

Research Article

Jina Lee Linton*

Production Background of the Baekje Gilt-Bronze Incense Burner in Light of Boshanlu's Emergence and Transformation

<https://doi.org/10.1515/jciea-2024-0010>

Received August 25, 2024; accepted November 20, 2024; published online April 16, 2025

Abstract: The first sight of Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner is enough to take one by surprise and awe for its beauty and intricacy. Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner excavated in Neungsan-ri, Buyeo in ROK was made in the 6th century AD and has its origins in the Han Dynasty of China's incense burner called Boshanlu, 'hill censer'. There are two bronze boshanlu excavated from the tomb of Seokam-ri, Pyongyang, a Nakrang. Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner made half a century later in Baekje of the Korean Peninsula is believed to have inherited the tradition and iconography of Boshanlu, but its grand size, aesthetic supremacy, excellent composition, and scientific design have raised questions about who, where, and why it was produced. Although there are many studies on Boshanlu, the historical transition process from Boshanlu of the Han to Baekje's Gilt-bronze incense burner has not been clearly explained to this day. In this paper, not only the archaeological, literary, and iconographic studies of Han's Boshanlu, but also the cultural, historical (domestically and internationally), and religious background of Baekje that led to the production of the Baekje's incense burner was studied, hoping to provide additional evidence for production of Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner.

Keywords: boshanlu; baekje gilt-bronze incense burner; baekje kingdom

1 Baekje Gilt-Bronze Incense Burner

Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner, National Treasure No. 287 of ROK, is a gilt-bronze incense burner discovered in 1993 at the construction site in Neungsan-ri, Buyeo,

***Corresponding author: Jina Lee Linton**, PhD, Department of Cultural Properties Diagnosis and Connoisseurship, Korea National University of Heritage, Graduate School of Cultural Heritage for the Future, 367 Baekjemun-ro, Buyeo, 33115, Republic of Korea, E-mail: jinalinton@gmail.com. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3935-3367>

which was the site of a royal temple of Baekje (百济, 18 BC - 660 AD) (Park 2014). The stone sarira reliquary discovered near the wooden pagoda reads, “Princess Jeonghae built this temple in the 13th year of King Chang’s reign (567 AD)”, so it is dated back to the early 6th century. Compared to Han’s Boshanlu, which is approximately 30 cm high, Baekje’s incense burner is 61.8 cm tall and weighs 11.8 kg, making it unprecedented in size. The burner stands out with its detailed and distinguished aesthetics. It is composed of four parts: a dragon-shaped pedestal, the body of burner with lotus flowers engraved on it, a lid with raised mountains, and a phoenix decoration on the lid that was cast separately and then joined together (Figure 1).

There are 23 layered mountains, five musicians playing musical instruments, and five birds sitting on the five highest peaks on the lid (Figure 2). There are 17 human figures (Figure 3), including a hunter riding on horseback in the mountains, and 42 imaginary and real-world animals, including a tiger, a lion, a monkey, a wild boar, an elephant, a camel, a phoenix, and a dragon. There is a stream flowing between the mountains, a waterfall, 6 types of grass such as ginkgo leaves and lotus petals, pine trees, 12 rocks, and more. The mouth of the lid is engraved with a single arabesque pattern, and the body has the same type of arabesque pattern placed on the mouth edge, so that when the lid was closed, the two pattern bars are placed in contact with each other as in Figure 1.

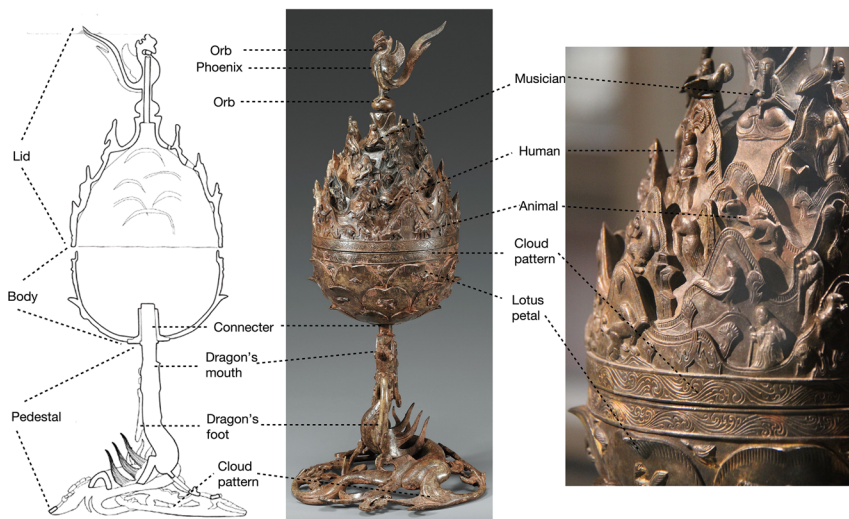


Figure 1: Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner (center, 61.8 cm, 11.8 kg) in cross section (left) and in larger scale (right), National Museum of Korea.



Figure 2: Right below the orb where the phoenix is standing (above), five musicians are surrounded by five mountain peaks, and birds are sitting on each peak. The five musicians with the same hair style are well depicted as if they are playing the instruments (below). National Museum of Korea.



Figure 3: On the lid, people doing various activities are depicted. National Museum of Korea.

At the top of the lid, a phoenix stands on an orb with its wings spread and a small orb on its chin, staring straight ahead. Out of the 12 air holes, there are two small holes in the upper front part of the phoenix chest to allow smoke to come out (Kang 2013). And there are five holes behind the highest five mountain peaks and in front of the five musicians, which would give the appearance of incense smoke rising from mountain peaks. In the radiograph, a tube is visible between the phoenix's legs, starting at the top of the lid, passing through the orb, and connecting to the body of the phoenix, creating a tight connection between the lid and the phoenix.

The body of the incense burner is hemispherical and has lotus petals arranged around it in three tiers. The end of each lotus petal is slightly turned outward, and short dense lines are engraved at the ends of the leaves. The lotus petal is wide at the top and narrows at the bottom in proportion to the curve of the fuselage. There are 26 creatures, including phoenixes, fish, deer, cranes, and crocodiles, as well as two immortals wearing long hats and robes made with feathers, placed between the lotus petals and on the petal surfaces. Among the animals carved on the body, there are 12 birds.

The pedestal is depicted as a dragon biting the lower portion of the lotus flower, which is the body of the burner, with its mouth and raising its head as if ascending to the sky. The dragon's body, tail, and mane are openwork in dynamic shapes, and are decorated with lotus arabesque patterns going from the middle of the dragon's body to the tail. The lower part of the body was connected to the short pipe held in the dragon's mouth. The connecting pipe was not cast with the body but was joined after casting. The lower edge of the pedestal depicts a body of dragon wrapped in a cloud pattern, giving the impression of a dragon climbing through the clouds (Seo 2001).

2 Boshanlu Reviewed

2.1 What is Boshanlu?

Boshanlu is a bronze incense burner from the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD). The tradition of burning incense in China is believed to have originated from the Shang Dynasty, and historical records show that the culture of burning incense indoors began during the Warring States Period around 403 BC. Incense, such as cinnamon (桂), basil (蕙), sweet grass (茅香), ginger, etc. was traditionally used before the Han Dynasty (Needham 1956). The full-fledged incense burning trend began in 200 BC through the Maritime Silk Road of Nanyue (南越), which stretched from Arabia in the west to Korean Peninsula and Japan in the east, followed by the in-land Silk Road. Instead of burning reeds or grass, pieces of charcoal were placed in a censer, and on top of the charcoal frankincense (乳香), myrrh (没药香), storax (苏合), benzoin (安息

香), imported from the Near East, and agarwood (沉香) imported from Southeast Asia were placed.

To burn resin and spices on charcoal, the bottom of the censer was deepened. And to prevent the charcoal from burning quickly, the air intake holes in the censer body were reduced to a minimum. The lid of the censer was made high and conical to allow air to flow inside. The lid was made with irregularly overlapping various mountain peaks, carvings of various animals, birds, gods, clouds, etc., and had several air holes. The desk or floor on which a censer was placed could be damaged by the heat conduction of the bronze incense burner. To prevent this, people would have filled the basin with water, which represents sea water. Then, the turtle supporting the pedestal could give the impression of submerging and disappearing into the sea, and as the water in the basin vaporized, it would rise like a cloud with incense smoke, making the censer look like an immortal island floating in the sea (Wang and Shengyu 2020). With the appearance of Boshanlu, the incense burning culture, which had been used only for the royal family, ceremonies, and ancestral rites, expanded to daily use for the noble class and scholars. Boshanlu's use was found in various documents, such as to infuse scents into banquet halls, to improve concentration in a scholar's study, and to fumigate and disinfect clothes and bedding in the house or bedroom (Erickson 1992; Kirkova 2018). Buddhists also gradually began to use Boshanlu by burning various incense and perfumes.¹

2.2 Historic Tracing of Boshanlu Iconography

The incense-burning culture, which emerged relatively late in central China, was widely used in West Asia before 1000 BC. The Nuska lamp, a relief on a Babylonian Kuduru (Babylon boundary stone, 855–819 BC) was excavated in Uruk. Nuska was the Mesopotamian god of fire and light and was represented by a lamp, a rooster, and a staff (Figure 4). The lamp and the rooster motif of Nuska continued to appear in later times as censer relief in Assyria (7th century BC) and in the Achaemenid dynasty (500 BC) (Aruz, Graff, & Rakic, 1992, pp. 69–71; Aruz, Graff, and Rakic 1992). In Lydia a censer with the addition of a cone-shaped lid, a chain connecting the lid and the body, and a small rooster shape perched on top of the cone was excavated.

The Pazyryk culture, which spread throughout Eurasia in the 7th to 1st century BC, is a Scytho-Siberian, early Iron Age culture. The oldest carpet in history, excavated from a Pazyryk Tomb, was decorated with fabric fragments that appear to have come from Persia. And this Persian fabric had a repeating pattern of four

¹ In Lu Chen's *Sacrificial Law*, it said that in the temple there were Boshanlus on each sides all year round.

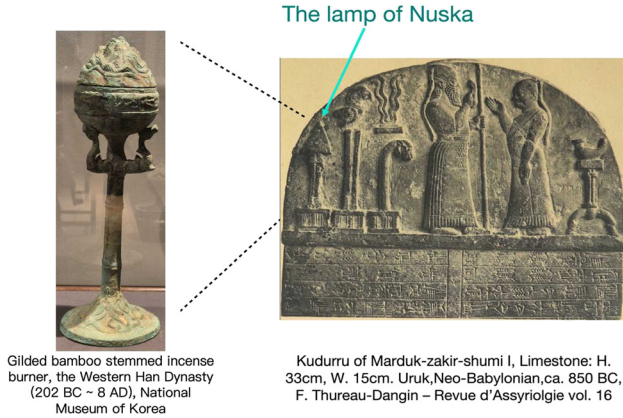


Figure 4: Nuska (left) is relieved with a lamp (arrows), rooster, and a staff on the top portion of a Kudurru (center). Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marduk-zakir-shumi_I It appears that the iconography of the lamp continued to the boshanlu (right) of the Han Dynasty.

Achaemenid noblewomen and their maids standing with a censer in the center, and Rawson (1999) suggested that this fabric is the evidence that the Pazyryk was an intermediary connecting the icon of the censer from Persia to China. According to Robinson's (1990) research, the Pazyryk people used this pattern by cutting it in the middle and patching it up, so the censer in the middle was cut off or not visible. In fact, the censer used by the Pazyryk people was a jar-shaped pottery and burned hemp (Trunova and Polosmak Natalia 2015). Rather than the censer in the Persian fabric being a direct medium for the transmission of the censer icon as Rawson (1999) claimed, it should be said that cultural exchange between Mesopotamia and Pazyryk was active to the extent that imported fabrics were cut and used insignificantly.

The Pazyryk culture was inherited by the Huns, who were partially taken over by Han Wudi in the 2nd century BC. Pazyryk's animal patterns were passed on to the relief patterns of fighting animals in the Ordos culture of Inner Mongolia and to the Han dynasty (Jacobson 1988). At the same time, the Chinese relics were excavated from Pazyryk's and Huns' tombs, showing that there was a lot of cultural exchange between nomads and ancient China (Rawson 2006). The iconography of the conical censers of West Asia, luxurious jewelry and gold leaf from Scythia-Siberia, and motifs such as people fighting animals, tigers attacking other animals, camels, and people pulling carts were incorporated into the boshanlu in the Han dynasty.

2.3 Why the Name ‘Boshan (博山)’ Not ‘Penglai (蓬莱)’?

The early censer of the Warring States Period in China in the 3rd century BC was shaped like a high cup with a lid. At first the lid had no air holes, then air holes began to appear. However, until this time, the lids were not in a ‘mountain’ shape. Suddenly, during the reign of Han Wudi (140–87 BC), Boshanlu appeared in a completed iconography, and even now, the stage of development of the boshanlu is not clearly known.

Boshanlu is said to symbolize Mount Penglai (蓬莱仙岛), an imaginary island of the immortals located in the middle of the east sea, which is represented with a mountain shaped censer on a basin. When Han Wudi, who had greatly expanded territory and respected Confucianism, began to believe in Taoism and pursued eternal life in his later times. King Yuan of Huainan gave ‘Huainanzi’, a book on Taoism to his nephew, Emperor Wu. In it stated, “the higher you climb Mount Kunlun (昆仑山), the more immortal you become.” If Mount Kunlun was the Western Paradise, Mount Penglai was the Eastern Paradise (Zaji 2000). Then Buddhism spread to the Han, and the Sukhavati, the Western Pure Land of Buddhism might have overshadowed the myth of Mt. Kunlun. While old mythology and tales of paradise merged and developed, the desire for the immortal mountain formed into a mountain shaped censer.

Then, the question arises as to why it has been called ‘Boshan-lu’ and not ‘Penglai-lu’. Zornica Kirkova (2018) suggested that during the Han Dynasty, it was not called ‘boshanlu’, but was called as boshanlu after the 6th century AD. *Xijing Zaji* (《西京杂记》) was known as the writings of Liu Xin (刘歆, ?-23 AD) of the Han Dynasty and compiled by Galhong (葛洪, 283–343 AD). Most scholars view *Xijing Zaji* as a book of the Jin Dynasty. Although *Xijing Zaji* was published during the Eastern Jin period, it is a collection of writings written during the Han Dynasty. In it, it is recorded that “a craftsman named Ding Huan (丁缓) of Changan built a nine-story ‘boshan’ censer and carved various animals and people into it.” It is difficult to believe what was mentioned as ‘boshan’ in the Han was edited from ‘xunlu’ later in the Jin. Although ‘boshan’ is not mentioned in any other documents of the Han period, there is no evidence that it began to be called ‘boshanlu’ after the Han. Therefore, there is a possibility that both the terms ‘xunlu’ and ‘boshanlu’ were likely to have been used during the Han Dynasty.

The author hypothesizes that ‘xunlu’ was used in official contents and ‘boshanlu’ was the nickname because the word ‘boshan’ had been used not just for incense burners, but also for any objects, such as patterns on silk and metal decorations in palaces that had mountain shapes. In *Yezhong Ji* (《邺中记》)² of Lu Hui (陆翊, 400 AD) said “big boshan and small boshan”, which refer to the two kinds of patterns in

2 It said “织锦署在中尚 ... 大博山、小博山 ...”, which referred the kinds of the fabric pattern as large boshan and small boshan.

fabric. Bo (博) means wide, so the expression ‘small boshan’ would be contradictory unless ‘boshan’ did not referred to a specific shape.

The early boshanlu depicted humans fighting and/or animal hunting, which was incompatible with the peaceful world of Penglai Mountain. The original intention of Boshanlu might have started with the intention of creating a Taoist ideal world, but the influence of Buddhism started to dilute this. China of the 2nd century BC was flooded with cultures from various neighboring countries, and the Han’s created a new mountain style of incense burner through combination of their own culture and selection of foreign cultures. As Li (2021) pointed out this immortal mountains were not limited to Penglai and Kunlun, but a place dear and close to people’s heart. So Boshanlu was called ‘Boshan’ instead of ‘Penglai’.

2.4 Birth and Transformation of Boshanlu

In the tomb of Liu Sheng (buried in 113 BC, the half-brother of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty), a bronze censer inlaid with gold was excavated, and in it placed holes for incense to rise between rugged mountain peaks, and carvings of people, beasts, birds, and a dragon in three dimensions. This incense burner was the beginning and the highlight of Boshanlu of the Han (Figure 5). After Han Wudi’s era, the boshanlu iconography did not develop any further in China. As pottery as well as bronze boshanlus were made, the mountains became less elaborate, and the sculptures of animals and people started to disappear. As the influence of Buddhism grew stronger, the rugged mountains on the lid of Boshanlu were replaced by soft Zen hills and lotus flowers (Huang 2022). The boshanlu of the Han Dynasty continued to be passed down to later generations and was loved as a precious object not only by scholars but also by the public and was also widely used by the Buddhists. During the Wei, Jin, and Northern Dynasties, as the trend of pedant school style emerged, popularity of Boshanlu boomed again. Nostalgia for Boshanlu lasted to the Ming and Qing dynasties.

3 Production of Baekje Gilt-Bronze Incense Burner

3.1 Cultural Background

The progressive advancement of culture of the Three Kingdoms in Korean Peninsula in the early 6th century AD can be seen in ring pommel swords (Figure 6). Gaya was a federation of states located between the Three Kingdoms, it was known for producing outstanding armor, swords, and other metal and gold work. The pommel



Figure 5: When all iconographies of Baekje Kingdom and the Han dynasty are put together, one can easily picture Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner.

iconography took a leap with phoenix and dragon designs in Gaya, and blossomed in Hwandudaedo (环头大刀), the Sword with Dragon and Phoenix Decorated Ring Pommel of King Muryeong (武宁王, r. 501–23 AD) of Baekje. This dragon iconography continued later as illustrated in Figure 5.

Eight different designs of bricks were excavated in an old temple site in Buyeo. All four corners of the tiles have square indentations, which was likely to receive some type of connector inserts to join the bricks together. Judging by the delicate features of the patterns, these bricks were meant for wall decorations, rather than



Figure 6: Comparison of Hwandudaedo (环头大刀), ring pommel swords of the Three Kingdoms in 5, 6th century AD in Korean peninsula. Available from: https://issuu.com/museumofkorea/docs/nmk_v50/s/12154348. The iconography of the pommel shared by the neighboring countries, evolved with time, and blossomed during the reign of King Muryeong of Baekje. National Museum of Korea. Available from: https://www.newsis.com/view/NISX20110222_0007481982.

to pave floors. Sansumunjeon (山水文磚), the landscape design brick, was reminiscent of landscape of mountains, trees, water, clouds, and rocks with the medium of clay. On the landscape & phoenix design bricks, Sansubonghuangmunjeon (山水鳳凰文磚), a phoenix and three-peaks-mountains, lotus flowers, and cloud patterns were elegantly expressed in perspective (Figure 7). The iconography of the patterned bricks appeared later in DongtakEnjan (銅托銀盞), Silver cup with Bronze Stand excavated from King Muryeong's tomb. The boshan-shaped lid of the silver cup was engraved with trees, lotus leaves, and phoenixes roaming in the valley between the three-peaks-mountains, and three dragons were engraved on the cup itself. The three-peaks-mountain iconography continued to Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner.

If the lifted up front paw and the body of the dragon on Brick with Dragon in Design was coiled up in three dimension to make the pedestal, the dragon head of Hwandudaedo of King Muryeong became the head of the pedestal, boshan iconography of the Han framed the lid, and the lotus of buddhism bloomed to form the body. The production of Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner is only a natural consequence as in Figure 5.

3.2 Geopolitical Background

Could the Baekje people carve crocodiles, elephants, monkeys which are not native to the Korean Peninsula by imagining or simply hearing explanations without seeing them? The crocodile on the Baekje's incense burner for example, is depicted very accurately, and the wave created by the movement of the crocodile as it dips into

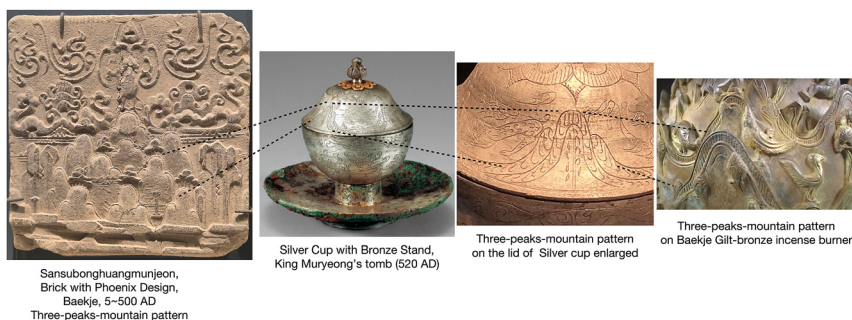


Figure 7: Three-peaks-mountain pattern appeared on the brick (29 cm × 29 cm × 4 cm), on the silver cup, then on the incense burner in time sequence in Baekje. National Museum of Korea. Available from: https://www.cha.go.kr/cop/bbs/selectBoardArticle.do?nttId=23121&bbsId=BBSMSTR_1008.

water is expressed so realistically (Figure 8). While Crocodiles exist in China until now, elephants do not. The Chinese elephant (*Elephas maximus rubridens*) is a subspecies of the Asian elephant. Considering that bronze elephant sculptures matching the ivory structure of the Chinese elephants exist during the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, some scholars believe that Chinese elephants may have survived until then. Some claim that they became extinct around the 14th century AD due to the increase in population and agricultural area in the central and southern regions (Brown 2011). Even after the Chinese elephant became extinct, the Indian elephant (*E. maximus indicus*) still exists in Yunnan in southwest China.

Politically, Baekje played an active role in maritime traffic between China and the Korean Peninsula and to Japan. Baekje's envoy to China started as early as the Western Jin in 280 AD, followed by 8 more trips during next 10 years. Baekje, with its rapid economic development, cultivated close relations and proactively absorbed many Chinese advanced cultures, and transferred them to Silla and Japan (Zhou 2010). One study said that Baekje continued exchanges with the Eastern Jin of the Southern Dynasty of China in the 4th century. The period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties of China, full of wars and chaos, was still a time when the development of art, culture, and technology flourished. Baekje sent envoys to each country of the Southern Dynasty about 33 times for 160 years (Jeong 2016).

The journey of Baekje envoys remains as a pictorial document in the *Baekje Envoy Map* (梁职贡图, 526–536 AD) during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty (502–557 AD). The Liang Dynasty mobilized elephant troops during the war with Western Wei in December 554 AD, so the elephant troops would have been in training at least for several years before the war broke out. Therefore, it is highly likely that the Baekje envoys who visited the capital of the Liang saw crocodiles



Figure 8: Animal figures on Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner. A crocodile (left) and an elephant (right). Buyeo National Museum of Korea.

swimming in and out of the water and elephants ridden by trainers. This may explain why the elephant in the Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner was depicted with a person riding on it as in Figure 8.

3.3 Religious Background

The period between 526 and 536 AD was a time when nostalgia for and reproduction of Boshanlu was popular in China. Baekje envoys would easily encounter a boshanlu in the royal palace or in the meeting with officials and learned the background of Boshanlu. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties, Mahayana Buddhism was spread to China, and Emperor Wu (r. 502–549 AD) of the Liang Dynasty was well-versed in Buddhist doctrine. He built the Great Temple and held more than 10 Great Equal Assembly (无遮大会), a Buddhist ceremony to save dead souls on land or in the water (Buddhism 2012). King Chang (昌王, r. 554–598 AD) of Baekje ascended to the throne in 554 AD and announced his intention to become a monk in 555 AD to pray for his father who was killed in action. Due to the dissuasion of his ministers, he reached a compromise by allowing 100 subjects to become Buddhist monks. King Chang, who longed for rebirth of his deceased father and son, might have found a solution in the hands of Baekje's craftsmen by combining Liang Wudi's Buddhist faith with Han Wudi's Taoistic Boshanlu as Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner, an earthly model of a heavenly reality.

3.4 Technical Background

There are 12 smoke holes in the incense burner approximately 3.8–3.88 mm diameter. Two of the five smoke holes in the top row were widened to 4.64 mm and 4.67–5.5 mm, and the rear one was further widened to 8.75 mm. Some of the lower smoke holes were widened irregularly, some in a circular shape and others in an irregular shape. The gold plating layer was found at the periphery and inside the holes (confirmed through high-definition photography), which explains the widening of holes was part of the production process. Recently an experiment of burning incense was done in a replica model of Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner with constant size of 3.8 mm smoke holes without any enlargement, but the incense was extinguished soon. When the holes were widened like the Baekje burner, the burning continued with release of smoke through the upper holes (Kim and Hwang 2019). The authors discovered that circulation of air occurred inside. Some of the smoke that had not been discharged went down and circulated again together with the air sucked in from the outside. Since it was probably the first time for the Baekje craftsmen to

make such a large scale of burner, they would have tested burning and started adjusting the size of holes by trial and error. Confirmation of satisfied smoke stream was followed by gold plating of the entire incense burner.

3.5 Geological Background

Every mine of galena (a natural mineral form of lead sulfide) has its own unique ratio of lead isotopes. Jeong YJ and others investigated the distribution status of 166 galena mines in ROK over a period of three years from 2010, secured samples of galena, and analyzed trace elements and lead isotope ratios (Jeong 2012). As a result, a comprehensive database of the 69 metal mines was established, and the lead area in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula could be divided into four separate zones. These are the Gyeonggi Massif, Okcheon Belt, Yeongnam Massif, and Gyeongsang Basin. Thermal ionization mass spectrometry on bronze samples collected inside the Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner was performed, and it was believed to be raw material from Zone 3, the Yeongnam Massif and Okcheon Metamorphic Rock Zone, and these areas are not far from Neungsan-ri, Buyeo where Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner was excavated (Kang and Koh 2015).

4 Conclusions

Other than the Seokam-ri 9th tomb boshanlu and Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner, there were no records or relics about the boshanlu in ROK. However, various evidence was presented in this article that Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner did not appear suddenly. The iconography used in Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner was already in use during the reign of King Muryeong, the grandfather of King Chang. Also, Baekje's cultural and international activity level indicate that they could not only digest imported culture but also elaborate it to the next level.

Boshanlu's iconography has not disappeared altogether after Baekje, either. The Bell of King Seongdeok (圣德大王神钟, 771 AD) is a bronze bell of Unified Silla, which measures 3.7 m high, 2.27 m in diameter at the lip, 12–25 cm in wall thickness, and weighs 18.9 ton. There are many relief patterns on the bell, including lotus flowers, grass, and four apsaras (heavenly maidens) (Figure 9). Each apsara on this Bell is kneeling and holding a boshanlu. Similar flying apsara and/or immortal holding Boshanlu were found on the relief of the tomb wall bricks of the Southern Dynasty (420–549 AD) in Xiaohengshan, China (Wang 2019).

Later in Goryeo Dynasty, a boshanlu was spotted by Xu Jing (徐兢) in Korean peninsula. Xu Jing recorded the boshanlu he saw in the 30th section of Xu (2006) (宣



Lotus shaped Dangiwa is where the bell is struck to ring.



One of the apsara carving on the bell is holding a boshanlu.



1,000-character inscription is on the other side of the bell body.

Figure 9: The Bell of King Seongdeok (Unified Silla, 771 AD, National Treasure of Korea No.29, 3.75 m × 2.27 m), Gyeongju National Museum. Available from: https://issuu.com/museumofkorea/docs/nmk_v50/s/12154348.

和奉使高丽图经, 1124 AD) of the Song Dynasty (宋朝). Xu Jing said that Goryeo's boshanlu had three legs, so it could have been b or c of Figure 10.

Boshanlu is just one of the various types of incense burners, such as high cupped, three-legged, rectangular, cylindrical, square, and double-shaped. Sometimes even



Celadon incense burner with openwork auspicious-character design lid, 15.3cm x 11.2cm, 12th AD



Bronze incense burner with inscription of "Eighth Jeounghwa Year", 1118 AD



Bronze incense burner, 11th AD

Figure 10: Censers of Goryeo Dynasty, which have boshan iconography. National Museum of Korea.

the boundary between the lotus flower of the Buddhism and the iconography of boshan is ambiguous (Huang 2022; Hui 2008). The reason why there are various theories about the origin and purpose of production of Boshanlu is because, compared to the interest expressed in numerous literary works and folk history, there is no clear record of production history. The same is true for the Baekje Gilt-bronze incense burner. An attempt has been made to provide some background information on this subject in this paper, but more research is still needed.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank Professor Park, Do Hwa for her guidance and valuable advice that helped me to write this article. I am grateful for the friendship of Long Xiaoping (龙小平), Ai Hong (艾红), and for the invaluable help of He Luxia (何路霞), Yue Jinhui (岳金辉), Lin Qiaomu (林乔木), and Wang Xiaoyi (王小熠).

Research ethics: The Review Board deemed the study exempt from review.

Informed consent: There was not informed consent necessary for this study.

Author contributions: Jina Lee Linton is the sole author of this article, which involves the conception to interpretation of data, drafting the work, final approval to be published, and agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Conflict of interests: There were no competing interests involved in this study.

Research funding: There was no funding organization in this study (study design, collection of data, writing of the report, or the decision to submit the report for publication).

References

- Aruz, J., S. B. Graff, and Y. Rakic. 1992. *Assyria to Iberia at the Dawn of the Classical Age*, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 340–41, 69–71. New York, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Brown, R. 2011. *Blood Ivory: The Massacre of the African Elephant*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Buddhism. 2012. “Encyclopedia of Korean Culture.” <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0024921>.
- Erickson, S. N. 1992. “Boshanlu: Mountain Censers of the Western Han Period: A Typological and Iconological Analysis.” *Archives of Asian Art* 45: 6–28.
- Huainanzi. 2008. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huainanzi>.
- Huang, Siyuan. 2022. *Study on the Cultural Value of Boshan Furnace Unearthed from Haihunhou Tomb in the Western Han Dynasty*. MA thesis, Nanchang, China: Nanchang University.
- Hui, Xiping. 2008. *Research on the Mountain Censers of Han Dynasty*. MA thesis, Shandong University.
- Jacobson, E. 1988. “Beyond the Frontier. A Reconsideration of Cultural Interchange Between China and the Early Nomads.” *Early China* 13: 201–40.
- Jeong, Y. J. 2012. “Regional Variation in the Lead Isotopic Composition of Galena from Southern Korea with Implications for the Discrimination of Lead Provenance.” *Journal of Asian Earth Sciences* 61: 116–29.

- Jeong, Youngsik. 2016. "A Study on the Tea Culture of Baekje Influenced by Southern Dynasties." *Journal of the Korean Tea and Tao* (3): 71–84.
- Kang, H. 2013. *Conservation science at the National Museum of Korea*, 73–82. Seoul, Korea: National Museum of Korea.
- Kang, H. T., and M. J. Koh. 2015. "Scientific Analysis of the Gilt-Bronze Incense Burner of Gaekje Form the Neungsalli Temple Site in Buyeo, South Korea." *Indian Journal of Science and Technology* 8 (23): 1–6.
- Kim, S. Y., and H. S. Hwang. 2019. "A Study on the Convective Characteristics of the Gilt-Bronze Incense Burner of Baekje Through the Incense-Burning Experiment." *Journal of Conservation Science* 35 (5): 470–9.
- Kirkova, Z. 2018. "Sacred Mountains, Abandoned Women, and Upright Officials: Facets of the Incense Burner in Early Medieval Chinese Poetry." *Early Medieval China* (24): 53–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299104.2018.1493827>.
- Kudurru of Marduk-zakir-shumi I, F. 2008. *Thureau-Dangin – Revue d'Assyriologie*, Vol. 16. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marduk-zakir-shumi_I.
- Li, L. 2021. "Boshan and Boshanlu." *Chinese Culture* 55: 108–11.
- Needham, J. 1956. *Science and Civilisation in China*, Vol. 2, 136–47, 163–75. England: Cambridge University Press.
- Park, K. 2014. "Taoist Iconography of the Baekje Gilt-Bronze Incense Burner." *JKAA* 8: 62–75.
- Penglai, M. 2000. "ChinaKnowledge.de – An Encyclopaedia on Chinese History, Literature and Art." <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Myth/personspenglai.html>.
- Rawson, J. 1999. "The Eternal Palaces of the Western Han: A New View of the Universe." *Artibus Asiae* 59: 5–58.
- Rawson, J. 2006. "The Chinese Hill Censer, Boshan Lu: A Note on Origins, Influences and Meanings." *Arts Asiatiques* 61: 75–86.
- Rubinson, K. S. 1990. "The Textiles from Pazyryk – A Study in the Transfer and Transformation of Artistic Motifs." *Expedition* 32 (1): 49–61.
- Seo, J. R. 2001. *Baekje Gilt-bronze Incense Burner*. Seoul, Korea: Hakgojae Publishing Co.
- Trunova, V. A., and V. Polosmak Natalia. 2015. "Secret of Copper Hair." *Science First Hand* 42 (N3): 22–23.
- Wang, Xiaoyang. 2019. "The Differences and Significance of Yuhang Flying Person." <https://m.fx361.com/news/2019/1130/6061632.html>.
- Wang and Shengyu. 2020. *Cosmology, Fashion, and Good Fortune: Chinese Auspicious Ornament in the Han Dynasty (206 BC–AD 220)*. PhD thesis. Univ of Oxford.
- Xu, Jing. 2006. *The Illustrated Book of Goryeo of Xuanhe's Envoys* [宣和奉使高丽图经] vol. 30. no publisher. <https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=757490>.
- Yang, L. 2005. *Handbook of Chinese Mythology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zaji, Xijing (西京雜記). 2000. "「長安巧工丁緩者 又作九層博山香爐，鏤為奇禽怪獸，窮諸靈異，皆自然運動。」" <https://ctext.org/xijing-zaji/1/zhs?searchu=長安巧工丁緩者，為常滿燈，七龍五鳳，雜以芙蓉蓮藕之奇%E3%80%82>.
- Zhou, Yu-Xing. 2010. "Sino-Baekje Relations in Light of Bilateral Marine Traffic." *Southeast Culture* 2010 (1): 70–78.