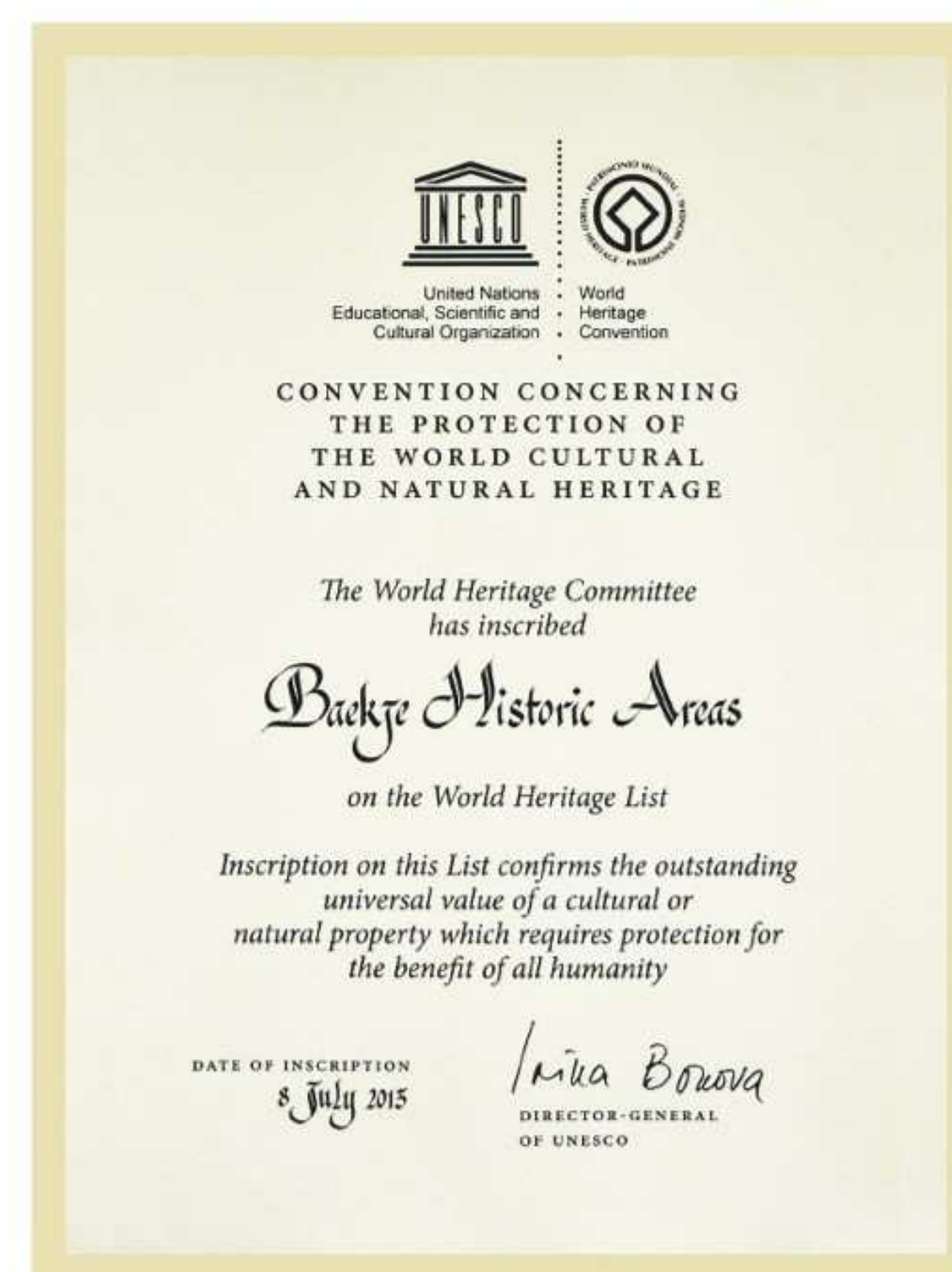


A Certificate of Inscription of
Baekje Historic Areas
on the UNESCO World Heritage List



In recognition of their outstanding universal value,
the Baekje Historic Areas were collectively
designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site at the
39th session of the World Heritage Committee on
July 8, 2015 in Bonn, Germany, making them
Korea's 12th property inscribed on the World
Heritage List.

 Baekje World Heritage Center



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 Baekje World Heritage Center

English

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Baekje Historic Areas



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Baekje Historic Areas

Criterion for inscription of Baekje Historic Areas on the World Heritage List

■ **Criteria (ii)** : to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
⇒ Baekje Historic Areas show how Baekje developed architectural technology and spread Buddhism through interchange between ancient kingdoms in Korea, China, and Japan.

■ **Criteria (iii)** : to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
⇒ The location of the capital, Buddhist temples, fortresses and other important buildings, ancient tombs, and stone pagodas of the Baekje Historic Areas all bespeak of the distinguished history, unique religion and beliefs about the afterlife, advanced architectural technology, and artistic beauty of the Baekje Kingdom and attest to the glory of Baekje at its height.

The Baekje Historic Areas are eight archaeological sites that are closely associated with the successive capitals of the Baekje kingdom, from Ungjin (Gongju today) and to Sabi (Buyeo and Iksan today) during the Three Kingdoms period. They include Gongsanseong Fortress and Royal Tombs in Songsan-ri in Gongju dating to the Ungjin Period; Archaeological Site in Gwanbuk-ri and Busosanseong Fortress, Jeongnimsa Temple Site, Royal Tombs in Neungsan-ri, and Naseong City Wall in Buyeo dating to the Sabi Period; and Archaeological Site in Wanggung-ri and Mireuksa Temple Site in Iksan dating to the Late Sabi Period.

These eight historic sites in Gongju, Buyeo, and Iksan located in the mid-western part of the Korean Peninsula were at the center of active exchange in East Asia between China, Baekje, and Japan. It was through such exchange that Baekje spread Buddhism and developed art and architecture.



Gongsanseong Fortress

Historic Site No. 12

Gongsanseong Fortress was both a royal palace and a defensive facility. It was well located for defense as the Geumgang River flowed by to the north and its walls ran along the ridges and valleys of Mt. Gongsan to the east, west, and south. Gongsanseong Fortress was structurally unique in that it was also a royal palace, and it remained an important location even after the Baekje period.



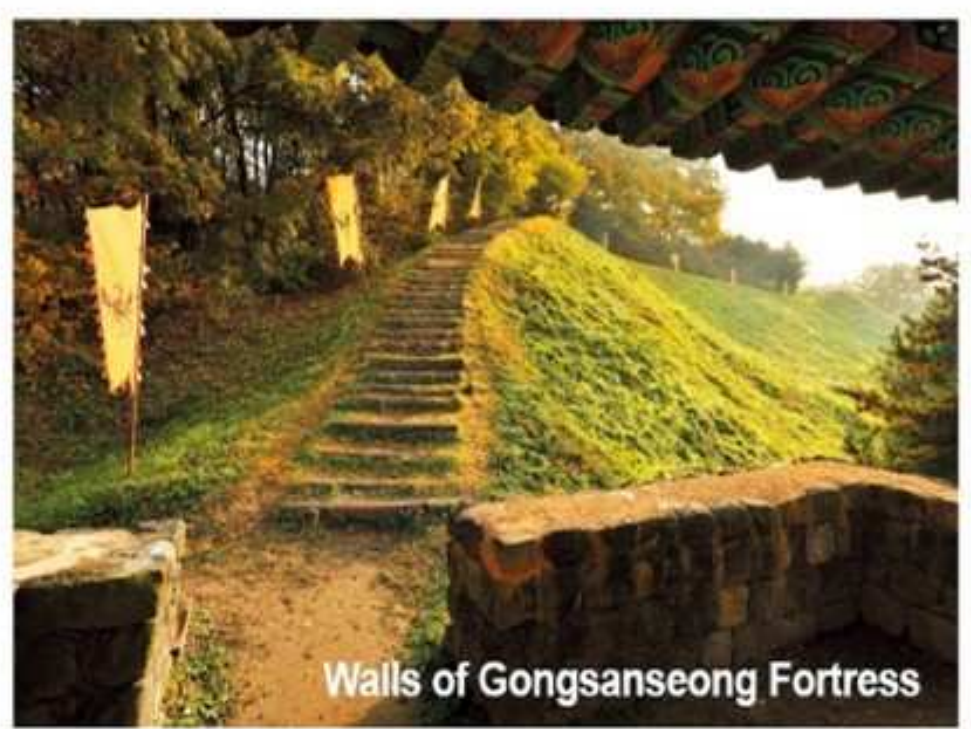
TIP Climb up Gongsanseong Pavilion and enjoy the beautiful sweeping view of the Geumgang River and Gongsanseong Fortress below.

Royal Palace Site

The site of the royal palace is at the highest point within the fortress. It has several building sites and a pond. Some of the buildings had columns implanted in the ground and were of an architectural style used only for very important buildings. Roof tiles of a building were also discovered.

Site of Ancillary Facilities of the Royal Palace

Annex buildings that provided necessities for the royal household during the Baekje period were located on the wide flat space within the fortress. Excavation of this space unearthed dozens of building sites and roads, embankments, a drainage system, workshop sites, and reservoirs.



Gongsanseong Fortress Walls

The walls of Gongsanseong Fortress stretch for 2.6 kilometers. Some sections are of stone and others are earthen. Most of the stone sections of the walls remaining today date to the Joseon period (1392-1910). Below the stone walls are earthen ramparts built during the Baekje period.

TIP Feel the history of Baekje by taking a walk along the walls of Gongsanseong Fortress.

Royal Tombs in Songsan-ri

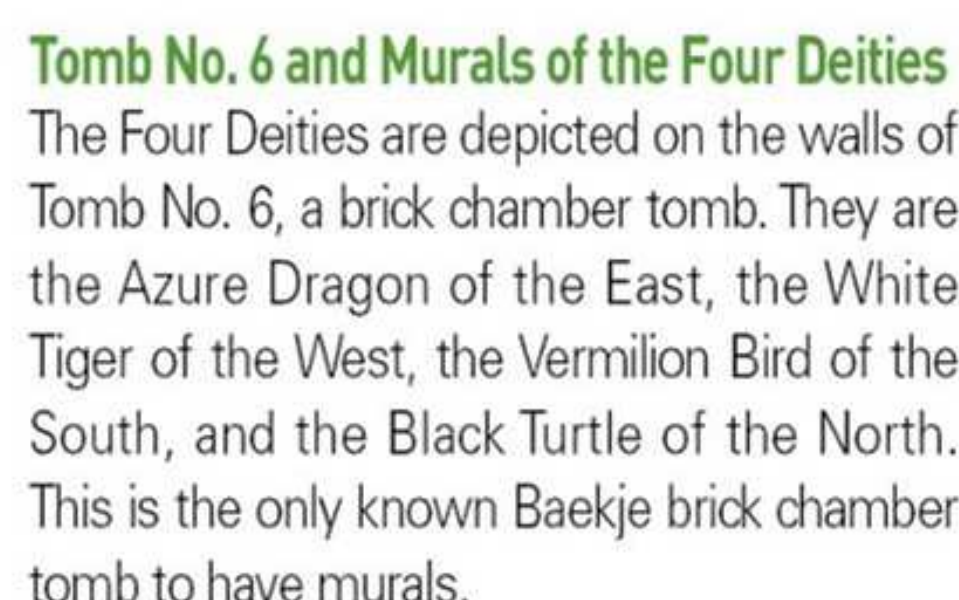
Historic Site No. 13

The royal tombs in Songsan-ri dating to the Ungjin Period are of two types: a stone chamber tomb with a corridor and a brick chamber tomb. The most famous is the tomb of King Muryeong, the 25th monarch of Baekje (501-523). Tombs No. 1 to No. 5 are stone chamber tombs with a corridor and domed ceiling. They are the traditional type of Baekje tombs. Tomb No. 6 and the Tomb of King Muryeong are brick chamber tombs with a vaulted ceiling, a type of tomb that was common in China at the time, which suggests that Baekje actively adopted Chinese culture during the Ungjin Period.



Discovery of King Muryeong's Tomb

Of the tombs dating to the Baekje period, the tomb of King Muryeong is of the greatest importance as it was completely untouched by grave robbers. Two granite epitaph plaques from the tomb of King Muryeong (National Treasure No. 163) tell us much about the life of King Muryeong and indicate that he was buried in 525. His tomb housed more than 4,600 artifacts, yielding a great wealth of information on Baekje society and culture.



TIP Find the Murals of the Four Deities of Tomb No. 6 in the exhibition hall of models of the Royal Tombs in Songsan-ri.

Archaeological Site in Wanggung-ri

Historic Site No. 408

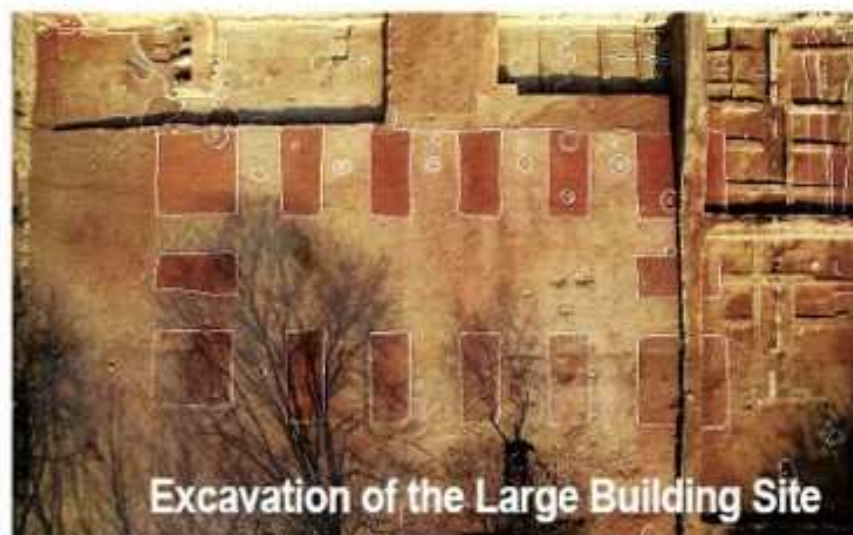
During the Sabi Period, a secondary capital was created in Iksan to facilitate the functioning of the capital city of Sabi, and a detached palace was built there. Archaeological research revealed diverse facilities for the royal palace inside the rectangular palace walls. Buildings for rituals and political affairs were located in the south of the palace complex and the garden in the north.



TIP Take a walk along the palace wall of the Archaeological Site in Wanggung-ri.

Large Building Site

The building is believed to have been the main hall of the palace. It was 35 meters long and 18 meters wide. The site of a building of almost the same size and structure as this one was discovered at the Archaeological Site in Gwanbuk-ri, Buyeo.



Living Facilities

Three ancient toilets were discovered on this site. No other such discovery has ever been made in Korea. These toilets were used by court ladies living in the palace and government officials. Analysis of microorganisms from the toilets tells us very much about the Baekje diet.



Garden

In the northern area of the palace is a garden dating to the Baekje period. This is the only Baekje garden extant. Oddly-shaped rocks brought from China and diverse garden facilities are representative of the lush gardens of the late Baekje period. A garden discovered at a historic site in Wanggung-ri evidences Chinese influence, which eventually spread to Japan.

Five-story Stone Pagoda in Wanggung-ri

- National Treasure No. 289
The Archaeological Site in Wanggung-ri was initially a royal palace. It became a Buddhist temple in the 7th century. The pagoda may have been erected during the Baekje period or afterwards, but it clearly shows that the basic features of Baekje stone pagodas were passed on to later generations.



Baekje World Heritage Center

Archaeological Site in Gwanbuk-ri and Busosanseong Fortress

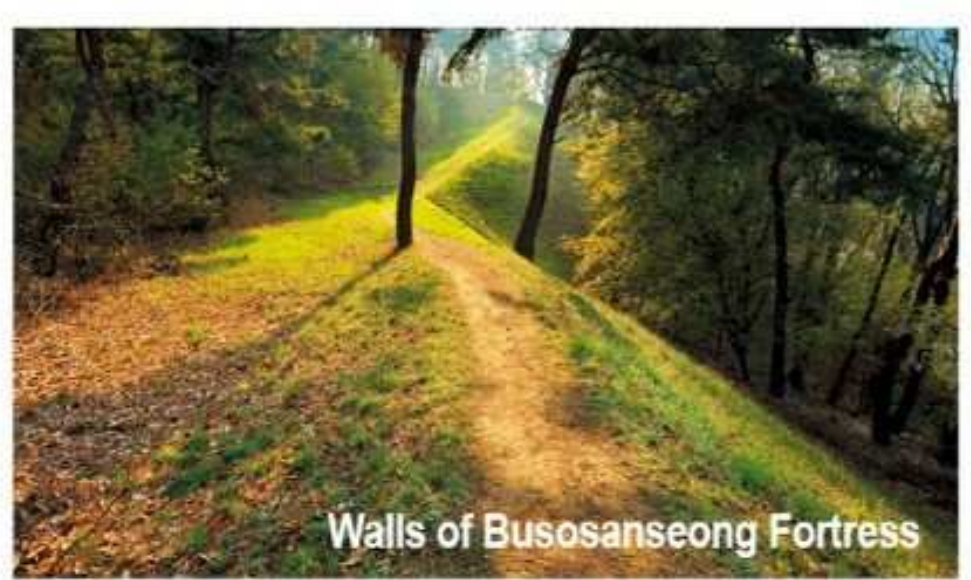
Historic Site No. 428, Historic Site No. 5

During the Sabi Period, Baekje settled in the plains bordered by the Geumgang River flowing by to the north like an enormous arch. A new palace was built at the foot of Mt. Busosan in the north of Sabi (Buyeo today). The Archaeological Site in Gwanbuk-ri as we see it today is believed to have been a royal palace. Mt. Busosan behind the palace was a garden frequently visited by the king. Busosanseong Fortress served as a refuge in times of emergency. Its earthen walls were built along the mountain summit and ridges. They were built by piling up a layer of earth, compressing the earth with a ram or stamp, and then adding more layers of earth on top in the same manner.



Archaeological Site in Gwanbuk-ri, Royal Palace during the Sabi Period

On the Archaeological Site in Gwanbuk-ri are traces of facilities of a royal palace including a large building site, underground storage facilities, a pond, and roads. The huge scale (35m long and 18.5m wide) of the large building site suggests that the building was a main hall of the palace, the most important part of the palace. A building site of almost identical size and structure was found at the Archaeological Site in Wanggung-ri, Iksan.



Busosanseong Fortress
Busosanseong Fortress enclosed a royal palace garden and served as a refuge in times of emergency during the Sabi period. Its earthen walls still stand. This fortress is home to the legend of Nakхваam cliffs ("cliff of falling flowers") and Goransa Temple, and traces of Baekje are found all over the fortress.

TIP Look up at Busosanseong Fortress from a yellow sailboat on the Baengmagang River.

Jeongnimsa Temple Site

Historic Site No. 301

Jeongnimsa Temple was built at the center of Sabi, the capital city of Baekje, and was one of the oldest temples in the heart of any city in East Asia. A stone pagoda towering 8.3 meters still stands on the site. Excavation revealed sites of the main hall, lecture hall, and monks' dormitories, and they evince the unique temple architecture of Baekje, which engendered three jewels of Buddhism: Buddha, Dharma (his teachings), and Sangha, the community of those who followed Buddha's teachings. Baekje temples had a pagoda and a main hall laid out on an axis, and Jeongnimsa was no exception. This tradition persisted into the Goryeo dynasty.



Five-story Stone Pagoda of Jeongnimsa Temple Site - National Treasure No. 9

The five-story stone pagoda on the site of Jeongnimsa Temple dates to the Baekje period and remains extremely well preserved. It has perfect proportions and structural features of a wooden pagoda.



Podium Decorated with Roof Tiles

Podiums of buildings decorated lavishly with roof tiles were discovered on the palace and temple sites dating to the Sabi period. Similar examples were found on the Archaeological Site in Wanggung-ri, Iksan. This kind of decoration was introduced to Japan and became very common there.

TIP Find podiums of buildings decorated with roof tiles on Jeongnimsa Temple site.

Naseong City Wall

Historic Site No. 58

The capital city of Sabi was well protected by the Geumgang River to the north, west and south. Naseong City Wall was built for defense to the east and stretched for 6 kilometers. It is one of the oldest defensive walls of any city in East Asia, and most sections of it have been discovered.



TIP Take a walk along the trail outside the city wall of Sabi. The trail goes up to Jangdaegi, from where you can see faraway Iksan when the visibility is good.

Purpose of Naseong City Wall

The city wall was not only intended for defense; it also served as a symbolic boundary between the inner and outer areas of the capital city. This is confirmed by the presence of the Royal Tombs in Neungsan-ri outside the Naseong City Wall as tombs were always located outside a city wall.



Construction of Naseong City Wall

Different techniques were employed for the construction of the wall depending on the topographical features. In mountainous areas, earthen walls were erected by laying down and packing one layer of earth upon another, and in swampy sections, walls were built by laying a foundation and covering it with tree branches and leaves. Baekje developed techniques most suitable for the local area based on Chinese technology, and later passed these advanced techniques on to Japan.



Mireuksa Temple Site

Historic Site No. 150

Mireuksa Temple Site is one of the largest temple sites ever discovered in East Asia. The layout of buildings is an embodiment of Buddhist scripture stating that the Maitreya, or Future Buddha, came from heaven to save all people with his three teachings, which attests to the outstanding creativity of Baekje culture. Mireuksa Temple has a unique layout of three units of "one pagoda and one prayer hall".



Pagodas Filled With Aspirations of the Baekje People

There were originally three pagodas at Mireuksa Temple—a wooden pagoda in the central unit and a stone pagoda in each of the east and west units. Excavation of this site revealed that the wooden pagoda and a stone pagoda in the east had been completely destroyed. The stone pagoda in the western unit (National Treasure No. 11) remained but was unstable and damaged. The stone pagoda in the east was rebuilt as a nine-story pagoda in 1992. The stone pagoda in the west was dismantled for examination in 2001 and is completely repaired by 2018.

Sarina Reliquary of Stone Pagoda at Mireuksa Temple Site

Inside a stone pagoda on Mireuksa Temple site, a discovery was made of a triple reliquary with an outer gilt-bronze bottle; an inner golden bottle enshrining the sarira and a glass bottle; and gold plates indicating the dates of the enshrinement of the sarira (639), construction of the stone pagoda, and establishment of Mireuksa Temple, adding all the more to the historicity of this temple site.

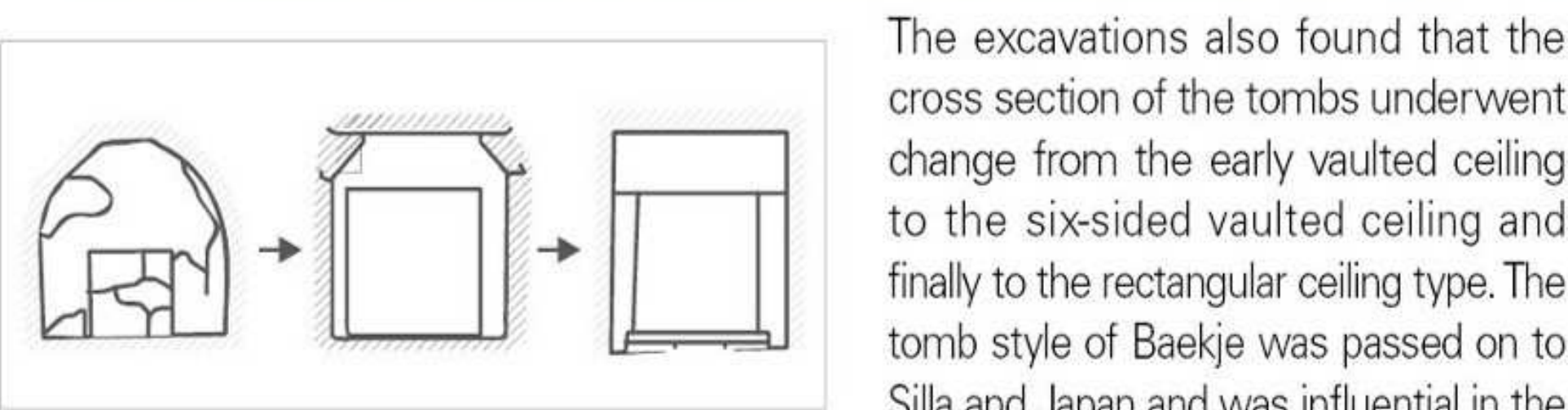


Artifacts recovered from the west pagoda at Mireuksa Temple Site

Royal Tombs in Neungsan-ri

Historic Site No. 14

Located outside Naseong City Wall, the Royal Tombs in Neungsan-ri are where kings and other members of the royal family during the Sabi Period were buried. These stone chamber tombs with a corridor are typical of Baekje tombs. Masonry developed significantly during the Sabi Period, and tombs were built with well-trimmed stones. Compared with Royal Tomb No. 5 in Songsan-ri from the Ungjin Period, the masonry of the tombs in Neungsan-ri is much more advanced.



Temple Site in Neungsan-ri

The Temple Site in Neungsan-ri (Historic Site No. 434) is located between Naseong City Wall and the Royal Tombs in Neungsan-ri. The discovery of the Gilt-bronze Incense Burner of Baekje (National Treasure No. 287) and the Stone Sarira Case with Niches with Inscription of Changwang (National Treasure No. 283) at this site suggests that the temple was built to pray for the repose of the deceased royal family members interred in the Royal Tombs in Neungsan-ri.



Murals of the Royal Tombs
On the inner wall of Donghachong (Tomb No. 1) is a mural depicting the Four Deities, and on the ceiling is a mural depicting lotus and clouds.

TIP See the murals of the royal tomb on the model of Royal Tomb No. 1

Why did Baekje move its capital from Hanseong to Ungjin?

Baekje founded its capital in Hanseong (Seoul today) in the Hangang River basin and expanded its power and territory. In 475, Hanseong fell to Goguryeo forces from the north, and Baekje moved its capital to Ungjin. Sixty-three years later, Baekje moved the capital from Ungjin to Sabi. This period of 64 years is called the Ungjin Period. Mountains to the east, west, and south and the Geumgang River flowing by to the north afforded Ungjin excellent natural defenses. The Geumgang River flowed into the Yellow Sea, enabling maritime exchange throughout East Asia. Ungjin was clearly at the optimal location for Baekje to build its power until 538, when it moved the capital to Sabi.

From Ungjin to Sabi!

Having gained in power, Baekje made the important decision to relocate its capital to Sabi. Ungjin had excellent natural defenses but was too small for the burgeoning kingdom. Baekje moved its capital to Sabi in 538 to enable continued development. It was in this new capital, Sabi, that Baekje experienced its golden age and reached the pinnacle of its power.

The 123 years from 538 when the capital was moved to Sabi to the fall of Baekje at the hands of allied forces of Silla and Tang China are known as the Sabi Period.

Iksan and the culture of the Late Sabi Period

Situated on plains, Iksan was a gateway to Silla. The Iksan region was developed in the Late Sabi Period to support the capital, and it evinces the splendid culture of Baekje.

At this point, let's take a moment!!