the people of Baekje, Shilla, Gaya, and the area of Yeongsan River in the Korean Peninsula.

The archaeological material that I will focus on comprises Wa-style burial mound built in the southern and western coastal areas of the Korean Peninsula around the first half of the fifth century. The tombs were built in a location overlooking the sea and adopt small to medium tomb system in the northern Kyushu region.

The entombed persons are thought to have been Japanese-born people who conducted negotiations between the people of Baekje and the Yeongsan River and the people in Wa. In addition, because village ruins associated with the route are scattered along the southern and western coastal areas, when we connect these ports of call, we will find an established route.

In the southern and western coastal areas of the Korean Peninsula those days, a regional network had grown to facilitate the exchange of materials, technology, information, ritual systems, and more. People who travelled to the Yeongsan River and Baekje, utilizing the network, seemed to have smooth navigation and negotiate

with people around the ports of call, and even sometimes, stayed there few days when needed. Among those people, there were some who died at a port of call. I believe the Wa-style burial mounds in Korean Peninsula were built for such Japanese people. Likely, some of them had to conduct a ritual for the safety of the navigation or settled in the port of call for one reason or another.

### **Ocean current and voyage environment of the East China Sea - Japan Sea**

HIROSE Naoki

Kyushu University

Kuroshio, one of the strongest currents on this planet, comes into the East China Sea through the Yonaguni Strait and travels along the continental slope to the northeast. It is interacted with the Taiwan Warm Current from the Taiwan Strait and also with land water such as Changjiang (Yangtze). A part of the mixed water reaches to the Tsushima/Korea Strait (TKS) and further extends to the northeast into the Japan/East Sea. The Tsushima Warm Current (TWC) transports huge amount of heat and controls the warm humid climate in this region. Ancient continental people must be aiming at this abundant island the TKS through the Korean Peninsula.

They were able to walk across the TKS at the glacial age but the resurgent TWC may block their travel afterward. Actually, the TKS transport has been/will be increasing with the present global warming based on our analysis. In this report, general characteristics of the surface current in this region is reviewed and the ancient ship routing is discussed for the TKS. Although we could simulate detailed variations of ocean conditions using supercomputers today, ancient people hardly predicted the chaotic motions of ocean current. The navigation crosses the TKS might be fulfilled using the periodic nature of spring tide.

## II . The Second International Review Meeting Summary of Report

### Research Issues of “The Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in Munakata Region - from a Viewpoint of World Heritage –

Cees VAN ROOIJEN

Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE), Netherlands

The early period of Okinoshima is an intriguing period. The finds on the island show the important role the island played in the interaction between the mainland of Asia and the Japanese Archipelago. A role whose importance was recognized by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel and was seen as the thread in the Nomination which was the most promising.

On the other hand, the question is; do we fully understand that role? It is always difficult to interpret archaeological finds by themselves. As archaeologist we interpret them from our present days view on the world. In the case of Okinoshima it is obvious that rites and seafaring play an important role, and the influence of the growing centralized power is also a main theme. But one can wonder what more is there to detect, and question if those three obvious threads are not overwhelming other lines. For World Heritage it is very interesting how the world interacts and how groups of people are influenced by each other. It was thought by the panel that it would be interesting to investigate if these lines of influence can be recovered by the expressions of the archaeological heritage, not alone at Okinoshima but also in a wider setting. This research can be done by deepening our knowledge of the items and finds we already know, but also by looking at them in another way. For instance, in a wider context, as is done by also researching Asian mainland sites. Also, examples from other places might help to open up new lines of thought and new lines for research. The program, where this conference is part of, is an excellent response to the need to better understand

Okinoshima and the role it played in the early medieval period of this part of Asia.

### Ancient Foreign Residents of the Kyushu Region and Their Faith - Himekoso, Gyokujo, and Satsuma Stone Pagodas -

TANAKA Fumio

Waseda University.

This report discusses the faith practiced by foreign residents in Kyushu, Japan from ancient times to the early medieval period, from the perspective of literature. In this report, “foreign residents” refers to the ancient people who arrived from overseas, some of whom did not settle permanently.

First of all, I would like to draw your attention to the worship of Himekoso as a faith associated with the Munakata region, and which was practiced by foreign residents in Japan prior to the 8th century. This faith was closely associated with the development of Miyake (estates established in various regions by a central kingship for regional governance) after the late 6th century, as foreign residents and their descendants who were worshippers of Himekoso became involved in its administration. Furthermore, as the wealthier and more influential locals also became engaged in the administration of Miyake, the worship of Himekoso spread to them as well.

The archaeological discovery dating from the 9th century that subsequently captures our attention is the wooden tablet (*mokkan*) No. 2 excavated from the Nakabaru site in Karatsu City, Saga Prefecture, which has an expression of the goddess called *Gyokujo* (jade woman). The description of this narrow wooden strip indicates some common features with Henbai (ritual footsteps performed by a sorcerer in a ceremony that was believed to have magical powers), which was influenced by Chinese Taoism and introduced in Japanese Onmyodo after the mid-10th century. This local wooden tablet dates back the Henbai of Onmyodo a hundred years earlier, which gives

evidence to the international environment of the northern Kyushu region of the time.

Additionally, we also want to consider the Satsuma stone pagoda as a significant representation of faith from overseas in Kyushu during the early medieval period. Satsuma stone pagodas are unevenly distributed in the western Kyushu region, and their direct Chinese influence has often been pointed out. They are thought to have been brought by the Song merchants who engaged in sulphur trading at Io Island in Kagoshima Prefecture, and may relate to the Chinese ship that appears in *Tale of the Heike*. Despite all this, pagodas matching the description of Satsuma stone pagodas have never been confirmed in China. This indicates that the practice of the faith may have been transformed in Kyushu.

As we can see, when compared to other regions in Japan, Kyushu had an ideal environment that made it easier for the faiths of China and the Korean peninsula to expand. At the same time, there has been a transformation that is connected with the regional characteristics of Kyushu in the development of those faiths. This shows that those faiths brought by the foreign residents were actively adopted by the local people in Kyushu and shared over time.

### **Overseas Exchanges in the Munakata Region and the Munakata Clan**

HANADA Katsuhiro

Yasu City Board of Education

The Munakata region is an ideal place for research aimed at uncovering how a group of people living on the small plains along the Genkai-Nada sea coast, an area that had very little fertility during the Jomon and Yayoi periods, grew to become influential clans in the Kofun period. These people, who lived in a region with low agricultural production marked mainly by inlets and lagoons, eventually became specialists in many aspects of maritime traffic and trade, fully utilizing their characteristic traits as marine people. As of the 4th

century, the rituals on Okinoshima aimed at securing and taking control of maritime routes had already started, and set the course for the Yamato court to seek hegemony and acquire interests on the Korean Peninsula. As if to respond to these political developments, numerous keyhole-shaped mounded tombs were built for local clans. It appears that the Munakata clan was assigned the role of the priest of Okinoshima by one of the “Five Kings of Wa” who is seemed to be buried in the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group.

It is noteworthy that significant contributions from the Kinai region have been confirmed after the Munakata region’s assistance to the Yamato court’s control of the sea lanes, as evidenced by the ritual accessories that the Yamato court used for rituals found on Okinoshima, by the goods shipped from the Korean Peninsula, and more. The excavated antiquities include the remains of ancient immigrants to Japan, as well as local people and people from the Kinai region, which also suggests group migrations behind the scenes. These developments helped this group of seaside people grow into powerful regional chieftains. This closely corresponds with the formation of the Yamato court and its regional governance and have much in common, including the acquisition of handicraft production technology and group placements.

The Article of Year 673 of “*Nihonshoki*” (Chronicles of Japan) mentions that Amakono-iratsume, a daughter of Munakata-no-Kimi Tokuzen, had taken into the inner palace, which highlights the fact that the Munakata clan, who had taken control of the maritime routes through Munakata-Oshima- Okinoshima-the Korean Peninsula had so significant power that it enabled marriage ties with the Yamato court when sending aid to the Baekje. The Miyajidake Kofun is believed to be the tomb of Munakata- no-Kimi Tokuzen. It should especially be noted that, geographically speaking, Munakata has been an important strategic point for trade traffic and the military, and that special rituals for the security of maritime traffic were performed out of regard to Munakata-no-Okami as Michinushi-no-Muchi (the

greatest deity of the road).

## **Reality of Rituals and Deity Views in Ancient Japan - The Natural Environment of the Japanese Archipelago and Relations with East Asia -**

SASO Mamoru  
Kokugakuin University

In each region of the Japanese archipelago (from the Tohoku region to Kyushu), ritual sites can be found where common relics used for rituals from the later 4th to the 5th century have been excavated. These excavated relics and other remains tell us that people prepared meals and offerings for deities, and accumulated earthenware and ritual items there. Recent studies have confirmed cases where there were fences used to partition and conceal a ritual site from the surrounding area, as well as raised-floor storehouses where valuable items were kept.

These provide us with enough evidence to reproduce a ritual structure consisting of (1) the preparation of offerings, (2) rituals and (3) the removal and storage of votive offerings after the rituals. This corresponds with the ceremony of Jingu rituals recorded in the *Kotaijingu Gishikicho* (Ceremony Register of Kotaijingu), issued in 804 (the 23rd year of Enryaku). The ceremony was needed to distinguish rituals from daily life and to help maintain cleanliness. In addition, the procedure for offering meals and valuable items was the same used in rituals conducted at Kofun (mounded tombs) established in the 3rd century, which are considered to be related to the formation of these rituals.

“Deity views,” which describe how deities for the rituals were regarded, were deeply interconnected with the natural environment of the Japanese archipelago, which offers not only blessings but also various disasters. Ancient ritual sites were located in places which played a special role in securing natural resources, developing agricultural production and marine and land transportation, and ancient shrines were also situated in

such places. People intuitively felt the “Agents” in the special mechanisms of the natural environment, who caused such work, and believed in deities and conducted the rituals. There was a view that deities “resided” in specific places, which is described in “*Kojiki*”, “*Nihonshoki*” and “*Engishiki*.”

These rituals and deity views were developed in tandem with the activation of exchanges between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese archipelago (Wakoku) in the 4th and 5th centuries, and relations with the unified empire of China in the 7th century, which led to Jingu rituals in the Ritsuryo Era.

## **The Development of Taoism in China and the Impact of Chinese Folk Beliefs to Japan**

NIKAIDO Yoshihiro  
Kansai University

The origin of Taoism is generally believed to have been the Way of the Celestial Master movement, founded by Zhang Ling during the Later Han period. However, even before that, there were the ideas of Taoism as typified by Laozi and Zhuangzi, as well as Shenxian Dao (the Way of the Immortals). Both served as sources of later Taoism. After that, during the Six Dynasties period, the Way of the Celestial Master developed its organization and structure to create Taoism. Distinguished Taoist monks such as Lu Xiuqing and Tao Hongjing also entered the scene, deepened the doctrines of Taoism, and sorted out the sutra. It was during this period, as well, that Ge Hong wrote “Baopuzi.” After uniting the Northern and Southern dynasties, the Sui dynasty esteemed both Taoism and Buddhism, though Buddhism was held in higher regard. During the Tang dynasty, with the imperial family’s claim to be descendants of Laozi, Taoism was instituted and developed as the official religion. Taoist monks such as Sima Chengzhen played an active role in the era of Emperor Xuan Zong. In the Five Dynasties period, Du Guangting compiled all the Taoist rituals that had been created up to that point. During the Song dynasty, Taoism

was again slightly transformed. During the Jin dynasty, a new form of Taoism called “Quan- zhen jiao” (Teaching of Complete Perfection) was established. You can read about the history of Taoism development up to the Tang dynasty in the book “Yunji Qiqian.”

Apart from Taoism movements, some folk beliefs have been continuous since ancient times. These folk beliefs originated from shamanism and were subject to a wider variety of changes, as they were widely practiced among commoners. For example, faith in Prince Jing of Chengyang was prevalent during the Han dynasty, though it became a rarity during the Tang dynasty. Folk beliefs often conflicted with Taoism. In fact, quite a number of articles that criticize folk beliefs are contained in “Baopuzi.”

There are no Taoist temples or monks in Japan, as Taoism was never introduced to the country in any comprehensive manner. Faith in the Three Pure Ones, the three most important deities in Taoism, is hardly known in Japan. Despite this, the influence of Taoist culture can be seen in Japan in various forms, and has affected Japanese people in many ways. Moreover, folk beliefs trickled over to Japan one at a time, and have commonly been syncretized with Japanese Shintoism and Buddhism.

## **Historical Development of Folk Beliefs and Overseas Exchanges in the Korean Peninsula**

SONG Hwa Seop  
Chung-ang University

The Korean Peninsula is located in the East Asian Middle Sea where marine culture prospered. Baekje was located in the south western side of the Peninsula, with Goguryeo as its rival in the north and Wa (Japan) and Southern Dynasties of China as its friendly nations in the south. In order to respond to the threat from Goguryeo, Baekje put a lot of emphasis on diplomatic exchanges with Gaya, Wa and Southern Dynasty of China. Diplomatic exchanges with China and Wa by Baekje were conducted through marine transportation and they got into full swing during

the periods of reign of King Dongseong and King Munyeong after the relocation of the capital to Ungjin.

As for the diplomatic relations, there are a state-led type and private-sector-led one. While the state-led type is conducted mainly by envoy and tribute ships, the private-sector-led one is by commercial and trade ships. Marine exchanges developed navigation guardian god, anchorage sites and sailing safety prayer places. Exchanges between Baekje and China/Japan were active during the Ungjin period. Such facts are reflected in the Buan Jungmak-dong maritime ritual site and their relics. The relics were mainly belonged to the middle of the 5th century to the middle of the 6th century.

The relics of external exchanges at the Buan Jungmak-dong site are soft steatite objects like ones of the Okinoshima Island in Japan and celadon porcelain pieces of China. As the steatite objects were national dedication articles only during a certain period, they did not have an ability to transmit as folk religion. On the other hand, cultural exchanges with the Chinese Southern Dynasties were implemented in parallel with the state-led and private-sector-led styles which maintained a transmission capability as maritime faith. Private trade became active in the Unified Silla period, and at the ruins of Jungmak-dong site, maritime folk religions developed, such as a water temple and seaside cave faith of Mount Putuo of Zhoushan Islands of China and faith in Nanhai Guanyin. At the seaside cave, guardian god for sailing was placed and Nanhai Guanyin was enshrined at a water temple as an incarnation, “Gaeyang Halmeoni (Grandmother)”.

In this way, at the Bay of Julpo and Byeonsan Peninsula, ocean Buddhism and maritime folk religion of Chinese descent have been continuously maintained after the Silla period, through the Goryeo era, Choson Dynasty era up to now.

### III. The Third International Review Meeting Summary of Report

#### Japanese Deities and the Sea

Fabio Rambelli  
University of California, Santa Barbara

Many people in Japan seem to consider the mountains as the place where deities, ancestors, and various spirits abide. However, the sea also plays an important role in the history of Japanese attitudes toward the sacred.

Some of the most ancient sacred places, as recorded in the *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihon shoki* (720), were actually located by the sea in northern Kyushu: Munakata, Shikanoumi, and Suminoe/Sumiyoshi. Their respective deities, Munakata, Watatsumi, and Sumiyoshi, receive detailed attention in the early sources. We understand that, for the ancient Japanese, sea deities were complex entities, composed of three distinct elements, organized on the basis of different structures and cosmologies. For example, Munakata is organized in a horizontal cosmology, which distinguishes between the coast (Hetsumiya), somewhere mid- distance in the sea (Nakatsumiya on Ōshima Island) and a point in the far distance at sea (Okitsumiya on Okinoshima). The other cosmological model, at Shikanoumi and Sumiyoshi, is structured along depth, with the three kami located, respectively, on the surface of the sea (Uwatsutsunoo no Mikoto at Sumiyoshi, Uwatsu Watatsumi no kami at Shikanoumi), at mid-depth in the water (Nakatsutsunoo no Mikoto at Sumiyoshi, Nakatsu Watatsumi no kami at Shikanoumi), and at the bottom of the sea (Sokotsutsunoo no Mikoto at Sumiyoshi, Sokotsu Watatsumi no kami at Shikanoumi). The gods of Munakata, Shikanoumi, and Sumiyoshi gradually spread all over Japan (the first of them in combination with the Buddhist deity Benzaiten) and played an important role in all aspects related to seafaring and fishing. Boats also became receptacles of divine beings (funadama-sama) and fish were envisioned

as divine beings or messengers of the gods.

In this presentation, I will discuss in some detail the sacred status of the sea and various aspects of sea deities.

#### Rituals to Sea Gods in Ancient China

JIANG Bo  
Shandong University

Rituals addressing the four seas were an important part of the cultures of successive Chinese states. From the Tang-Song period, Guangzhou and Quanzhou entered an era of prosperity as representative ports of the southeastern coastal area. The Nanhai Temple in Guangzhou and Tianhou Temple in Quanzhou became important sites for the worship of sea gods, with the Tianhou Temple being the most influential.

The Tianhou Temple in Quanzhou is dedicated to Mazu, the ancient (pre-modern) Chinese god of the sea. With the growth of Quanzhou's harbor and the increase in Fujian's maritime merchant power, Mazu's status as a goddess of the sea was ascendant. Her status changed from Mazu to Tianhui (Queen of Heaven) and then to Tianhou (Empress of Heaven) according to the dynasties that granted the title. The status of Mazu was transformed from a local deity in Fujian and Zhejiang to a sea deity under centralized jurisdiction. The Tianhou Temple in Quanzhou provided not only geographical coordinates for the port of Quanzhou, a World Heritage Site, but also spiritual coordinates for voyagers. Many of the Mazu temples in Southeast and Northeast Asia are "branch spirits" of the Tianhou Temple in Quanzhou. A grand ceremony is still held every year on Mazu's birthday, and believers from across the region visit the Quanzhou Tianhou Temple with their Mazu statues. It serves as a connection between overseas Chinese and their kin.

## **Jisai (持衰) in Ancient Japan as seen from Early Modern Maritime Faith**

YAMAUCHI Shinji

Kobe Women's University

The early modern period of Japan (Edo era) provides numerous written records of seamen adrift at sea. When reading through them, we often encounter the religious custom of seamen cutting their hair (*kamimotodori* or tied hair) and praying to Gods and Buddha to save their lives when a storm caused their vessel to founder. In this report, I analyze this “cutting-hair prayer custom” and explore its meaning and historical origin dating back to ancient China. Then, changing course, I would like to discuss a custom called *jisai* and examine the meaning of the custom of not combing hair. It played a special role in seafaring going back to China, records of which can be found in the account of Wa in the part of “Encounters with Eastern Barbarians” section of the Book of Wei, the “Records of the Three Kingdoms” of the 3rd century.

## **Maritime Faith in Iki and Tsushima, and Yamato Court**

HORIE Kiyoshi

National Institute of Technology, Sasebo College

Iki and Tsushima link the Asian continent and Korean Peninsula with the Japanese archipelago. As such, they played an important role in ancient times, enabling the Yamato Court to receive political concepts and a variety of products from the Korean Peninsula and Chinese dynasties. To engage in either war or diplomacy, and to keep the trade of products and ideas flowing, the Yamato Court needed to maintain cooperative relations with the powerful clans ruling these islands and the maritime groups who sailed between the islands. However, from the standpoint of literature, there are few historical sources covering these islands from the 5th to 7th century, making it difficult to get a clear picture of the maritime faith held by the local clans and maritime people on

Iki and Tsushima Islands during the relevant era. The relations between their faith and the Yamato Court are similarly unclear. In this report, I will mainly talk about the lore included in the Chronicle of Emperor Kenzo of the “Nihon Shoki”, in which the Moon God of Iki and Sun God of Tsushima play key roles. These stories indicate that the Yamato Court subjugated the local leading clans and maritime people in Iki and Tsushima, gave the land of Kadono in Yamashiro (a newly developed area) to Iki's powerful clan as a place to enshrine the Moon God of Iki, and made Tsushima's powerful clan enshrine its imperial ancestor Takamimusuhi in Iware in Yamato, adjacent to the royal court. This is considered to have taken place during the reign of Emperor Keitai. Emperor Keitai also intervened militarily on the southern part of the Korean Peninsula, in cooperation with Baekje, in order to acquire the latest Chinese culture. He won over the powerful clans and maritime people of Iki and Tsushima to enable this. The leading clan of Tsushima, who had strong relations with Shilla, was especially urged to maintain strong ties with the imperial family.

## **Ancient Ritual Sites on the Islands of the Seto Inland Sea**

SEO Shuso

Hatsukaichi City Board of Education

When studying the ritual sites dotted across the islands of the Seto Inland Sea, we can roughly divide them into sites of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries and sites of the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries by examining the combinations of excavated remains. Of these, the former can be categorized into sub-types based on the existence or lack of steel products, steatite objects and clay pottery, and all can be assumed to have been derived from rituals with a common background. However, for the latter group, the rituals conducted on Itsukushima and other places are likely to have been different. It is likely that ancient mountain worship was mainly conducted at Itsukushima Shrine and Misen, the highest peak on the island, with the

ascetic training and beliefs of esoteric Buddhism. I would like to expand on this theme.

### **The Jike Site and Keta Shrine in Ancient Noto as a Boundary**

NAKANO Tomoyuki

Hakui City Board of Education

The Jike Site comprises ancient ritual ruins from mainly the eighth and ninth centuries, and is known for its excavated group of facilities and the variety of ritual relics associated with shrines and their rituals. Excavations have unearthed pottery with ink inscriptions of *kami* (deity), *miya* (shrine), *tsukasa* (office), *tsukasanotachi* (office building) and *miyanokuriya* (shrine kitchen), as well as a group of facilities considered to be a settlement of *kanbe* (people involved in rites for the *kami*) in the early eighth century, *miyanokuriya*, *mii* (well), *miyanotsukasanotachi* and a production area of the ninth century. These precious discoveries tell us how the organizations and groups supporting ancient shrines were structured. Furthermore, large-scale burnt soil remains indicating fires of grand scale, as well as the accumulated remains of earthenware and ritual utensils, were discovered nearby in a collective and concentrated

manner, indicating a possible ritual site.

These research results are highly consistent with the descriptions of Keta Shrine in ancient times found in the Six National Histories of Japan and other literature in terms of period and contents, and, therefore, may reveal a part of the state of nearby Keta Taisha Shrine, Ichinomiya (first rank shrine) of Noto Province, in ancient times. It is essential that we examine the ancient establishment of this local powerful shrine and its development in the Ichinomiya system in medieval Japan by alternately reviewing the archaeological results and literature.

The Hakui area was blessed with an environment that embraced new culture and technology gained through exchanges made across the Sea of Japan earlier than other areas due to its advantageous location. The Noto Peninsula, viewed from the ancient capital area, was a “boundary with another world” that linked to northeast and northern areas from Kashima harbor and to Balhae from Fukura harbor. It is therefore considered that Keta Shrine was valued as an important religious facility, the first-ranked shrine in Noto. In this report, I will outline the regional features of Noto related to exchanges in the Sea of Japan based on the results of studies of the Jike Site and Keta Shrine.

## 4. Summary of the Special Research Project Report

Preservation and Utilization Council of the sacred Island of Okinoshima and the Associated Sites in the Munakata Region, *Sacred island of Okinoshima and the Associated Sites in the Munakata Region Special Research Project Report*, 2023. (Japanese)

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Survey of related heritage sites in East Asia (Summary of inspection tours) ..... OHTAKA Hirokazu

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Sea routes in Japan-Korea negotiations during the Kofun period: Focusing on analysis of ancient Japanese materials from the south and west coast regions of the Korean Peninsula ..... TAKATA Kanta  
The Hata clan and the deities of Munakata: Seeking clues from the Hata-shi Honkei-cho ... TANAKA Fumio  
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Author profiles

# Maritime World Heritage from the perspective of seacrafts, seafaring technology and inter-island networks

AKIMICHI Tomoya

Director, Yamanashi Prefectural Fujisan World Heritage Center

## 《Abstract》

In the sea regions of East Asia, a variety of transoceanic activities have developed since the late Pleistocene and early Holocene periods. These cover a wide range of maritime activities between islands such as fishing, trades of commodities and tributes, intentional migration, invasion, exile, and accidental drifting. The success or failure of voyages was largely determined by natural factors such as ocean and tidal currents, prevailing seasonal winds, and typhoons as well as factors relating to the seacrafts technology and steering techniques. Inter-islands voyages between Japan and China conducted during the *Kentoshi* periods (632 – 894 AD), suggest changes in sea routes during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, due to the geopolitics in the area, and overall success rates of the voyages were fairly high. Even prior to the *Kentoshi* period, religious transactions prevailed in East Asian sea regions where the rituals to pray for the success of voyages were conducted extensively as clarified as evidences from various archaeological remains in Korean and the western Japan. The *Munakata* three goddesses, and the *funadama* (the female spirit of seacraft) represent the symbolic icons for the safety and security of seafaring. As the close relations among the Okinoshima World Heritage Site and relevant archaeological sites suggest, an inter-island maritime model, rather than a land-based concentric model, will provide much more useful means for the research and international cooperation.

Keywords: seafaring and seacraft, *funadama*, seafaring safety rituals, shell road, inter-island networks, maritime world heritage

## 《Profile》

Director-General, Yamanashi Prefectural Fujisan World Heritage Center, Professor Emeritus, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature

Specializes in ecological anthropology, marine ethnography, and ethnobiology.

Major publications include: *Crossing World Beyond Nature and Culture: Dialogue with Philippe Descola* (ed. Kyoto University Press, 2018), *Research and Materials Relating to Fishery Rights from the Meiji to Early Showa Period*, (Two vols., Rinsen Book Co., 2021), *Cultural History of Sacred Mountains*, (Bensei Publishing, 2023).

# Exchanges between ‘Wa’ (Japan) and ‘Baekje’ (Korea) as seen from the ritual sites of Okinoshima and Jungmak -dong

WOO Jae Pyoung

Professor Chungnam National University

## 《Abstract》

The background to the emergence of the Okinoshima ritual site appears to have been strongly influenced by the emergence of religious systems that accompanied the formation of the “Wa”(Japan) state. However, if we consider the geographical position of the Okinoshima ritual site, which could be said to be the gateway to the Korean Peninsula from Wa, it becomes imperative to also approach the issue not simply from the formation of religious systems, but also from the aspect of strengthening the long-distance seaborne economic trading systems. During the fourth to sixth centuries, namely the Kofun period in Wa, the single greatest challenge for the ruling elite was to secure a stable supply of strategic materials, such as iron, from overseas. Due to Goguryeo’s southern expansionist policy on the Korean Peninsula it is generally thought that there would also have been strict controls on the import of iron materials to Wa from Geumgwan-Gaya. The primary purpose of the voyage, which involved putting to sea on quasi-structural ships, trading vessels vulnerable to rough seas, loaded with Wa goods such as Japanese umbrella pine (*Sciadopitys verticillata*), was to head to the international port of Geumgwan-Gaya. It was a sea route fraught with danger and risk. In particular, if the Wa vessels loaded with strategic materials that had been purchased overseas, such as iron from Gaya, were to encounter difficulties or be lost at sea, the Wa political elites and merchant groups would also suffer devastating losses. There is no doubt that at that time, Wa poured every effort into ensuring the safe transport of strategic materials such as iron, which was also as a means of resisting the threat posed by Goguryeo. In the process of trading vessels plying the waters of the Genkai Sea, it is thought that there were diverse and varied efforts to protect the safety of those vessels. One particular area into which the political elites and merchant groups of Wa focused their attention during the fifth to sixth centuries was prayer to deities. The main purpose of such prayers was likely to have been to pray for the safe return of the trading vessels, loaded with strategic materials of great value, such as iron. The loss of a trading vessel could be said to have been a disaster that was to be avoided at all costs. In order to avert disaster for their ships it is thought that the political elites and merchant groups decided to hold grand-scale rituals on Okinoshima. Around the fifth century there was a trend that saw the ritual acts on Okinoshima further enhanced. This phenomenon could well have been due to the impact of the southern expansionist policies of Goguryeo on the Korean Peninsula at the time. Rituals similar in form to those conducted at the Okinoshima ritual site have also been confirmed at the Jungmak -dong ritual site of Baekje (Korea). This is a coastal ritual site located on the western coastal route, on the way from Wa to Gongju, the capital of Baekje at the time. Around the fifth to sixth centuries, at this coastal ritual site in addition to remains of Baekche-style rituals, traces of Wa-style open-air rituals have also been found, with stone-made copies of implements being offered. These traces of Wa-style rituals could be said to be similar in form to the ritual sites of Okinoshima. They very likely document how, at a time when the threat from Goguryeo was increasing, protecting the safety of Wa trading vessels plying the waters along the western coast of Baekje was a strategic goal for both countries. Accordingly, the Okinoshima ritual site and the Jungmak -dong ritual site can be said to be the most valuable religious heritage for understanding the international political situation and trading environment that Wa and Baekje faced at that time.

Keywords: Okinoshima ritual site, Jungmak-dong ritual site, iron, strategic materials, stone-made copies, semi-structured vessels, Wakoku, Baekje, Goguryeo, Geumgwan-Gaya

## 《Profile》

Professor, Department of Archaeology, Chungnam National University, Korea

Specializes in archaeology, political history of the Kofun period, and the history of exchange between Japan and Korea.

Major publications include: “Tomb System of the Daeseong-dong Tumuli Group in Gimhae, Korea and the Beginning of the Kofun Period in Japan,” *Machikaneyama Archaeological Papers*, (Osaka University, 2005), *Research into Articles Detailing Relations with Korea in the Nihon Shoki I-III*, (Co-editor, Isshi Publishing, 2002-2004), *Early Korea - Japan Interactions* (2018, Harvard University, Korea Institute, co-editor).

# **Sea routes in Japan-Korea negotiations during the Kofun period: Focusing on analysis of ancient Japanese materials from the south and west coast regions of the Korean Peninsula**

TAKATA Kanta

Associate Professor, National Museums of Japanese History

## 《Abstract》

During the Kofun period, Wa (Japanese) society actively accepted and incorporated diverse culture from the Korean Peninsula, making it a part of their own culture. The people of Wa in those days were active seafarers, interacting with people on the Korean Peninsula from Baekje, Silla, Gaya, and the Yeongsan River basin. Archaeological remains that are noteworthy in relation to the sea routes that were traversed from Wa to the Yeongsan River basin and Baekje, are the “Wa-style burial mounds” constructed in the southern and western coastal regions of the Korean Peninsula in the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Located overlooking the sea, these tumuli generally adopt the tomb system seen in small and medium-sized kofun tumuli in the northern Kyushu region. It is therefore hypothesized that the persons buried in these tombs were not native to the locality, but rather of a different origin, and could realistically be the tombs of people from Wa, who engaged in negotiations with Baekje and the Yeongsan River basin region. Furthermore, given that ruins of settlements related to ports of call are scattered along the western and southern coasts of the Korean Peninsula, it is possible to recreate the routes by following the ports of call.

At that time, a network of relationships, which could be referred to as a regional network existed along the western and southern coastal regions, involving the exchange of goods, technology, information, and ritual methods. It is thought that delegations from Wa, who were sailing to the Yeongsan River basin and Baekje, utilized these networks to interact with local groups in ports of call, sometimes sharing living quarters for short periods of time as a means of facilitating coastal navigation. In the course of these voyages invariably some seafarers from Wa would die, and it was for such persons for whom the “Wa-style burial mounds” were constructed. Rituals to pray for safety of passage would also be conducted, and it would appear that situations arose in which some of the Wa seafarers would settle on the Korean Peninsula.

Keywords: History of Japan-Korea relations, Kofun period, Wa-style burial mounds, ritual sites, stone-made copies

## 《Profile》

Associate Professor, National Museum of Japanese History, Associate Professor, Graduate University for Advanced Studies SOKENDAI

Specializes in archaeology, and the history of pre-historic and ancient Japan-Korea relations.

Major publications include: *Japan-Korea Relations in the Kofun Period*, (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2014), *Japan (Wa) as Seen from Beyond the Sea*, (Kodansha Gendaishinsho, 2017), “Unusual” Burial Mounds: Keyhole-shaped Tumuli on the Korean Peninsula, (Kadokawa Shoten, 2019).

# The Hata clan and the deities of Munakata: Seeking clues from the Hata-shi Honkei-cho

TANAKA Fumio  
Professor, Waseda University

## 《Abstract》

The “Hata-shi Honkei-cho” as described in the *Honchō Gatsuryō*, a guide to annual rituals in the first half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, records that the Hata clan invited and enshrined “Tsukushi Munakata Nakatsu-no-Okami” at Matsunoo Shrine (Matsuo-sha) in Yamashiro Province. Using clues described in the “Hata-shi Honkei-cho,” this paper examines the background and circumstances that led the Hata clan, a migratory clan based in Yamashiro, to dedicate a shrine to the deities of Munakata. The results of research show that the Hata clan enshrined “Tsukushi Munakata Nakatsu-no-Okami” at Yamashiro in 608, a deity thought to be the same as the female deity of Oshima Island. The background to this is thought to be the influence exerted by the activities of the Hata clan in Buzen relating to the management of the *Miyake* fief system, and the influence of external military activities undertaken on royal authority in northern Kyushu around the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, which developed on the basis of the *Miyake* system. These facts indicate that the *Miyake* system and the military activities undertaken on royal authority based on the *Miyake* system in Tsukushi, which was the central hub for foreign interactions by the royal house of Wa, brought about significant changes in local social relations and beliefs, and that belief in Oshima was important in ancient maritime traffic and not limited exclusively to the Okinoshima route.

Keywords: *Honchō Gatsuryō*, *Hata-shi Honkei-chō*, Hata clan, *Minuma-no-kimi*, Matsunoo Shrine, *Tsukushi Munakata Nakatsu-no-Okami*, *Himekoso*, *Miyake* fief system

## 《Profile》

Professor, Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Waseda University  
Specializes in Japanese ancient history.

Major publications include: *Foreigners and the Control of Ethnic Peoples in Ancient Japan*, (Azekura Shobo, 1997), *Ancient Archipelagic International Trade*, (Kadokawa Sensho, 2016), *Foreign Visitors and Naturalized Citizens*, (Kadokawa Sensho, 2019).

# **The significance of ancient rituals on Okinoshima in Munakata region and their transformation through to the medieval period: From the perspective of human cognitive functions and environmental change**

SASO Mamoru

Professor, Kokugakuin University

## 《Abstract》

This paper reexamines the ancient rituals and perceptions of deities in Munakata and considers the transformation that took place through the years to the medieval period. The ancient Okinoshima rituals have been restored using a huge rock from the ritual site as a “*Iwakura* (the belief in rocks as Yorishiro containing Kami in ancient Shinto).” However, as demonstrated in cognitive religious studies of recent years, based on the human cognitive function that seeks to intuitively assign the actor (deity) a specific function, it can be inferred that the basis for deific perceptions was that deities enshrined at Okitsu-miya (Okinoshima) and Nakatsu-miya (Oshima) functioned as maritime objects of navigation, while that at Hetsu-miya (mouth of Tsurikawa River) functioned as a deity overseeing the lagoon that was suitable as a harbor. In particular, in the case of Okinoshima the function of Mt. Ichinotake, the highest point on the island which can be viewed from the sea, was of particular importance, and the possibility can be suggested that it was the subject of rituals. From around the latter half of seventh century these ancient rituals changed to a form in which Sue ware was used as vessels for offerings of food to the deities, and steatite objects were used as offerings. The background to this change was the establishment of Munakata-gun in Shin-gun, and the formation and establishment of Kanbe settlements based on the traditional villages there. It is thought that the divine character of the three female deities of Munakata as seen in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* was established in parallel with the compilation of those historical chronicles. The perceptions of the divinity and rituals relating to the three female deities of Munakata transformed from the late 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries in response to domestic and international tensions and changes in the environment. The Tengyo Rebellion led to the conferral of Bodhisattva status on the Munakata deities, and their rituals took on a more pronounced Buddhist character. Also, from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards beach ridge were formed at the mouth of the Tsurikawa River, and it is thought that this resulted in the river mouth and the lagoon facing Hetsu-miya losing their functionality as a port area. Conversely the port functions of Tsuyazaki tidal flats to the west of Hetsu-miya became more established, coming to serve as a hub for trade between Japan and the Song Dynasty, in which the Munakata clan, Daiguji of Munakata Taisha, was involved. In this process, the idea of Buddhist invocations was adapted for the three female deities of Munakata, and at Hetsu-miya a shrine precinct landscape was established in which the three deities were enshrined together, incorporating the deities of Okitsu-miya and Nakatsu-miya. In particular the Tei-ichi-gu of Hetsu-miya was named Soja-Sansho (collective shrine). On the other hand, Okitsu-miya (Okinoshima) was removed from the main maritime route for Japan-Song Dynasty trade, becoming a sacred sanctuary symbolizing the presence of a deity since ancient times, a belief that would be passed down to subsequent generations.

Keywords: Workings of the natural environment, human cognitive functions, view of the divine, rituals and ritual tools, environmental change, festival of the three goddesses, Japan-Song Dynasty trade

## 《Profile》

Professor, Faculty of Shinto Studies, Kokugakuin University, Director of Kokugakuin University Museum. Specializes in Japanese archaeology and the history of Japanese religion.

Major publications include: *Archaeology of Shinto, Buddhist and Village Landscapes*, (Kobundo, 2005), *Archaeology of Ancient Japanese Rituals*, (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2012), *Archaeology of God and the Deceased*, (Yoshikawa Kobunkan 2016).

## Religious beliefs prior to Mazu: With a focus on the Sizhou Dashi

WANG Haiyan

Professor, Zhejiang University

### 《Abstract》

Chinese maritime and navigational-related beliefs were based on indigenous beliefs in distinct and unique sea gods, and while worshipping such Jinnisou (Buddhist thaumaturge monk), people also accepted Buddhist seafaring and navigational beliefs such as belief in the Dragon King of the Sea and the Kannon (Avalokitesvara). The belief in Sangha emerged in Sizhou, a strategic location for waterborne transportation, and worshipped Sangha, a venerated monk of the Tang Dynasty, as a deity or incarnation of the Kannon (Avalokitesvara). This belief in Sangha spread widely from the Tang Dynasty capital to many regions, from the imperial court down to the common people. When belief in Sangha permeated coastal regions such as Tengchow (Deng Prefecture), the local population were not immediately inclined to afford the new belief the status of a sea god, due to pre-existing uniquely local beliefs relating to seafaring and navigation. In the folk beliefs of the Song Dynasty, along with prayers for the prosperity of waterborne transportation, the monk Sangha, who was regarded as the guardian deity of inland water transportation, was accorded elements similar to those of the Dragon King and positioned as a sea god, and many seafarers and traders worshipped Sangha as a guardian deity of maritime navigation, under the honorific title of Sizhou Daishi (the Buddhist Thaumaturge Sangha). The development and spread of belief in Sangha, aka the Buddhist Thaumaturge Sangha, reflects a fusion of individual beliefs with the teachings of Buddhism in China.

Keywords: Maritime and navigational beliefs, Sizhou Daishi, monk Sangha, Jinnisou (Buddhist thaumaturge monk), Kannon

## **Maritime navigation, exchange and religion in ancient East Asia: Particularly from the perspective of navigation and exchange**

SATO Makoto

**Chairperson**

Professor Emeritus, The University of Tokyo

### 《Abstract》

I think that there may have been little inclination among young researchers to engage in research about Munakata and Okinoshima more than 50 years after the excavation of the sites had taken place.

However, following the inscription of the sites as World Heritage Site and the implementation of this special research project, various new research outcomes have been achieved. Although the original excavation survey undoubtedly reported outstanding fine results, after the passage of several decades I think that we are finally seeing a new academic revival and shining a spotlight on the sites once more. I believe that through these efforts we have been able to acquire a great deal of new knowledge and make new discoveries.

### 《Profile》

Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo. Committee chairman of the Expert Meeting of “Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region”

Specializes in the ancient history of Japan.

Major publications include: *Ancient Japanese Imperial Capitals and Mokkan* (wooden tablets), (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1997), *Ancient History of Excavated Materials*, (University of Tokyo Press, 2002), *Ancient Local Government Administrations and Society*, (Yamakawa Shuppansha, Japanese History Libretto, 2007), *Ancient History of Japan 6 Ancient Archipelago* (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1997).

# **The Historical Trajectory of the Functions of the Okinoshima Ritual: An Examination of Maritime Navigation, Exchange, and Religion in Ancient East Asia Through the Lens of Rituals and Religious Beliefs**

MIZOGUCHI Koji

**Chairperson**

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## 《Abstract》

Aiming to elucidate the actual conditions of rituals conducted on Okinoshima, Munakata and the historical, cultural, and natural environmental backgrounds and contexts surrounding these rituals, the Special Research Project considered various perspectives, encompassing maritime navigation in East Asia, interregional exchange and beliefs and rituals, and maritime beliefs, and has resulted in significant outcomes. This paper attempts to summarize the project as a whole by referring to the specific results of individual studies conducted under the auspices of the project, and discussing the following two points related mainly to rituals and beliefs.

1) Why were large-scale ritual activities led by the central government continued for such a long period on Okinoshima from the late 4th century to the end of the 9th century?

2) What were the specific purposes and functions of rituals on Okinoshima? Why and how did they change?

Given the above, this paper assumes that the “function” of such ritual practices and religions was “to formalize, segmentalize, and then process various undefined, indeterminate risks that may conspire to make it difficult to continue various activities, interactions, and communications related to the survival and reproduction of society, and in so doing incorporate the possibility of responding to such risks into the technological systems of social and cultural reproduction, while at the same time enabling the continuation of such activities, interactions, and communications when such risks actually materialized.” In that context, Okinoshima was identified as a “place for processing specific groups of risks.” Based on this recognition, I attempt to answer the above two questions by examining the specific content of the various risk groups, the actors responsible for processing such risks, and the ways in which they changed and how interactions between actors changed.

Keywords: Risk, rituals, personal gods, network horizon, periphery, Wa, Japan

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