



Fig. 1. Vermilion Bird on the south wall of the burial chamber, Gangseodaemyo Tomb, Pyeongyang. *Cultural Assets and Sites in North Korea II* (북한의 문화재와 문화유적 II) (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2000, Fig. 256)

## The Murals of Takamatsuzuka and Kitora Tombs in Japan and Their Relationship to Goguryeo Culture

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### Introduction

Located in the Japanese village of Asuka (明日香村), Nara Prefecture (奈良県), the Kitora Tomb (キトラ古墳) and the Takamatsuzuka Tomb (高松塚古墳) garnered international attention at the time of their discovery because of the strong continental influences they displayed. The discovery in the 1960s of the Takamatsuzuka Tomb confirmed for the first time the existence of mural tombs—a type of tomb different in lineage from decorated tombs (装飾古墳)—and also suggested the possibility that even more might exist in the Nara region. This sparked debate in academic circles both inside and outside of Japan as to the sociopolitical background and the sociocultural conditions that led to the construction of a continental-style mural tomb in Nara. Meanwhile, another mural tomb was discovered in the region in 1983: the Kitora Tomb.

The discovery of the Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tombs also caused much excitement in the Korean academic community, as these tombs suggested a connection with the culture of Korea's Three Kingdoms period (三國時代, 57 BCE – 668)—particularly that of the Goguryeo Kingdom (高句麗, 37 BCE – 668)—a matter that Japanese scholars also acknowledged. This paper offers a detailed look at the Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tombs and examines historical and cultural sources that can shed light on the possible link between Goguryeo tomb murals and the two Japanese mural tombs.

### Transmission of Goguryeo Culture to Japan

Prior to the mid-sixth century, Goguryeo and the Yamato Court of Japan (大和朝廷, Yamato chōtei, c. 4th – 7th century) did not enjoy amicable relations. In the course of providing military assistance to Baekje (百濟, 18 BCE – 660) and Gaya (加耶, 42 – 562), the Yamato Court (hereinafter, Japan) engaged in frequent clashes with Goguryeo. Records show that Goguryeo-Japan relations turned around in the late sixth century, at which time exchanges between the two countries began to flourish. Japanese historical records confirm that in 570, in 573, and again in 574, Goguryeo sent envoys to Japan, establishing a channel for the transmission of Goguryeo culture (Yi Hongjik 1971, 134–136). Goguryeo Buddhist monk Hyepyeon (惠便), who had been residing in Japan, became a mentor to the powerful courtier Soga no Umako (蘇我馬子, 551 – 626) in 584. In 595, Buddhist monk Hyeja (惠慈) arrived in Japan and became tutor to the twenty-two-year-old Prince Shōtoku (聖德太子, 574 – 622). Thereafter, many other Buddhist monks from Goguryeo went to Japan.

The fact that exchanges between Goguryeo and Japan became active from the late sixth century onward and that the people who stood at the forefront were Buddhist monks appears to be closely related to shifts in the regional order at the time. In 552, the allied forces of Silla (新羅, 57 BCE – 935) and Baekje occupied the Han River basin in Goguryeo, and in 568, Silla troops advanced as far north as the eastern



coastal area of Goguryeo, seizing most of the territory that formerly belonged to Okjeo (沃沮) and Eastern Ye (東濊). In China, Northern Zhou (北周, 556–581) destroyed Northern Qi (北齊, 550–577), and the Sui Dynasty (隋, 581–618), which succeeded Northern Zhou, went on in 589 to vanquish the Chen Dynasty (陳, 557–589), the last of China's Southern Dynasties (南朝), signaling the end of the period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties (南北朝, 439–589) and the emergence of a unified China. In Inner Asia, the Gokturks (突厥, a Turkic tribe from Central Asia) destroyed Rouran (柔然, a state of nomadic tribes in Mongolia) and strove to further extend their reach into Goguryeo in the east and China in the south. Facing hostile powers from the west, north, and south, Goguryeo lived under the constant threat of aggression from its neighbors.

In the face of such a geopolitical environment, Goguryeo actively sought ties with Japan in hopes of curbing Silla's territorial ambitions (Lee Sungsi 2010, 49–55). Japan also had good reason to forge relations with Goguryeo, as an alliance with a major power in Northeast Asia could keep Silla, its long-time enemy, in check. Amid such changes in the regional order, Buddhist monks from Goguryeo crossed over to Japan, both to serve their country and to propagate Buddhism.

Development of friendly relations between Goguryeo and Japan permitted a political alliance among Goguryeo, Japan, and Baekje. The envoys the Japanese sent to Goguryeo in 601 returned home by way of Baekje, for instance. In 604, Japan established organizations of professional painters of Goguryeo descent, one of them being the Kibumi no Eshi (黃文畫師), to protect and foster the work of artists who painted Buddhist images at various temples around the country. In 605, King Yeongyang of Goguryeo (嬰陽王, r. 590–618) sent 300 *nyang* (兩, approximately 11.25 kg) of gold to Japan as a contribution toward the construction of Buddhist statues, which can be interpreted as a gesture of goodwill in return for Japan's warm reception of the Goguryeo artists. Aside from Buddhist monks, Goguryeo also sent works of art, a variety of goods, and people with technical expertise and skills in various fields. In 645, when welcoming the envoys from Goguryeo, Emperor Kōtoku (孝德天皇, r. 645–654) issued the following imperial edict proclaiming the heightened friendship between the two states: "Though the history between them

may have been short, the emissaries of the Japanese emperor and the envoys sent by Goguryeo's son of the gods will have a long future ahead of them. It is my sincere wish that the two countries continue to maintain cordial relations for a long time to come."

### Emergence of Goguryeo-Japanese Style Mural Tombs

#### Takamatsuzuka Tomb

The Buddhist monks from Goguryeo who settled in Japan devoted themselves to disseminating new knowledge and technology, and seeing it take root. Buddhist monk Hyeja participated in the construction of the Asuka-dera Temple (飛鳥寺), also known as Hōkō-ji Temple (法興寺), and remained there in order to pursue mission work. Buddhist priest and artist Damjing (曇徴, 579–631) resided in Hōryō-ji Temple (法隆寺), teaching Buddhist scriptures and painting. He is known to have created the famous wall paintings in the temple's main worship hall, or "Kondō" (金堂, "Golden Hall")—a landmark work that allowed ancient Japanese paintings to be viewed in the greater context of East Asian art (Ahn Hwi-



Fig. 2. Interior of the stone chamber, Ouzuka Tomb in Fukuoka (Author's photograph)

Joon 1988, 396).

After the downfall of Goguryeo in 668, displaced Goguryeo people crossed the sea to Japan. The influx of immigrants from a country with a more-advanced technology and culture had a positive influence on the development of Japanese culture. Mass migrations of people from Baekje and Goguryeo in the late seventh century ushered in a new wave of change in Japanese culture (Lee Jinhee and Kang Jaeeoun 1998, 71–73). Of particular note in terms of art and culture are major developments in Buddhist art and new trends in burial practices and funerary art.

Among the Goguryeo immigrants to Japan, those that possessed specialized knowledge or skills were offered the opportunity to work in government offices or court-sponsored workshops in their fields of expertise. People with exceptional skills in weaving were able to work in the government bureau of textiles, for example, while those highly experienced in civil engineering or construction were offered employment at the government construction bureau. That is how Koma no Kasei (高麗加西滌), an artist of Goguryeo descent, came to play a prominent role in the design and embroidering of the Tenjukoku Shuchō Mandala (天壽國曼荼羅繡帳), which was made to honor Prince Shōtoku following his death in 622 and now is a Japanese registered national treasure (Ueda Masaki 1972, 140–141).

The construction of stone-lined or stone-chambered tombs using granite slabs in the Nara and Kyoto (京都) regions at the end of the seventh century is also closely related to the influx of immigrants from Baekje and Goguryeo (Son Yeongjong 2000, 245–247). The early stone-chambered tombs, which are concentrated in the Kitakyushu (北九州) region, were built using large unworked stones. These early tombs are termed "decorated tombs," because the interiors of the tomb chambers were painted in yellowish-red and the walls were embellished with various patterns (Fig. 2). The new types of stone-chambered tombs that appeared in Nara toward the end of the seventh century share some similarities in structure with the decorated tombs, but also show distinctive characteristics that clearly set them apart from decorated tombs (Saito Tadashi 1997, 142–144).

The mural tombs are especially noteworthy among these new types of stone-lined and stone-chambered tombs found in the Kansai (關西) region. The Takamatsuzuka Tomb and the Kitora Tomb,

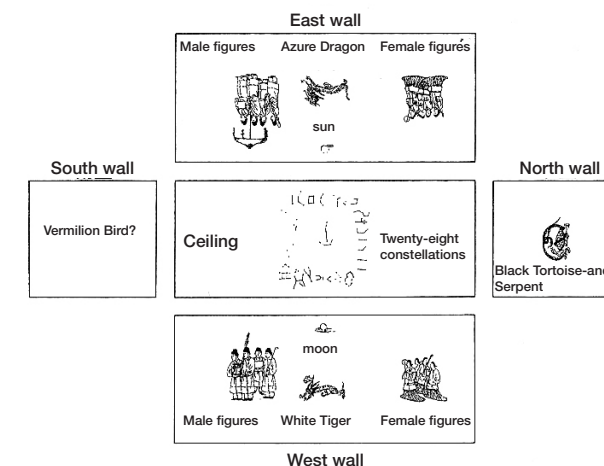


Fig. 3. Layout of murals. Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *The Birth of "Nippon": The Asuka and Fujiwara Capitals* (飛鳥・藤原京展) (Osaka: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 2002, p. 123)

both in Nara Prefecture, are the most salient as they offer insight into new cultural developments in Japan from the late seventh century onward (Yamamoto Tadanao 2010, 4–5). The mural paintings in the two tombs exhibit influence from late Goguryeo tomb murals representing the Four Directional Deities (四神)—the mystical animals guarding the four cardinal directions—as well as from the seventh-century murals, epitaphs, and stone-coffin decorative schemes of tombs from China's Tang Dynasty (唐, 618–907 CE) (Monta Seiichi 2003, 180–197).

Dating to the early eighth century, the Takamatsuzuka Tomb is a stone-lined tomb oriented toward the south. Despite some similarities to those from Goguryeo and Tang tombs, its murals also show distinct differences in their choice of subject matter, which includes both human figures and the Four Directional Deities (Fig. 3). Nothing remains of the mural on the tomb's south wall (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2004, 29–30). However, given that the other three walls feature paintings of the Azure Dragon (青龍), White Tiger (白虎), and Black Tortoise-and-Serpent (玄武), the mural adorning the south wall must originally have depicted the fourth guardian deity, the Vermilion Bird (朱雀). The Azure Dragon is depicted in the center of the east wall, accompanied by four male figures to the south (i.e., to its right) and four female figures to the north (left). The sun appears above the dragon. In like manner, the White Tiger occupies the center of the west wall, with four male





Fig. 4. Black Tortoise-and-Serpent on the north wall, Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *National Treasure: Takamatsuzuka Tomb Murals* (國寶 高松塚古墳壁畫) (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijyutsu Shuppan, 2004, Fig. 48)

figures to the south (left) and four female figures to the north (right). The moon appears above the tiger. The Black Tortoise-and-Serpent graces the north wall. Divided into groups of seven lunar mansions according to the four cardinal directions, the twenty-eight constellations enliven the ceiling stone.

The mural composition's most striking feature is not what is depicted, but what is lacking: the walls that the mystical animals inhabit are wholly lacking in background ornamentation. In Tang-Dynasty tomb murals and stone-coffin embellishments, the Four Directional Deities were typically painted against an ornate background including clouds, constellations, and honeysuckle scrolls. The only other examples of four-deity paintings on an unembellished background are in tombs in the Pyeongyang (平壤) region that date to the late Goguryeo period (Jeon Hotae 2004, 262-268). This strongly suggests that the artist who painted the guardian deities in the Takamatsuzuka Tomb was either influenced by or adopted the artistic conventions of Pyeongyang-style tomb murals.



Fig. 5. Black Tortoise-and-Serpent on the north wall of the burial chamber, Gangseodaemyo Tomb, Pyeongyang. *Cultural Assets and Sites in North Korea II* (북한의 문화재와 문화유적 II) (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2000, Fig. 266)

Only the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent, depicted in the center of the north wall, is presented as an independent, stand-alone motif without accompanying figures (Fig. 4). Although not found in Tang murals, such a composition is a common feature of four-deity murals of the late Goguryeo period (Fig. 5). The presentation of the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent—the tutelary deity of the north—as an independent theme reflects the artistic conventions of Goguryeo tomb murals.

The Azure Dragon on the east wall and the White Tiger on the west wall also appear as virtually independent motifs, which is reminiscent of the pictorial compositions of four-deity murals from the late Goguryeo period. The addition of human figures to the right and left of the Azure Dragon and White Tiger clearly reveals Tang influence (Monta Seiichi 2003, 180-181). In particular, the ladies behind the two divine creatures partially overlap one another, stand in varied poses, and face in different directions, as if engaged in conversation. This is indicative of the artistic techniques employed in rendering groups of human figures in Tang-era tomb murals (Figs. 6 and 7).

The sun and moon, which appear above the Azure Dragon and White Tiger, respectively, seem to float above the thin layers of clouds, differing from the preferred style of depicting the sun and moon in Goguryeo and Tang mural paintings. Stylistic parallels occur in a few early Tang paintings, but such was not the fashion at the time (Donohashi Akio 2010, 23-25).

A close examination of the murals in the Takamatsuzuka Tomb reveals the Tang and Goguryeo works of funerary art that influenced them. Images similar to the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent on the north wall can be found in brick reliefs from China's Northern and Southern Dynasties, but a closer parallel from a period closer in time is the mural representing the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent in Gangseodaemyo Tomb (江西大墓) of Goguryeo. It is difficult to find comparable examples in tomb murals, epitaphs, or stone-coffin engravings from the Tang Dynasty. The depiction of the tortoise's head in a manner that resembles that of a ferocious animal is reminiscent of the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent in Goguryeo Gosan-ri Tomb No. 1 (高山里 1 號墳).

The decorative band around the neck of the Azure Dragon on the east wall is especially striking. Al-



Fig. 6. Female figures in the north section of the east wall, Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *Mural Tomb: National Treasure Asuka Takamatsuzuka Tomb* (壁畫古墳 國寶飛鳥高松塚) (Kyoto: Benrido, 2000, Fig. 3)



Fig. 7. Female figures in the south section of the east wall in the antechamber, Tomb of Princess Yongtai (永泰公主墓), Xi'an (西安), Shaanxi Province. *Chinese Art Collection: Paintings* (中國美術全集, 繪畫編) 12 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1989, Fig. 119)

though the details differ, it bears a close resemblance to the five-colored decorative band on the neck of the Azure Dragon featured in late Goguryeo tomb murals (Figs. 8 and 9). This stylistic feature is not





Fig. 8. Azure Dragon on the east wall, Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *Murals of the Kitora Tomb* (キトラ古墳と壁畫) (Nara: Asuka Town Tourism Promotion Agency, 2001, p. 13)



Fig. 9. Azure Dragon on the east wall of the burial chamber, Ohoebun Tomb No. 4, Ji'an, Jilin province. *Cultural Assets and Sites in North Korea II* (북한의 문화재와 문화유적 II) (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2000, Fig. 198)

found in Tang murals depicting the Azure Dragon. Called *cheokmok* in Korean (尺木, Ch. *chimu*), the red, mane-like elements on the Azure Dragon's neck, body, and tail reflect the influence of late Goguryeo tomb murals. In many ways, the head of the White Tiger on the west wall resembles the White Tiger in the murals of Goguryeo Deokhwa-ri Tomb No. 1 (德花里1號墳) and Gosan-ri Tomb No. 1 (Figs. 10 and 11). The White Tiger's stripes also more closely resemble those on the White Tiger in late Goguryeo tomb murals than those in Tang murals. Another stylistic affinity shared with late Goguryeo four-deity murals is the two-dimensional character of the bodies of the Azure Dragon and White Tiger, which contrasts with the three-dimensional character of the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent. By contrast, Tang four-deity murals clearly shows that significant effort went into depicting a voluminous body.

The style of the human figures represented on the east and west walls hints both at influence from Tang tomb murals and a connection with Goguryeo tomb

murals. The full-face renderings of the plump, round faces reflect traces of the style of the late Northern and Southern Dynasties of China, whereas the flow of the lines that define the eyebrows, the upper part of the forehead, and the hair on the nape of the neck is reminiscent of human figures in early Tang tomb murals (Figs. 12 and 13).

At the same time, the design and style of the female figures' multi-colored, pleated skirts—which delight in the strong contrast between the red and green pleats and in the lines defining the pleats that are so straight that they suggest the use of a ruler—bear a striking resemblance to the noblewoman's attire in the procession scene on the west wall of the burial chamber in Goguryeo Susan-ri Tomb (水山里古墳) (Kim Jonghyeok 1974, 232-233) (Figs. 14 and 15). The long *jeogori*, or upper garment, which covers a good portion of the skirt, and the fastening of the jackets from right to left must derive from the style of dress transmitted from Goguryeo to Japan (Shirai-shi Taiichirō 1993, 118-119).

The male figures on the west wall, unlike those on the east wall, appear uniform and are arranged in a straight line with minimal variation in pose. This compositional arrangement and style of representation recall a still image, a departure from the general trend in Tang paintings. The twenty-eight constellations painted on the ceiling stone are related to the Four Directional Deities and stem from the astronomical charts in late Goguryeo tomb murals (Kim Ilgwon 2003, 256-268).

#### Kitora Tomb

Dating to a slightly later period than the Takamatsuzuka Tomb, the Kitora Tomb also features murals on its walls: the Vermilion Bird on the south wall; the Black Tortoise-and-Serpent and several of the twelve Chinese zodiac animals on the north wall; the Azure Dragon and several of the twelve Chinese zodiac animals on the east wall; the White Tiger and several of the twelve Chinese zodiac animals on the west wall; and an astronomical chart on the ceiling stone (Fig. 16). Murals featuring both the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac and the Four Directional Deities, as in the Kitora Tomb, have yet to be found in Goguryeo and Tang tombs.

The placement of the twelve zodiac animals on the lower half of the wall and the guardian deities on the upper half indicates that the Kitora tomb



Fig. 10. White Tiger on the west wall, Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *Murals of the Kitora Tomb* (キトラ古墳と壁畫) (Nara: Asuka Town Tourism Promotion Agency, 2001, p. 12)



Fig. 11. White Tiger on the west wall of the burial chamber, Deokhwa-ri Tomb No. 1, Daedong-gun, South Pyeongan Province. *Cultural Assets and Sites in North Korea II* (북한의 문화재와 문화유적 II) (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2000, Fig. 108)





Fig. 12. Male figures in the southern section of the east wall, Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *National Treasure: Takamatsuzuka Tomb Murals* (國寶 高松塚古墳壁畫) (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijyutsu Shuppan, 2004, Fig. 9)



Fig. 13. Honor guards on the east wall of the entranceway, Tomb of Prince Zhanghuai (章懷太子墓), Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. *Chinese Art Collection: Paintings* (中國美術全集, 繪畫編) 12 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1989, Fig. 117)

murals were painted during a transitional period that witnessed a thematic shift from the Four Directional Deities to the twelve zodiac animals. As in the Takamatsuzuka Tomb, the Kitora Tomb features the Four Directional Deities as its central theme; each

set against an unembellished background, one of the Four Directional Deities appears on each of the corresponding walls. The difference from the Takamatsuzuka Tomb is that in the murals of the Kitora Tomb human figures do not accompany the guardian



Fig. 14. Female figures on the northern section of the east wall, Takamatsuzuka Tomb, Nara. *National Treasure: Takamatsuzuka Tomb Murals* (國寶 高松塚古墳壁畫) (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijyutsu Shuppan, 2004, Fig. 98)



Fig. 15. Noblewoman in the procession scene on the west wall of the burial chamber, Susan-ri Tomb, Nampo, South Pyongan Province (Photograph by Kim Gwangseop)

deities; in fact, the presentation of the Four Deities is almost identical in composition to the four-deity murals of the late Goguryeo period.

Featured as independent motifs, the Azure Dragon, White Tiger, and Black Tortoise-and-Serpent were executed in a style similar to that of murals in tombs in the Pyeongyang region from the late Goguryeo period. The depiction of the crest and wings of the Vermilion Bird on the south wall (Fig. 17) bears a closer resemblance to late Goguryeo tomb murals (Fig. 1) than to those of Tang murals. However, the rendering of the Vermilion Bird's tail, with its multiple layers of long feathers arranged laterally in something of a horizontal line, diminishes the overall sense of dynamism compared to the Vermilion Bird found in late Goguryeo-period tomb murals, in which the bird's tail often rises vertically in graceful fashion. Given that the divine animals on the walls of the Kitora Tomb share many similarities with those of the Takamatsuzuka Tomb, a Vermilion Bird similar in style to the one in the Kitora Tomb likely once graced the south wall of the Takamatsuzuka Tomb.

The remnants of the twelve zodiac animals and other remaining traces painted on the walls suggest that three animals originally appeared on each of the four walls. Adopted from Sui and Tang, Silla employed the twelve Chinese zodiac animals for funerary figurines as well as for decorative stone carvings and reliefs in the tombs. It is difficult to determine whether the iconography of the Kitora Tomb murals resulted from the transmission of ideas and artistic styles from Silla to Japan or from Japan's direct cultural exchanges with Sui and Tang (Iwase Tōru 2001,

16-21).

The sun, moon, and stars that appear on the ceiling stone are comparable to those in the astronomical charts in tomb murals from the middle and late Goguryeo period. Recent studies on the arrangement and position of the stars in the Kitora Tomb strongly suggest that the location of observation was Pyeongyang, which was the last capital of Goguryeo from 427 until 668 (Son Yeongjong 2000, 264-267) (Figs. 18 and 19).

The twelve zodiac animals are especially noteworthy aspects of the mural in the Kitora Tomb. The animal in the northern section of the east wall, which remains relatively intact, corresponds to the third of the twelve earthly branches—that is, to the tiger of the Chinese zodiac—when the center of the north wall is taken as the starting point (Yoshinori Aboshi 2006, 316-319) (Fig. 20). The figure has the body of a human but the head of a tiger; its stance and general appearance project the powerful energy of a warrior and thus recall the gatekeepers in tombs of the middle and late Goguryeo period (Fig. 21). The expressive technique reflects a connection to the depiction of human figures in Goguryeo murals.

### Japanese Culture in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries and Goguryeo-Japanese Style Tomb Murals

Exchanges between Goguryeo and Japan flourished at the turn of the seventh century, and cultural imports from Goguryeo prompted the Japanese to pur-

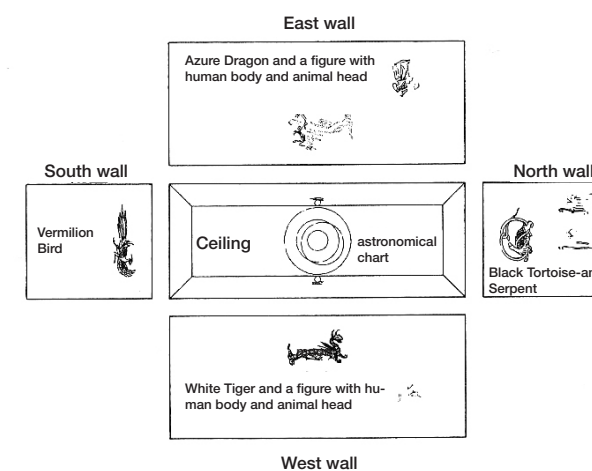


Fig. 16. Layout of murals, Kitora Tomb, Nara. *The Birth of "Nippon": The Asuka and Fujiwara Capitals* (飛鳥・藤原京展) (Osaka: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 2002, p. 125)



Fig. 17. Vermilion Bird on the south wall, Kitora Tomb, Nara. *Murals of the Kitora Tomb* (キトラ古墳と壁畫) (Nara: Asuka Town Tourism Promotion Agency, 2001, p. 8)





Fig. 18. Astronomical chart on the ceiling stone, Kitora Tomb, Nara. *Murals of the Kitora Tomb* (キトラ古墳と壁画) (Nara: Asuka Town Tourism Promotion Agency, 2001, p.14)



Fig. 19. Astronomical chart on the ceiling stone of the burial chamber, Jinpatri Tomb No. 1 (眞坡里1號墳), Pyeongyang. *Cultural Assets and Sites in North Korea II* (북한의 문화재와 문화유적 II) (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2000, Fig. 141)

sue direct exchanges with China by sending envoys on diplomatic missions to the Sui Dynasty. After Tang succeeded Sui, Japan sent the first state envoys on a diplomatic mission to Tang (遣唐使) in 630 in

order to acquire more elements of Chinese culture for Japan.

As Japan became embroiled in the war between the Baekje and the Silla-Tang alliance in the mid-seventh century, however, exchanges between Japan and Tang Chinese were interrupted until Japan resumed its diplomatic missions to China in 703. During this hiatus, Japan concentrated on assimilating the elements of culture acquired during its previous six missions to China and the cultural imports brought by Baekje and Silla immigrants.

The emergence of a new regional order in East Asia early in the eighth century, led by Tang China, prompted Japan to seek broader cultural exchanges. The large-scale Japanese diplomatic missions to Tang included individuals representing diverse professions, including painters. Numerous individuals descended from Goguryeo and Baekje immigrants were allowed to join these missions to China because of their extensive experience in cultural exchanges with other countries (Donohashi Akio 2010, 152-166).

In 604, Japan established the first organizations of professional painters; they comprised mainly descendants of immigrants from the Korean Peninsula. In 612, members of the Kibumi (黄文 or 黄書) and Yamashiro (山背) clans, both of Goguryeo descent, were appointed as professional painters by the imperial court (Yi Hongjik 1971, 229-234; Ueda Masaki 1972, 140-141). The Goguryeo priest and artist Damjing, who went to Japan in 610 and introduced paper, ink, and painting pigments, presumably exerted some influence on this decision. Thereafter, such artists of Goguryeo descent as Koma no eshi Komaro (高麗畫師子麻呂) played a prominent role in the creation of Buddhist works of art, as indicated by historical records, a situation made possible in large part by the extensive exchanges between the two countries in the early seventh century.

Descendants of Goguryeo immigrants played a vital role in introducing Tang culture to Japan, as did the technocrat Kibumi no Honjitsu (黄文本實, 黄文連本實 or 黄書本實), who was from a Goguryeo painter's family and who was included in Japan's sixth diplomatic mission to Tang China (Yi Hongjik 1971, 229-234). Of course, the artistic techniques employed in decorating royal palaces and temples were among the Tang cultural imports. The establishment of a government painting bureau in Japan in 701 is intimately related to the increased demand for art and to



Fig. 20. Tiger from the twelve zodiac animals on the north wall, Kitora Tomb, Nara. *The 12 Animals of the Chinese Zodiac in the Kitora Tomb Murals: Rat, Ox and Tiger* (キトラ古墳壁画十二支—子・丑・寅—) Kyoto: Asuka Historical Museum, 2008, Fig. 3)



Fig. 21. Gatekeeper on the east wall of the antechamber, Jangcheon Tomb No. 1, Ji'an, Jilin province. 1993. *Goguryeo Tomb Murals of the Ji'an Region* (集安 高句麗 高句麗墓) (Seoul: Chosun Ilbo Co. Ltd., 1993, Fig. 51)

the need for a government office to oversee, sponsor, and promote the development of artistic techniques (Donohashi Akio 2010, 152-166).

The Asuka (飛鳥時代, 552–645) and Hakuho (白鳳時代, 645–710) periods of ancient Japan are marked by the continuous influx of diverse knowledge, technology, and culture from abroad, which laid the foundation for the development of a new culture with a distinctly native style. New cultural imports introduced to the country in the seventh century were adopted, adapted, and assimilated in order to create a distinct Japanese culture in the eighth century. Among those that played an active role during this period of cultural transition were Baekje and Goguryeo immigrants and their descendants.

The Kibumi and other clans of Goguryeo descent, who stood at the forefront in opening the new horizon for ancient Japanese art, likely engaged in art-related professions in their home country. They most probably participated in various projects concerning funerary and Buddhist art that flourished in Goguryeo, particularly in Pyeongyang and Gungnaeseong (國內城), present-day Ji'an (集安) in Jilin Province, China. The Japanese imperial court appointed the members of these clans as official court-sponsored painters, acknowledging the extensive knowledge and experience they had acquired in Goguryeo.

Members of Goguryeo immigrant clans participated in many Japanese missions to Tang, taking ample opportunity to learn about Chinese culture; this naturally resulted in the assimilation of elements of Tang culture into the Goguryeo cultural tradition. The Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tomb murals clearly reflect such cultural trends in early eighth-century Japan, led by clans of Goguryeo origin.

The Takamatsuzuka Tomb murals well-demonstrate the integration of cultural elements newly adopted from Tang into the Goguryeo painting tradition. The unique mural composition combining themes with different cultural origins—human figures from Tang paintings, for example, and the Four Directional Deities from Goguryeo tomb murals—is the earliest example in the development of Japanese-style tomb murals. The figures' style of dress, their postures, and the objects they hold not only show influences from Goguryeo and Tang but reveal a unique assimilation of foreign cultural elements.

The murals in the Kitora Tomb also present a synthesis of Goguryeo-style mural compositions with



important themes from Tang funerary art. They also exhibit distinct differences from the Takamatsuzuka Tomb, however, even though the two tombs were constructed relatively close in time to each other. The twelve Chinese zodiac animals represent a new theme featured in the Kitora Tomb murals together with the Four Directional Deities. The artist appears to have been influenced by the new styles of pictorial composition in epitaphs on stone-chamber covers popular at that time in Tang China. In addition, the astronomical chart that adorns the ceiling originated in Goguryeo, yet it reveals slight differences in detail from those in Goguryeo tombs, indicating that the artist attempted a style of his own, a style distinctly different from that of earlier tomb murals.

The Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tomb murals reflect influences from the Goguryeo cultural tradition merged with the new cultural elements from Tang China. Even so, the changes in mural composition and artistic techniques also indicate an attempt to create a unique style distinct from that of Goguryeo and Tang. The two tombs reflect the early stages of the effort in Japan to establish a Japanese cultural identity and to develop a distinct Japanese style. The two tomb murals are especially noteworthy in that, although they do not yet manifest a firmly established Japanese style in terms of motif, composition, or artistic technique, they do show initial attempts at such. Because their murals exhibit the strong influence of Goguryeo, the Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tombs can be classified as Goguryeo-Japanese style mural tombs.

Conclusion

The murals in the Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tombs reveal the influence of Tang culture on the Goguryeo tradition in the choice of themes, composition, and technique. They also introduce features of mural composition unseen in Goguryeo or Tang tomb murals, however, as they were produced at a time when Japan was beginning to seek its own cultural identity. Both tomb structure and mural styles suggest the strong possibility that the people who constructed the two tombs and painted the murals were descendants of Goguryeo immigrants. It is also probable that the interred were government officials of Goguryeo descent.

From many points of view, the two tombs can be classified as Goguryeo-Japanese style mural tombs. However, the task at hand in Japan in the eighth century was the establishment of a Japanese identity and the development of a distinct Japanese style and culture. Descendants of Baekje and Goguryeo immigrants also would have actively participated in such endeavors. The Takamatsuzuka and Kitora tombs provide insight into how Goguryeo immigrant clans understood and responded to the tasks of the day. ㄸ

TRANSLATED BY PARK HYUN-AH

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