

Earthenware roof-tiles and tile-ends are evidence that the Koguryo decorated their palaces and temples in Chinese style with tiles bearing impressed decoration. Koguryo tiles are decorated with lotus flowers and demon masks, the latter to ward off evil spirits. The decoration is generally in higher relief and more vigorous than that on Paekche or Silla roof-tiles.

Evidence of the adoption of Buddhism by Koguryo in the fourth century AD is provided by the remains of temples and some extant sculptures (see section on Buddhist sculpture in the Three Kingdoms, below). A ceramic Buddhist figure and clay models for bronze figures were found near Pyongyang; and three fifth-century Buddhist temple sites have been excavated near the city, one of which had a large octagonal pagoda in the centre.¹²

Paekche

The date of the founding of the kingdom of Paekche is not certain, although the *Samguk sagi* puts it at 18 BC. It developed out of one of the walled-town states in Mahan territory and by AD 246 was strong enough to repel the Chinese commandery of Taebang. By that time, the eighth Paekche king, Koi (reigned 234–86), was on the throne. This King Koi is probably the same person as Kui, whom Paekche later regarded as its founding figure and honoured in ceremonies four times a year. It is recorded that under King Koi sixteen grades of official rank were created, together with an official dress code, and that anti-corruption measures were introduced. Later, under the warrior king Kun Chogo (reigned 346–75), Paekche destroyed Mahan in the south and attacked Koguryo in the north, opening relations with the Eastern Jin in south China and with the Wa in Japan. It was also under King Kun Chogo that the history of Paekche, the *Sogi* (later destroyed), was completed and that queens began to be chosen exclusively from the Chin family. Very soon after this, under King Chimnyu (reigned 384–5), Paekche adopted the Buddhist faith. In 433 Paekche allied with Silla in order to counter the Koguryo threat, and in 475, after Koguryo expansion forced it to move its capital south to Ungjin (present-day Kongju, on the Kum river), the Paekche king, Tongsong, married into the Silla royal family. Paekche then experienced a period of strong rule under kings Tongsong (reigned 479–501), Muryong (reigned 501–23) and Song (reigned 523–54). Song moved the capital yet further south, to the more favourable location of Sabi (present-day Puyo), as well as encouraging the spread of Buddhism and strengthening Paekche's ties with the Chinese Southern Dynasties. Paekche's alliance with Silla was, however, to come to an abrupt end when Silla seized the territories around the Han river which Paekche had won back from Koguryo. King Song was killed in battle and Paekche then allied with Koguryo, its former enemy.¹³

Tombs

Of the Three Kingdoms, Paekche is generally regarded as embodying the greatest artistic refinement and sophistication. Unfortunately, relatively little remains of its buildings or tomb goods, the result of destruction and plunder in the many battles with Koguryo, Silla and ultimately Tang China, which eventually aided Silla in its unification of the peninsula. The construction of Paekche horizontal chamber tombs, moreover, facilitated tomb robbery. However, the burial customs were not uniform over the whole of Paekche and several different types of tomb were employed. Jar-coffins were still used in some areas in the south, some being concentrated in cemeteries with square or keyhole-shaped mounds.

show Koguryo influence, such as those decorated with a bird motif within a circle or a winged full-face monster, while others, such as those decorated with swirling flames or mountainous landscapes, are influenced by southern China. Roof-tiles are usually decorated with six- or eight-petalled lotus blossoms, the petals being broad and fleshy and the tips upturned. Some fragments with a yellowish-green glaze have been found at the Miruk temple site.²⁵

Kaya

Kaya or Karak emerged along the lower reaches of the Nakdong river, the original area of Pyonhan's twelve states. These developed into the six states which made up Kaya, the largest being Taekaya or Great Kaya, in the region of Koryong in northwest Kyongsang province. Ponkaya or Original Kaya occupied the Kimhae area at the mouth of the Nakdong river. Ponkaya carried out much maritime trade with the Wa in Japan, trading particularly in iron, which was produced in Kaya and not in Japan. Although many Japanese historians claim, on the basis of the *Nihon shoki*, that Kaya was a Japanese colony, Egami's horse-rider theory also has some adherents. This theory was originally propounded by

Kita Teikichi and suggests that the earliest Japanese state, Yamato, was

founded by horse-riding invaders from the Eurasian steppe, who swept through the Korean peninsula to Japan in the fourth century, conquering the lands they passed through.²⁶ It has been opposed on various grounds, including that of the absence of archaeological evidence in southern Korea for horse-riders, but recent excavations have produced considerable amounts of iron armour, for both men and horses, at Kaya sites such as Chisan-dong, Imdang-dong, Choyong-dong, Pan'gyeje, Pokchon-dong (fig. 29), Taesong-dong, Wolsan-ri and Yangdong-ri. The armour found at these sites shows similarities to that depicted in Koguryo wall-paintings, featuring, for example, the Mongolian-type helmet, which suggests that Kaya armour developed from a Koguryo prototype. It may be that the horse-riders who crossed over to Japan and brought about a great change in burial customs by introducing tumulus building, will in the future be proved to have come from Kaya.²⁷

Kaya was always caught between Paekche and Silla and suffered persistent harassment until it was eventually conquered by Silla, first Ponkaya in 532 and then Taekaya in 562. All the other smaller states in the Kaya federation endured the same fate. Silla culture was very much affected by the absorption of Kaya and in some aspects, such as tomb pottery, it is not easy to differentiate between the two.

29. Iron horse-armour
excavated from Tomb
10.11 at Pokchon-dong,
Pusan. Kaya, 5th century AD.
Length: 51.6 cm.





Tombs

Kaya burials consisted of rectangular or oval pit graves excavated into hillsides, mounded tombs with rectangular stone-lined pits, usually found on hill slopes (starting from around AD 300) and later stone chamber tombs (450–570). Many large chamber tombs with sacrificial burials have been found. After the beginning of the sixth century, tombs were constructed with horizontal entrances. Some, of higher status, had separate chambers for burial goods. These comprise large amounts of tomb pottery (figs 30 and 31), armour, horse-trappings, gold and gilt-bronze jewellery and bronze vessels. Four tombs at Chisan-dong revealed horse-trappings which included saddle-parts, stirrups, buckles, bits and bells as well as a suit of iron armour and a helmet, iron swords and arrow-heads. Also buried were a gilt-bronze crown with a very wide central upright, similar to Paekche crowns, necklaces of round beads and curved kogok, tomb pottery and food offerings of fish, bird and crab. Finds at Pokchon-dong in Pusan from tombs dated from around AD 300 onwards also include iron armour – cuirasses, helmets, horse-masks (see fig. 29) and iron weapons. The presence of the earliest riveted cuirass among these finds, as opposed to thonged armour, makes them significant. It is conjectured that riveting therefore spread from fourth-century Korea to fifth-century Japan.²⁸ Numerous examples of iron armour have been excavated recently from other Kaya tombs, suggesting a society to which horse-riding warfare was central.²⁹ Excavation of two of the five large tomb mounds

30. Group of *kobae* or stem-cups buried in rows at Sungsan-dong, near Koryong, evidence of the large numbers of the most commonly shaped tomb vessels buried in one tomb, often containing food or drink for the after-life. Kaya, 5th–6th century AD.



31. Stoneware spouted funerary cup in the shape of a duck, with combed and incised decoration of wings and feathers. Kaya, 5th–6th century AD. Ht: 16.5 cm.

belonging to the royal family of Taekaya situated at Koryong provided evidence of the family's wealth and power, despite the relatively small size of a Kaya state. This wealth was probably based on the rich iron ore deposits and the fertile soil. Tomb no. 44 contained thirty-five burial pits, with three large pits arranged in a T-shape and surrounded by all the other subsidiary pits. Since they were all constructed and covered at the same time, this tomb is thought to provide evidence that the over thirty people interred in the subsidiary pits were forcibly buried with the king as human sacrifices.³⁰

Tomb pottery was placed in large quantities in Kaya tombs, for example at Taesongdong, in a group of graves dating from the mid-fourth to early fifth centuries. Here 241 ceramic vessels were found in Tomb no. 39, stacked in rows at the head and foot of the body. (Sixteen suits of armour were also found at this site.) It is thought that these vessels were used in shamanistic burial rites, where they would have contained ritual food and wine. Sometimes the remains of the offerings have been found. The most common type of pottery vessel found in Kaya tombs is the stem-cup, with rectangular pierced decoration on the stand and incised and combed decoration on the lid (see fig. 30). This type of vessel was also common in Silla. Other types include large jars with round bases, tall stands also with pierced decoration and long-necked jars on small pierced stands. Impressed mat- or lattice-patterned jars of an earlier type are also sometimes found. The most elaborate Kaya tomb pots were made in shapes such as ducks (see fig. 31), shoes, boats, houses and

mounted armed warriors, as well as horn-shaped rhyton cups which suggest contact with Western Asia, an assumption which is strengthened by the discovery at Taesong-dong of a Scythian or Northern-type bronze jar, 25 cm (10 in) high. Nelson suggests that this contact may have been the result of sea trade.³¹

Although it is difficult to differentiate between some Kaya and Silla tomb wares, in general Kaya pieces are characterized by a more rounded profile and an inward-curving stand, as opposed to the straighter Silla profile. The technology of Three Kingdoms pottery has been researched by Tite, Barnes and others. Scientific analysis of sherds shows that the clay of which they were made can be classed as stoneware clay.³² Already sloping kilns had been introduced, and there is no doubt that the development of stoneware technology was the result of contacts with China, probably through the Han commanderies in the north. The development of the high temperatures associated with the production of stoneware is also linked with the production of iron at this time.³³

Kaya stoneware with characteristic shapes and incised, pierced and combed decoration, found in a Yamato tomb of the early fifth century, provides evidence that it was exported to Japan at this time, before the technique for producing high-fired stoneware had been introduced there by Korean potters (a development which was to result in the production of Japanese *sueki* ware in the fourth–fifth century).³⁴

Other interesting examples of Kaya tomb art and artefacts include a mural painting discovered in a tomb at Koa-dong in Koryong, consisting of lotus flowers and cloud designs in red, green and brown. The date of this tomb is uncertain but the motifs would suggest a Buddhist connection. Two gilt-bronze crowns with shamanistic upright tree and antler-shaped projections have been found at Pisan-dong near Taegu, similar to early Silla gold crowns (see section on Silla metalware, below).

Silla

The Silla kingdom evolved out of Saro, one of the seventy-eight walled-town states of Samhan. Saro consisted of six villages or clan communities, according to the *Samguk yusa*, and its leaders all came from the Pak, Sok and Kim families. The Korean terms used to describe the rulers of Saro (early Silla) varied, but one, 'chachaung', meant shaman or priest, showing that rulers at this time probably also acted as shamans. The title 'Maripkan', a native Korean word meaning 'ridge' or 'elevation', was adopted by King Naemul (reigned 356–402) and from that time his Kim family dominated the succession. The Chinese title 'wang', meaning 'king', was not adopted until the sixth century. In the latter part of the fifth century the six clan communities were organized into administrative districts, as part of the development of a centralized authority. Post stations were set up and markets established in the capital. Although Silla was harrassed by Koguryo and concluded an alliance with Paekche in 433, its relatively isolated position meant it was largely left alone, separated from the rest of the peninsula by mountains. Under King Chijung (reigned 500–514), ploughing by oxen and irrigation works were introduced, bringing about a great increase in agricultural production. A law code was promulgated in 520, instituting the 'bone-rank' system, and Buddhism was officially adopted by 535, considerably later than in the other kingdoms.

The 'bone-rank' system (*kolpum*) was a kind of caste system, whereby every member of society was graded according to their hereditary blood line or 'bone-rank'. The top rank