



Pungnap-toseong, which was the first capital of Baekje. The green zones are the earthen wall. (Picture by Naver)

Baekje

The First Country that Designated Seoul as their Capital.

Period	18 BCE - 660 CE	Government	Monarchy
Capital	Seoul (18 BC-475 AD)	Population	750K (in 7 th c.)
Language	Ancient Korean	Religion	Buddhism



Baekje at its height at 375 CE

Location

Baekje was located in southwestern Korea. At its peak in the 4th century, Baekje controlled most of western Korea, as far north as Pyongyang. Some records note that Baekje even held territory in China, but this is controversial.



Mongchontoseong (3rd c., Seoul, Korea)
The first fortress of Baekje.

Brother of Goguryeo

Baekje was founded by Onjo, the third son of Goguryeo's founder Jumong.

Jumong had left a son, Yuri, in Buyeo when he left that kingdom. After Goguryeo was founded, Yuri arrived in Goguryeo and became a crown prince.

Onjo left Goguryeo and founded his own kingdom in Seoul.

Friend of Japan

Baekje was the first and only country that Japan gave military support to in Korean history.

Baekje and Japan were strong allies. There was a Tenno* who was half-Baekje. Also, Baekje had a great cultural influence on Japan. Even some restored Baekje buildings are quite similar to buildings of Japanese style like Horyuji.



Horyuji (7th c., Nara, Japan)
(Picture by Wikipedia user Nekosuki)

Buddhism and Taoism

The art of Baekje was based on Buddhism and Taoism.

The burner on the left shows that art at its peak. This gilt-bronze burner is gorgeous and very detailed. Experts say it is even more beautiful when it burns incense and emits smoke.



Gilt-bronze Incense Burner of Baekje
(6th c., Korea)

Tomb of King Muryeong

This tomb was discovered in 1971. It had not been robbed because it was buried entirely, and the mound was too low to suggest that the slope was a tomb. Lots of artifacts from Baekje was discovered here.

Without the discovery of the tomb, we would not know as much about the culture and technology of Baekje.



Interior of the tomb of King Muryeong (Korea)
This photo is of a replica of the real tomb

Three Keys to the Baekje

1. Baekje changed its name three times in its history.
2. The correct location of Baekje's first capital is not exactly the same as that of current Seoul, but rather, in the southern part of Seoul.
3. The Japanese Emperor Ganmu was a descendent of King Muryeong of Baekje.

* The emperor of Japan