



Fig. 9. Gold crown from Seobongchong Tomb in Gyeongju and the bird ornament connecting the intersecting bands. (National Museum of Korea).

Silla Crowns and Crown Ornaments of the Yeongdong Region

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I. Introduction

Most extant Korean crowns and associated regalia date from the Three Kingdoms Period (三國時代, 57 BCE-668 CE). Of the three kingdoms, Silla (新羅, 57 BCE-935 CE) seems to have produced the most crowns. Thus far, more than eighty Silla crowns, made from various materials, have been discovered, all of which are estimated to have been produced in the fifth and sixth centuries of Silla, within a period of 100 to 200 years. Most of the Silla crowns have been found in and around present-day Gyeongju, the former capital of Silla, but many have also been found in outlying areas. Significantly, some of the crowns discovered in the outlying areas predate the estimated time in which the central government sent its own officials to preside over those regions. The presence of such crowns in those outlying areas suggests that the people who wore the crowns were the rulers of those areas, rather than members of the royal court or central government. However, it is not known whether the crowns were given to regional leaders by the Silla government or produced locally by the regional rulers themselves (Jeon Deokjae 1990, 39-44).

The Yeongdong region in eastern Gangwon Province (Fig. 1) represents the furthest reaches of the Silla Kingdom during the Three Kingdoms Period. This coastal area was once the site of fierce conflicts among local clans and confederacies, and then between Goguryeo (高句麗) and Silla, all vying to

increase their maritime power. Eventually, however, Silla was able to expand through the territory and seize control, stabilizing the region and causing the conflicts to dissipate. The crucial significance that this region held for Silla is illustrated by the Silla tumuli that have been excavated and researched in



Fig. 1. Map of Silla sites.

areas such as Gangneung (Chodang-dong, Byeongsan-dong, Hasi-dong and Yeongjin-ri) and Donghae (Chuam-dong). These excavations have yielded numerous Silla artifacts from the fifth and sixth centuries, among which the crowns and crown ornaments stand out. In addition to symbolizing the power of a ruler, crowns and crown ornaments also reflect the contemporaneous culture of the region.

In 2008, Chuncheon National Museum held a special exhibition entitled *Crowns, the Symbol of Power: From Gyeongju to Gangwon Province*. This exhibition featured crowns and crown ornaments excavated from the Yeongdong region, as well as some replicas of artifacts that had been badly damaged or destroyed. During the process of making the replicas, new information was discovered that greatly illuminated the relationship between the artifacts from the Yeongdong region and those of other regions. Based on that new information, this paper compares the crowns and crown ornaments excavated from the Yeongdong region with those found in other regions in order to identify and assess the regional differences in their characteristics.

II. Crowns of the Yeongdong Region

Prior to the Three Kingdoms Period, various local societies regularly battled for control of the Yeongdong region, a key strategic area that includes the coast on the East Sea.¹ Silla eventually gained tentative control of the region, but still had to fend off incursions from Goguryeo and the Mohe people (靺鞨) of ancient Manchuria. Records of these conflicts can be found in volume 3, chapter 3 of *Samguk Sagi* (三國史記, *History of the Three Kingdoms*), entitled *Annals of Silla*. According to the records, the Mohe people attacked the region in 395, but they were eventually repelled. Then in 468, the combined forces of Goguryeo and Mohe attacked and conquered Silla's Siljikseong Fortress (悉直城), located in present-day Samcheok. Silla eventually regained control of the territory, although details about how and when this happened are as

¹ There are no written records of conflicts and wars before the Three Kingdoms Period, but other evidence exists. For example, most of the Iron-Age dwellings that have been discovered in the Yeongdong region were destroyed by fire, indicating that there were frequent conflicts.

yet unknown. Geographically, the Yeongdong region was of the utmost importance to Silla, because it was the gateway to the path down the east coast to Silla's capital in present-day Gyeongju. Thus, in an effort to block its enemies from the north, Silla must have exerted efforts to incorporate the local powers of the Yeongdong region into its kingdom. As part of such efforts, Silla may have given crowns and crown ornaments to the local powers.

Two Silla crowns have been found in the Yeongdong region: one gilt-bronze crown from Gangneung, and one bronze crown from Donghae. Two crowns is a small quantity when compared to the number of crowns found in other regions that Silla conquered between the fourth and sixth centuries. This small number may reflect the difficulty of forming large municipalities within such a narrow strip of land along the coast. Nonetheless, the presence of any Silla crowns demonstrates that some local powers in Gangneung and Donghae were deemed to be sufficiently large and important to receive crowns from the central government.

A. The Gilt-bronze Crown

The gilt-bronze crown was excavated from Chodang-dong Tomb B-16 in Gangneung. Figure 2 (left) shows the crown's condition at the time it was excavated. To prevent further damage, the crown was originally preserved within the soil where it had been found. Recently, however, the dirt and other accretions were removed so that the crown could be properly conserved and restored (Fig. 2, right). During the conservation process, detailed photos were taken of the exposed parts of the crown, and X-rays photos were taken of the elements that remained concealed under the dirt. Utilizing the results of this research, this paper examines each part of this crown and compares them to related crowns found in other regions.

Headband: Almost every Silla crown includes a headband made by bending a long rectangular strip of metal into a circle and then connecting the two ends with small rivets. Two small rivets were used to join the ends of this crown's headband (Fig. 2a). Unlike other parts of this crown, the headband remained virtually intact. The most significant detail about the headband is that its upper edge is serrated (Fig. 2b), a circumstance that was confirmed by X-ray photography (Fig. 2c). In fact, this is the only Silla crown



Fig. 2. Gilt-bronze crown from Chodang-dong Tomb B-16, Gangneung, before (left) and after (right) conservation. (Chuncheon National Museum).

known to have a headband with a serrated edge.

In addition to connecting the two ends of the headband, rivets were also used to attach the crown's uprights to the headband. In this case, two rivets were used to attach a single, stand-alone upright (Fig. 2b), while three rivets were used in those areas

where both an upright and one of the intersecting bands that fit across the head were attached (Fig. 2d). The uprights were likely attached to the headband with two rivets while the headband was still flat (i.e., before it was bent into a circle). However, the intersecting bands could only be attached after the head-

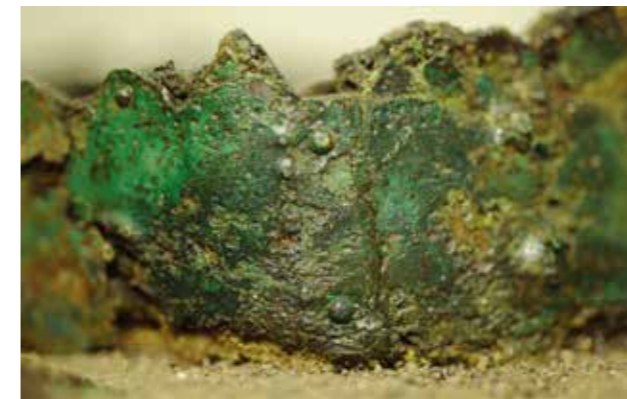


Fig. 2a. Detail of the two ends of the headband connected with nails.

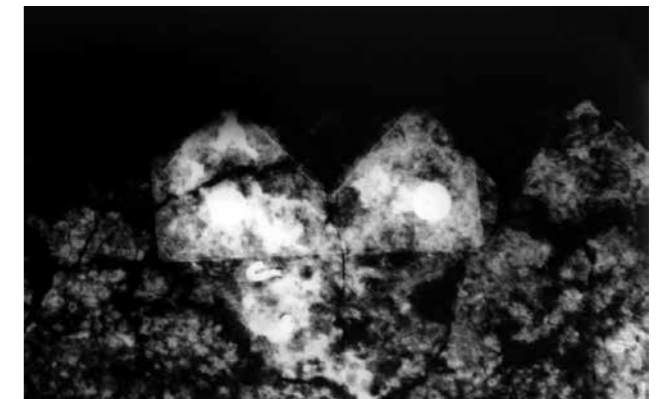


Fig. 2c. X-ray photography of the connection between the headband and an upright.

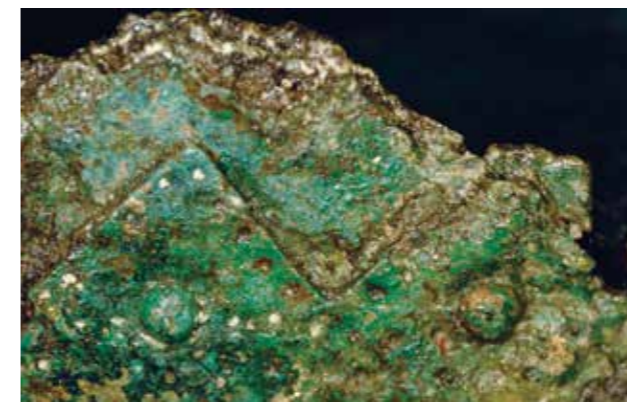


Fig. 2b. Detail of an upright connected to the headband with nails.



Fig. 2d. Detail of an upright connected to the intersecting bands with nails.

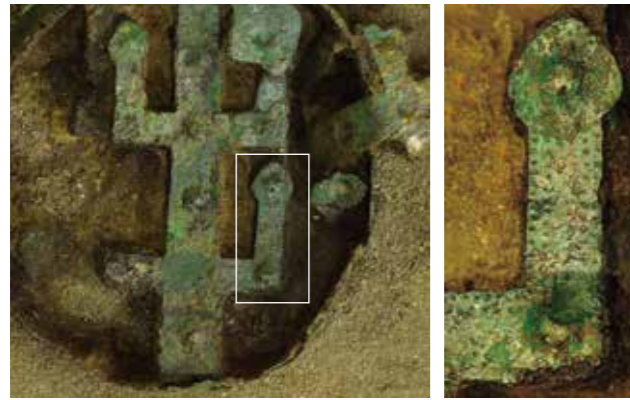


Fig. 2e. An upright (left) and its detail (right).

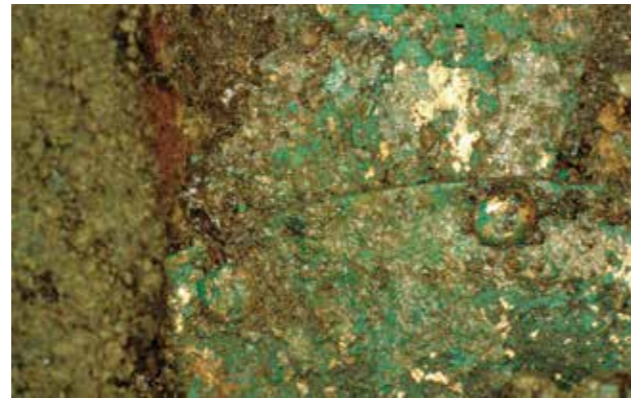


Fig. 2g. Detail of an antler-shaped upright.



Fig. 2f. Traces of a diamond-shaped design of dots in the middle of the upright.

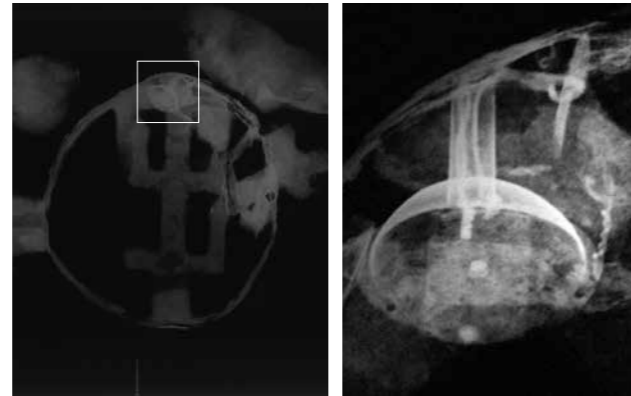


Fig. 2h. X-ray photography of the intersecting bands and the small dome-shaped ornament connecting the bands.

band had been formed into a circle, so an extra rivet was needed to attach them.

Uprights: Like other Silla crowns, this crown has several uprights attached to the headband. In this case, the crown has three tree-shaped uprights and two antler-shaped uprights. The tree-shaped uprights have three tiers of branches, each with two parallel rows of relief dots along the edges (Fig. 2e). Notably, in the middle of the upright, there seems to be a pattern of dots in the shape of a diamond, although it is not clear (Fig. 2f). This detail has rarely been seen on other excavated gilt-bronze crowns, although a similar dotted diamond design in the middle of an upright can be seen on a bronze crown found in Ha-ri, Danyang-gun, North Chungcheong Province (Fig. 3). In addition, a gilt-bronze crown from Ji-dong Tomb 2 in Andong (Fig. 4) features two rows of dots in the middle of the upright, along with larger circles that were stamped from the back.

Examination of the antler-shaped uprights re-

vealed that the central branch and sub-branches were made separately and then joined together with two rivets (Fig. 2g). A similar manner of assembly can also be seen on a gold crown from Geumnyeongchong Tomb in Gyeongju (Fig. 5), as well as a gilt-bronze crown that is said to have been found in North Gyeongsang Province (Fig. 6), the province that includes Gyeongju. In the latter case, however, metal wires were used to attach the sub-branches to the central branch, rather than small rivets. It is difficult to determine the relation between the gilt-bronze crown from the Yeongdang region (Fig. 2) and those produced in the area of the capital (Figs. 5 and 6) based solely on the similarity between the antler-shaped ornaments. However, the style of the antler-shaped uprights of the Yeongdang crown would seem to indicate that the crown was produced via the same methods that were used in the capital, which would in turn suggest that the crowns excavated from the provinces may have been produced in the capital.



Fig. 3. Bronze crown and upright from Ha-ri, Danyang-gun, North Chungcheong Province. (Cheongju National Museum).



Fig. 3a. Small disc.

Intersecting Bands and Small Dome-shaped Ornament: In addition to the headband and uprights, the crown also includes two connecting bands that curve across the top of the wearer's head, intersecting in the middle. Similar bands have been found on other Silla crowns, but their exact purpose or function remains unknown. Prior to conservation, these intersecting bands could not be seen with the naked eye. However, they were detected with X-ray photography, which also revealed a small dome-shaped ornament that capped the point where the bands intersect (Fig. 2h). Based on the X-rays, conservation was undertaken and the dome-shaped ornament was uncovered. The ornament is believed to have been both functional and aesthetic; it held the two bands in place at



Fig. 4. Upright of the gilt-bronze crown from Ji-dong Tomb 2 in Andong. (Gyeongju National Museum).



Fig. 5. Detail of an antler-shaped upright of the gold crown from Geumnyeongchong Tomb in Gyeongju. (National Museum of Korea).



Fig. 6. Detail of an antler-shaped upright of the gilt-bronze crown said to have been discovered in North Gyeongsang Province. (Gyeongju National Museum).



Fig. 7. Gilt-bronze crown from Bisan-dong Tomb 37 in Daegu and detail of cross-shaped ornament connecting the intersecting bands. (National Museum of Korea).

their point of intersection, and it was more decorative than rivets.

To date, intersecting bands with a dome-shaped ornament have also been found on a gilt-bronze crown from Bisan-dong Tomb 37 in Daegu (Fig. 7); a gilt-bronze crown said to be from Ulsan (Fig. 8), which is now in the Ogura Collection of the Tokyo National Museum; and a gilt-bronze crown now at the Musée Guimet in Paris. Furthermore, the gold crown from



Fig. 8. Gilt-bronze crown said to have been discovered in Ulsan (now in the Ogura Collection of Tokyo National Museum) and detail of dome-shaped ornament connecting the intersecting bands. *Korean Cultural Heritage from the Ogura Collection of Tokyo National Museum* (오구라 컬렉션 한국문화재). (Daejeon: National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, 2005, plate 126).



Fig. 9. Gold crown from Seobongchong Tomb in Gyeongju and the bird ornament connecting the intersecting bands. (National Museum of Korea).

Seobongchong Tomb in Gyeongju also has the intersecting bands, but it has decoration of three birds rather than a dome-shaped ornament (Fig. 9).

B. The Bronze Crown

To date, only three Silla crowns made solely from bronze have been found, and they were found in the following three sites: Ulleung-gun, North Gyeongsang Province; Ha-ri, Danyang-gun, North Chun-



Fig. 10. Bronze crown from Ulleung-gun, North Gyeongsang Province. (History of Museum of Ulleung-gun).

gcheong Province; and Chuam-dong, Donghae, Gangwon Province. Only fragments of a bronze crown were found at Ulleung-gun, North Gyeongsang Province (Fig. 10), making it difficult to determine the crown's overall shape and appearance. Apart from their material, the two other bronze crowns are especially interesting, because each has four uprights with shapes that vary from conventional tree-shaped uprights; in contrast, Silla gold and gilt-bronze crowns typically have three tree-shaped uprights and two antler-shaped uprights.

The bronze crown of the Yeongdong region was found in Chuam-dong Tomb Ga-21 in Donghae (Fig. 11), and it is still preserved in the condition in which it was excavated. Some fragments of the skull are still attached to the crown, proving that crown was placed on the head of the tomb occupant. According to the excavation report, the bone fragments were from the skull of an adult female (Catholic Kwandong University Museum 1994). Microscopic and X-ray analyses of this bronze crown provided the evidence for pro-



Fig. 11. Bronze crown from Chuam-dong Tomb Ga-21 in Donghae upon conservation (left) and in X-ray photograph (right). (Chuncheon National Museum).



Fig. 11a. Replica.

ducing the replica. In fact, the X-rays were unable to reveal many parts of the crown, other than the small discs attached for decoration, so the reconstruction process relied heavily on microscopic analysis.

Headband: The excavation report records the initial measurements of the bronze crown and includes a description of its condition and conservation treatment. Notably, however, according to the initial measurements, the full length of the headband was only 43.4 cm, which would seem to be too small to fit over the head of an average adult. Based on these measurements, a paper replica of the crown was made, and it indeed proved to be too small for an adult. Thus, additional measurements were taken after the conservation treatment, and the length of the headband was determined to be 56 cm. Accordingly, the space between the uprights increased to almost twice the original estimate (from 3.4 cm to 7.2 cm).

Uprights: As mentioned, the uprights of the few Silla bronze crowns that have been discovered vary considerably from those of other Silla crowns. For example, no antler-shaped uprights have been found on the bronze crowns, and the main uprights do not have clearly delineated branches. These discrepancies in the uprights suggest that the bronze crowns were not produced at the same time as other Silla crowns, such as the gilt-bronze crown from Ji-dong Tomb 2 in Andong (Fig. 4).

The four uprights of the bronze crown (Fig. 3) from Ha-ri, Danyang-gun, North Chungcheong

Province are perforated with four tiers of holes; each of the holes comprises three overlapping circles, and each is encircled by an elongated ring of punched dots. Notably, the overlapping circles that form the holes are the same size as the small discs that were attached for decoration. Also, as seen in Figure 3a, some of the small discs are not perfectly circular, as some of the edges are very slightly flattened, matching the circumstances of the three overlapping circular perforations. Based on these details, the small circles were likely cut out to make the holes and then attached as the dangling decorative discs.

The uprights of the bronze crown (Fig. 11a) from Chuam-dong, Donghae consist of a single sheet with three tiers of perforated rectangular holes. Two rows of dots were stamped along the outline of the uprights, as well as around the entire circumference of all three holes, rather than each individual hole. Between both the first and second holes and the second and third holes, there are slight indentations on each side, which may be minimal indicators of the branches of the uprights.

Characteristics of the Bronze Crown: As mentioned, only three Silla bronze crowns have thus far been excavated. Based on the relative hierarchy of metals used to make crowns, one might expect that bronze crowns would have been produced in larger quantities than crowns made from gilt-bronze, silver, or gold. This clearly is not the case with Silla, however, as the vast majority of crowns so far discovered have been crafted of gilt-bronze. Thus, it is estimated that bronze crowns did not represent any official political status, unlike crowns of gold, gilt-bronze, and silver, which are believed to have been reserved solely for members of the royal family or other aristocratic rulers, either in the capital or in outlying areas. It seems highly likely that, rather than serving a political function, the bronze crowns were associated with people of some other special status, perhaps related to rituals, in various outlying areas.

The “Miscellaneous” (雜誌) section of volume 32 of *History of the Three Kingdoms* includes a part that is dedicated to “Silla Rituals” (新羅 祭祀). According to the text, Silla state rituals can be divided into three categories based on their importance; the highest level was Daesa (大祀), followed by Jungsa (中祀), and then Sosa (小祀). The text records that, in Jungsa rituals for the “Four Seas,” the northern site of the ritu-

als was Mt. Birye (非禮山) in Siljikgun (悉直郡). There are no other known references to a Mt. Birye, so it is not known which mountain is being referred to. Siljikgun, however, is the area of present-day Donghae and Samcheok, where the bronze crown was found (Kim Changkyum 2007, 167). This historical reference indicates that Silla rituals must once have been held around Donghae, which would seem to support the hypothesis that the bronze crowns were worn by those who led rituals, rather than by those with political power. In addition, as mentioned, the bronze crown from Donghae was worn by a deceased female, and women were known to have served as chief priests or shamans. One of the other Silla bronze crowns was found in Ulleung-gun, an island in the East Sea, more commonly known as Ulleungdo Island. Hence, it seems likely that that crown was related to rituals associated with the sea.

In 505 (sixth year of Silla’s King Jijeung), the Silla central government appointed Yisabu (異斯夫), a famous general, as the local governor of Siljikgun (悉直軍主). Then, in 512 (thirteenth year of King Jijeung), Yisabu conquered Ulleung-gun and claimed it for Silla. Since the island had been conquered, there would have been no reason for the Silla government to confer a crown upon the local rulers. However, the residents of the island, who relied on the sea for their livelihood, almost certainly conducted rituals related to the sea. It is estimated that, after Yisabu’s conquest, as a measure of unity and conciliation, the central government likely allowed the people of Ulleung-gun to perform rituals or related events, almost at the level of state rituals. If so, then it is very likely that the government would have designated a person to be in charge of performing the rituals and then conferred a bronze crown upon that person.

According to the “Silla Rituals” section, the Sosa (i.e., third-level) rituals were associated with different places. One of the places listed for those rituals is Jukji Geupbeolsangun (竹旨 及伐山郡), which refers to the area of present-day Yeongju in North Gyeongsang Province. Notably, this area is adjacent to Ha-ri, Danyang-gun, North Chungcheong Province, where the third bronze crown was found. It is certainly possible that, at the time the record was compiled, the area of Jukji Geupbeolsangun encompassed the area of present-day Ha-ri, Danyang-gun, which again supports the hypothesis that these bronze crowns were associated with rituals. In particular, Jukji (竹旨) is an ancient

name of present-day Jungnyeongno (竹嶺路), an area that has long been an important hub for land transportation. Hence, it would seem that Silla likely held state rituals in sites near the capital, sites representing the four cardinal directions, and sites with heavy movement of people and goods (Koo Hyosun 2008).

III. Crown Ornaments of the Yeongdong Region

In addition to the previously discussed components, some Silla crowns also featured wing-shaped ornaments that were fitted into the crown or attached to the headband. Some of these ornaments resemble the slim wings of a bird, while others are more akin to the wider wings of a butterfly. Importantly, no such wing-shaped crown ornaments have ever been found in Goguryeo or Baekje sites. However, some Goguryeo tomb murals show people wearing helmets, or crowns, with a feather-shaped ornament. The Silla wing-shaped ornaments bear some resemblance to the feather-shaped ornaments in the Goguryeo murals, leading some scholars to speculate that the Silla artifacts reflect the influence of Goguryeo (Park Sunhee 2001; Jin Hongseop 1973). Goguryeo metal crown ornaments were made as grave goods, but unfortunately, there is almost no archeological evidence of such ornaments, making it difficult to determine their exact appearance. By contrast, numerous Silla metal crown ornaments have survived, almost matching the total number of extant Silla crowns.

To date, a total of three Silla crown ornaments have been found in the Yeongdong region, including one gilt-bronze crown ornament and two silver crown ornaments. Initially, the two silver crown ornaments seem to be incomplete sets with some missing pieces. But given their unique characteristics, it is possible that they simply differ from other Silla crown ornaments and are not missing any parts.

In terms of the overall form and style, the crown ornaments from the Yeongdong region do not match the superior quality of the crown ornaments found in the tombs of royalty and other rulers in the Silla capital. Nonetheless, they are believed to have had some symbolic significance and may have even served the function of a crown in outlying regions where no actual crown was present. In particular, the butterfly-shaped gilt-bronze crown ornament from Gangneung has an unconventional shape that has

only been seen in a few artifacts, and thus may hold some special significance for the Yeongnam region.

A. Butterfly-shaped Gilt-bronze Crown Ornament

A gilt-bronze crown ornament with butterfly-shaped wings was excavated from Chodang-dong 84-2 Beonji Tomb A-1 in Gangneung (Fig. 12). Other similarly shaped crown ornaments have been recovered from the following sites: Tap-ri Chamber Tomb 3 in Uiseong-gun (Fig. 13); Myeongnyun-dong Tomb in Andong; Gyo-dong Tomb 11 in Changnyeong (Fig. 14); and Bisan-dong Tomb 59 in Daegu. Each of the three main segments of these ornaments (i.e., the central shaft and the two wings) was made from a single folded sheet of gilt-bronze.

The upper portion of the vertical shaft of the crown ornament from the Yeongdong region is severely corroded. However, the dots along its outer edges suggest that the shaft originally was shaped like five mountain peaks, akin to the ornaments in Figures 13 and 14. In the middle of the vertical shaft, there are two rows of dots forming a V-shape (Fig. 12a). The part of the vertical shaft that connects to the wings is perforated with two small holes that are also decorated with a row of dots (Fig. 12b). Like other butterfly-shaped crown ornaments, this one has dangling small discs attached to both the wings and the vertical shaft. More specifically, there are seven columns of small discs on each wing (Fig. 12) and three columns on the vertical shaft. Each dangling disc was attached with a wire that was twisted approximately five times to form a loop, and then inserted through the back of the sheet (Fig. 12c).

B. Silver Crown Ornament I: Wings with No Vertical Shaft

Two silver wing-shaped ornaments with no vertical shaft were recovered from Chodang-dong 123-3 Beonji Tomb C-1 in Gangneung (Fig. 15) (Ji Hyeonbyeong and Bak Yeonggu 1996). It is not known whether these ornaments had no vertical shaft to begin with, or if the shaft was lost or destroyed after burial. Notably, excavations of Bisan-dong Tomb 51 in Daegu also uncovered silver wing ornaments with no shaft (Fig. 16), but these are the only two known examples of wing-shaped ornaments with no shaft.

The two wings in Figure 15 were cut into their tapered shape from a sheet of silver. Traces on the edges indicate that the cutting was not done with a



Fig. 12. Butterfly-shaped gilt-bronze crown ornament from Chodang-dong 84-2 Beonji Tomb A-1 in Gangneung. (Chuncheon National Museum).
Figs. 12a through 12c. Details.



Fig. 13. Butterfly-shaped gilt-bronze crown ornament from Tap-ri Chamber Tomb 3 in Uiseong-gun, North Gyeongsang Province. (National Museum of Korea).



Fig. 14. Butterfly-shaped gilt-bronze crown ornament from Gyo-dong Tomb 11 in Changnyeong, South Gyeongsang Province. (National Museum of Korea).

scissors, but by repeatedly pressing a sharp instrument through the sheet. Along the outer edge of the wings, a single row of small holes was perforated from the front to the back to make a dot pattern. On the lower edge of the base of each wing, where they

ostensibly would have been attached to the shaft, there is a wedge-shaped outline of perforated holes (Fig. 15a). Indentations between the holes indicate that the holes were once threaded with thin metal wire (Fig. 15a right).



Fig. 15. Pair of wings of a silver crown ornament from Chodang-dong 123-3 Beonji Tomb C-1 in Gangneung. (Chuncheon National Museum).

The wire traces near the base might initially suggest that the wings were originally connected to the vertical shaft with wire, but that is not necessarily the case. For example, another silver crown ornament (Fig. 17) from Kyungpook National University Museum also has holes in the base that are threaded with thin metal wire, but the vertical shaft of that ornament shows no traces of ever having been connected to the wings with metal wire. The same situation applies to silver crown ornaments excavated from various other tombs, including the south mound of Hwangnamdaechong Tombs in Gyeongju; Munsan-ri I Zone Tomb 4-1 in Dalseong-gun, Daegu (Fig. 18); and Imdang Tomb in Gyeongsan, North Gyeongsang Province. Thus, the intended function of the wire near the base of the wings remains unclear.

C. Silver Crown Ornament II: Vertical Shaft with No Wings

Oppositely, excavations at Byeongsan-dong 329 Beonji Tomb in Gangneung (Fig. 19) yielded a vertical shaft with no wing-shaped ornaments. In fact, there are no traces on the shaft to indicate that wing-shaped ornaments were ever attached to it. This is not an isolated case, as vertical shafts lacking wing-shaped ornaments have also been found in other areas, including at Seongsan-dong Tomb 1 in Seongju (Fig. 20) and Gyo-dong Tomb 1 and 11 in Changnyeong (Figs. 21 and 22). Based on the lack of hooks, rivets, or other evidence of physical attachment, it is assumed that the vertical shafts without wing-shaped



Fig. 16. Pair of wings of a silver crown ornament from Bisan-dong tomb 51 in Daegu. (National Museum of Korea).



Fig. 17. Silver crown ornament. (Kyungpook National University Museum).



Fig. 18. Silver crown ornament from Munsan-ri I Zone Tomb 4-1 in Dalseong-gun, Daegu. (Daegu National Museum).



Fig. 19. Vertical shaft of silver crown ornaments with no attached wing-shaped ornaments from Byeongsan-dong 329 Beonji Tomb 26 in Gangneung. (Chuncheon National Museum).
Fig. 19a. Detail of the back.

ornaments were probably once inserted into a crown. In any case, this discovery provides a compelling contrast to the previously discussed wing-shaped ornaments without vertical shafts that were found in Gangneung.

The vertical shaft from Gangneung was created from a sheet of silver that was cut and then folded in half lengthwise down the center. Interestingly, the folding does not seem to have been done with great precision, unlike that of the vertical shaft from Seongsan-dong Tomb 1 (Fig. 20). The upper edge of the Gangneung shaft has five sharp peaks, and the outer edges are lined with two rows of small perforations. There are also two parallel rows of small perforations horizontally traversing the center of the shaft. A guide line was scored on the back, between the two dotted rows (Fig. 19a). Notably, like some other excavated vertical shafts, this one has no perforations along its lower edge. This lack of decoration suggests that the lower part was not exposed, likely due to being inserted into a crown (Figs. 17, 19, and 20).

IV. Conclusion

This paper has utilized the results of recent research to examine the characteristics of Silla crowns and crown ornaments from the Yeongdong region of Gangwon Province, and also to compare these artifacts to counterparts found in other regions. Virtually all of the characteristics of the crowns and crown ornaments from the Yeongdong region are similar to those of related artifacts from other regions. One important exception is the headband of the gilt-bronze crown from Chodang-dong Tomb B-16 in Gangneung (Fig. 2), which is uniquely cut with a serrated edge, an unprecedented feature among Silla crowns. Of course, not every Silla tomb has been discovered, let alone excavated, so it is possible that other such crowns may be discovered in the future. Based on current evidence, however, the serrated edge may be interpreted as a distinctive trait of the Yeongdong region.

To date, only three Silla bronze crowns have been excavated, including the one found in the Yeongdong region, in Chuam-dong, Donghae, Gangwon Province. The discovery of bronze crowns expands our understanding of the variety of materials used to make Silla crowns (from the previously known gold, silver, and gilt bronze). Most importantly, however,

all three bronze crowns were found in sites associated with rituals. Various archaeological findings, technical discoveries, and historical records were presented to suggest that bronze crowns, unlike crowns of gold or gilt bronze, were probably not associated with political status, but were rather linked to the performance of rituals. This hypothesis is supported by the limited number of bronze crowns that have been discovered and by the fact that they have been found only in ritual-related areas distant from the capital. In addition, one bronze crown was discovered in Ulleung-gun, North Gyeongsang Province, an area that had already been conquered by Silla, and thus would not likely have been granted a political crown from the capital.



Fig. 20. Vertical shaft of silver crown ornament with no attached wing-shaped ornaments from Seongsan-dong Tomb 1 in Seongju. (National Museum of Korea).



Fig. 21. Vertical shaft of silver crown ornament with no attached wing-shaped ornaments from Gyo-dong Tomb 11 in Changnyeong. (National Museum of Korea).

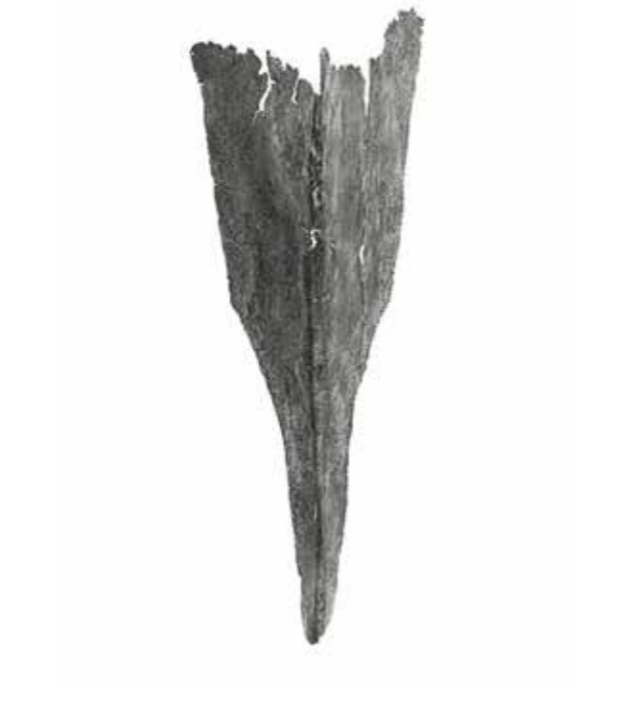


Fig. 22. Vertical shaft of silver crown ornament with no attached wing-shaped ornaments from Gyo-dong Tomb 1 in Changnyeong. (Gimhae National Museum).

The number of excavated Silla crown ornaments almost matches the number of excavated Silla crowns. Three Silla crown ornaments have been found in the Yeongdong region. The aesthetic quality of these ornaments is somewhat inferior to related ornaments found in the royal tombs of Gyeongju; even so, the ornaments from the Yeongdong region are believed to have served an important symbolic function for leaders in the outlying regions of the Silla Kingdom. Notably, the crown ornaments were elaborately decorated with numerous small, dangling discs, such that they are as resplendent as the gilt-bronze crowns themselves. As such, their significance and symbolic function may have been equal to that of the crowns themselves. Also, some of their unconventional characteristics may have been associated with the specific region where they were used.

Finally, two interesting cases of silver crown ornaments found in the Yeongdong region were discussed: one case of wing-shaped ornaments with no attached vertical shaft, and one case of a vertical shaft with no attached wing-shaped ornaments. In several cases, an excavated vertical shaft and wing-shaped ornaments have been joined together during conservation treatment, even though there was no hard evidence to indicate that they were originally attached. A comparison of the silver crown ornaments excavated from the Yeongdong region with those from other regions reveals that there have been other cases of silver crown ornaments that were not attached. Further analysis of tomb murals showing crowns with ornaments or crowns made from organic materials (probably fabric) will surely help to explicate this matter. ㄸ

TRANSLATED BY PARK MYOUNGSOOK

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