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JEJU ISLAND AS A CASE STUDY IN ANCIENT ISLAND-MAINLAND INTERACTION

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INTRODUCTION

Jeju Island (Jeju-do 濟州島) lies west of where the Korea Strait joins into the East China Sea, and about 85 km south of South Jeolla Province (Jeolla-namdo 全羅南道, South Korea) (Fig. 1). It is highly praised for its natural beauty and distinct culture, and the picturesque waterfalls of the volcanic island draw flocks of honeymoon couples flying in from the Korean Peninsula and elsewhere. The island is of oval shape, measuring ca. 64 km from east to west and 26 km from north to south. In the centre of Jeju Island, mount Halla 漢拏 – the highest peak of South Korea – rises up to 1,950 meters. While nowadays tourism wins an increasing share of the income of the approximately half-million people, the traditional economic sectors comprise pasturage, horse breeding, fruit growing – especially tangerines, fishery and aquaculture.

In historical perspective, the cultural developments of Jeju Island seem to have always been determined by

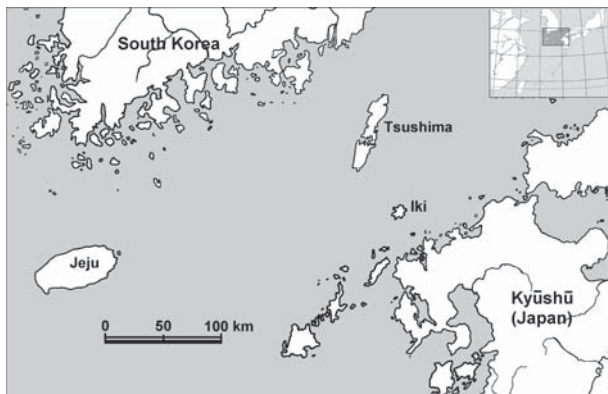


Fig. 1: Location of Jeju Island.

its relatively remote location. Contrary to other islands in the vicinity of the Japanese and Korean coasts, such as the Izu Islands (Jap. *Izu-shotō* 伊豆諸島) off the Izu Peninsula, or Tsushima 対馬 in the Korea Strait, Jeju neither had natural resources of any interest for prehistoric people, nor did it function as a passage area, owing to its geographic position. Instead, Jeju developed its own cultural characteristics from ancient times on and appears cut off from the main streams of cultural and political progress in East Asia. It was only in the early Goryeo 高麗 period (918-1392) that Jeju, or Tamna 耽羅, as it was known then, officially became a part of the Korean Kingdom. Jeju was used after the Mongol invasion as a pasture place for horses, and as a place of exile for disagreeable subjects during the Joseon 朝鮮 dynasty, making the remoteness of Jeju Island seem even stronger.

The following study searches to question the concept of remoteness and distinctiveness of Jeju culture with a focus on the material from the proto-historic ages in the Korea Strait area. The early centuries CE saw a sudden rush in socio-cultural achievements in the south of the Korean Peninsula and in the western Japanese Archipelago. The knowledge of wet rice agriculture had already initiated a significant population growth and the associated necessities of rural economic organization along with new impulses from the Chinese mainland resulted in the advent of small principalities throughout the Korea Strait region.

Chinese documentary sources for the first time paid broader attention to the situation of the so-called Han 韓 communities in the Korean south and the Wo 倭 (Jap. Wa; Kor. Wae) living in the Japanese islands (Fig. 2). Archaeological sources from this period reveal a closely connected cultural sphere in this region, with a lively



Fig. 2: Geography of the Eastern Barbarians.

trade going on across the Korea Strait. Jeju’s position within – or beyond – this cultural sphere at the eastern edge of the East China Sea will be the focus of attention.

THE EARLY CULTURES AROUND THE KOREA STRAIT

In earlier studies on the interrelationship between metal age cultures in western Japan and in southern Korea, I have characterized the Korea Strait as the “the most important connecting road” within a joint cultural sphere spread throughout the Korean south and the north of Kyūshū (SEYOCK 2003:75; 2004:230–31). While trade and travel across the Korea Strait is detectable from an archaeological perspective even from earlier cultural stages, the period between the late second and first century BCE to the third century CE is of special significance. It is at the beginning of this period that the establishment of the Chinese commanderies, first and foremost Lelang 樂浪郡, in the northwest of the Korean Peninsula, initiated not only a rush in the technological and social development of a civilization that already carried both indigenous and foreign elements. It moreover is due to the presence and the interest of the Middle Kingdom in the ‘barbarian’ people beyond the borders of Chinese culture that information and news from the Peninsula and the Archipelago were compiled by historiographers, resulting in a first comprehensive ‘handbook’ of the so-called Eastern Barbarians in the 3rd century CE, the (Chin.) *Wei-zhi Dongyi zhuan* 魏志東夷傳 (Fig. 3).

An analysis of the text, which is composed of infor-

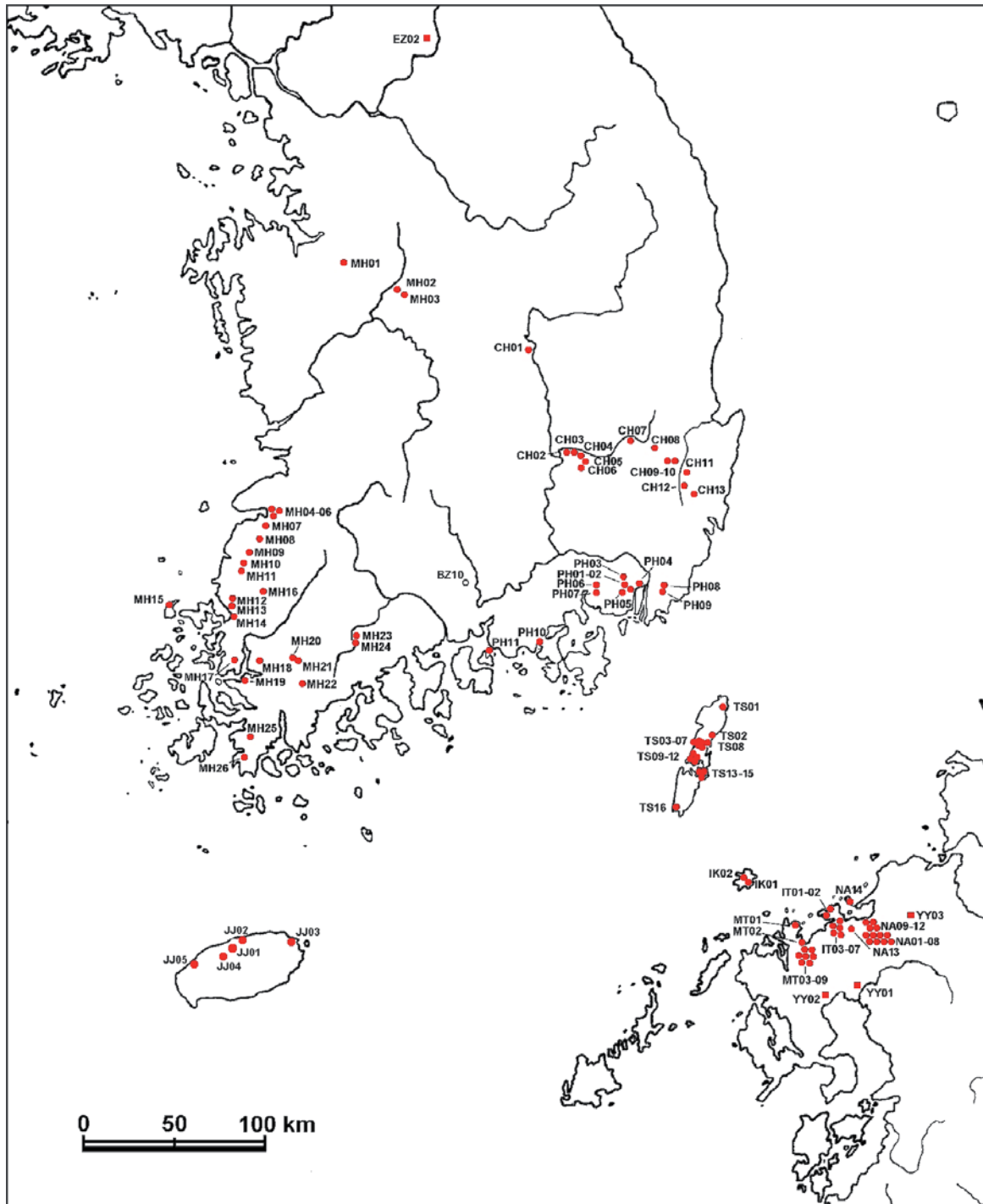


Fig. 3: Extract from the *Wei-zhi Dongyi zhuan*, Han-zhuan (Zhou-hu/ Juho marked).

mation from different time strata, revealed that refugees of late Warring States period China, from the north of the Korean Peninsula, as well as from the territories of the Chinese commanderies, had been relocating to the Korean south, especially in the southeast, at various stages in proto-historic times, and apparently in differing ethnic compositions. This development took place over a period of several centuries, and accordingly the ‘new’ cultures in the Korean south, which are – owing to their material heritage – moreover clearly detectable from an archaeological perspective, carried elements from different geographic origins, and from various cultural layers and affiliations. Spreading from an early core center in the Korean southeast westwards and southwards across the Korea Strait and to the north of Kyūshū, these *impeti* led to a remarkable cultural sphere characterized by hierarchical structured societies on their way towards a chiefdom stage, with a subsistence based on rice agriculture, maritime resources, metal production, and far-distance trade during the centuries between 1BCE and 3CE (Fig. 4). For this period I identified three– or respectively four – different traditions contributing to the advent of what I designated the ‘Han and Wa culture’. In the following these traditions – the Han Chinese tradition, the nomadic heritage, as well as the peninsula and island traditions – will be briefly summarized, as they constitute the cultural background for an analysis of the characteristics of the cultural development of Jeju Island.

THE HAN CHINESE TRADITION

Cultural elements of Han Chinese tradition spread throughout the (Korean) Han and Wa cultural sphere after the establishment of the Chinese commanderies in the north of the Korean Peninsula. One of the main complexes concerns horse-and-carriage equipment (Fig. 5). Single-axle two-horse carriages were common within Han 漢 Chinese elite culture. Bronze fittings and ornaments, like umbrella rib points (Fig. 5a), which were in use for fixing the roof of a carriage, iron bridles (Fig. 5b) or horse bells (Fig. 5c), have been found at various sites



Key (for all maps) to sites mentioned in the text (for other sites see SEYOCK 2004)

CH01 Nakdong-ri 洛東里	JJ02 Samyang-dong 三陽洞	PH08 Nopo-dong 老圃洞
CH02 Pyeongni-dong 平里洞	JJ03 Jongdal-ri 終達里	TS03 Sakadō サカドウ
CH03 Bisan-dong 飛山洞	JJ04 Yongdam-dong 龍潭洞	TS04 Takamatsunodan タカマツノダン
CH06 Jisan-dong 池山洞	KF03 Sakakiyama 榭山	TS05 Shimo-gayanoki 下ガヤノキ
CH07 Eocun-dong 漁隱洞	MH02 Songdae-ri 송대리	TS06 Kisaka 木坂
CH08 Sara-ri 舍羅里	MH03 Bongmyeong-dong 鳳鳴洞	TS09 Shigenodan シゲノダン
CH10 Hwangseong-dong 皇城洞	MH10 Gundong-ra 郡洞라	TS11 Tōzaki 唐崎
CH11 Joyang-dong 朝陽洞	MT02 Sakuranobaba 桜馬場	YY01 Yoshinogari 吉野ヶ里
CH12 Ipsil-ri 入室里	MT09 Kashiwazaki 柏崎	YY03 Tate'iwa 立岩
IK01 Harunotsuji 原の辻	PH03 Daeseong-dong 大成洞	YY11 Asakawabata 浅川端
IK02 Karakami カラカミ	PH05 Yangdong-ri	YY16 Kuwamizu 神水
IT03 Mikumo-minami-shōji 三雲南小路	PH05 Yangdong-ri 良洞里	YY17 Dōzō 道蔵
IT06 Hirabaru 平原	PH06 Daho-ri 茶戶里	
JJ01 Sanjihang 山地港	PH07 Samdong-dong 三東洞	

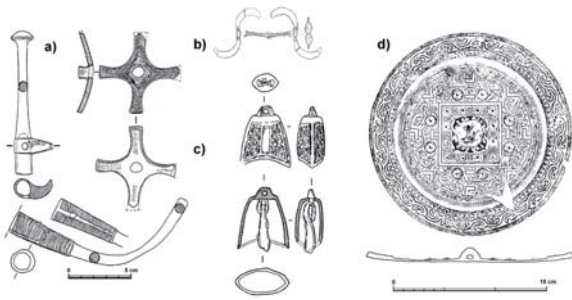


Fig. 5: The Han-Chinese tradition: a) bronze umbrella rib points and ornaments (Tōzaki), b) iron horse bridle (Pyeongni-dong), c) bronze bell (Shigenodan), d) bronze mirror (Yangdong-ri) (pictures after Nagasaki-ken kyōiku iinkai 1974:533; YUN 1991:261; ODA/HAN 1991:(I)140, 194).

of the Samhan or Proto Three Kingdom period¹ in the Korean south, and at sites of the Middle and Late Yayoi 弥生 period (here: 100 BCE–250CE) in the Japanese Archipelago respectively.²

A significant find showing both the trade activity between the Chinese commanderies and the Han and Wa areas, and moreover illustrating the esteem for this kind of commodity is the Chinese bronze mirror (Fig. 5d). Especially early Han mirrors with continuous arc design and mirrors with four buckle and snake design were in great demand in the early phase of the Han and Wa cultures. For the latter phase, the second and early third centuries CE, the late Han period TLV mirror came first. In order to satisfy the demand for this highly valued status symbol, mirror copies of minor size and quality were manufactured on both sides of the Straits, substituting for the Chinese prototypes in places where the original commodity could not be purchased. Bronze mirrors were in use as burial goods in elite burials. Regularly one or two mirrors turn up in elite burial excavations.³ In rare cases a multitude of pieces have been found, such as in Eoendong 漁隱洞 (CH07, *abbreviations refer to maps*), where most of the pieces are mirror copies, or in Hirabaru 平原 (IT06) and Mikumo-minami-shōji 三雲南小路 (IT03),

¹ 'Samhan 三韓' and 'Proto Three Kingdoms' (Kor. *weonsamguk sidae* 原三國時代) refer to the same cultural stratum. While both terms emphasize the body of sources – outside historical writings concerned with an otherwise script less culture, thus creating a 'proto-historic' setting the term 'Proto Three Kingdoms' points to a strong structural relationship with the advent of the Three Kingdoms in later centuries, whereas 'Samhan culture' relates to the perception that the cultures under discussion reveal an independent cultural layer with distinct structures and far reaching networks and relations that are apt to a specific terminology.

² A full set of bronze umbrella roof fittings and ornaments, for example, comes from the Nakdong-ri 洛東里 (CH01) site in the middle Nakdong River plain, as well as from the Kisaka 木坂 (TS06) and Tōzaki 唐崎 (TS11) sites on Tsushima Island in the Korea Strait. Single finds come, for example, from Shimo-gayanoki 下ガヤノキ (TS05) (Tsushima), Bisan-dong 飛山洞 (CH03) and Daho-ri 茶戸里 (PH06) in the Korean southeast. Iron bridles are known from the Pyeongni-dong 平里洞 site (CH02) in Daegu City 大邱[市] or from Sara-ri 舍羅里 (CH08), while small bronze bells are spread widely with the exception of the region which is assigned to have been Mahan 馬韓 territory in the Korean southwest (see Fig. 5).

³ Bronze mirrors were discovered for example in Bisan-dong (CH03), Yangdong-ri 良洞里 (PH05), Kisaka (TS06) and Sakuranobaba 桜馬場 (MT02) (see Fig. 6).

where the deposit of up to 36 bronze mirrors points to the existence of a strong local power, which is moreover noticeable from the *Weizhi Dongyi zhuan* description of the 'small principality' (Chin. *guo* 國) of Ito 伊都 (Chin. Idu) (SEYOCK 2004:187–198).

Additional finds from the Chinese cultural sphere are bronze coins. They are important for the dating of archaeological complexes, and widespread at sites in the Korean south and in Kyūshū.

THE NOMADIC HERITAGE

Another cultural tradition which affected the advent of Proto Three Kingdom culture to a great extent, and later on strongly influenced the cultures of Han and Wa, stems from origins and time strata even beyond the Chinese commanderies. This Scytho-Siberian tradition comprises finds associated with an epi-nomadic heritage (Fig. 6), which is closely connected in time to the spread of both Han Chinese tradition and the techniques of iron production, all of which are detectable in the archaeological record from the late second to early first century BCE onward.

A main element of this originally nomadic tradition is found in animal style bronzes as they are familiar from the Ordos region and from the Karasuk and Tagar cultures in the Siberian steppes, for example bronze antenna daggers (Fig. 6a) or pommel ornaments with symmetrical decorations in the shapes of animals (Fig. 6c).⁴ Also appearing in assemblages from both the Korean south and the north of Kyūshū are ring pommel iron knives and swords (Fig. 6b) – later in their chronological setting, but linking to the same animal style tradition.⁵ A common element of the tradition from the Siberian steppes moreover is a hemispherical bronze button decorated with lines arranged in spirals or geometric fields, or similar pieces without any decorations.⁶ A burial find at Eoendong (CH07) exemplifies how bronze buttons were ap-

⁴ Bronze antenna daggers or their respective pommel ornaments have been excavated for example from the Bisan-dong (CH03) and Jisan-dong 池山洞 (CH06) sites in Daegu, from the Takamatsunodan タカマツノダン (TS04) and Sakadō サカドウ (TS03) sites on Tsushima Island, and from Kashiwazaki 柏崎 (MT09) in the Karatsu 唐津 plain. Two pieces of bronze pommels ornaments with symmetrical decorations in the shapes of animals – four standing horses and two ducks, or possibly the upper parts of horses, respectively – come from the Yangdong-ri (PH05) site in the Nakdong delta and Shigenodan シゲノダン (TS09) site on Tsushima (see Fig. 7). There are other bronze pommel types with a specific cross shaped base and in parts with millet-like decoration as well as additional dagger fittings appearing in the same complexes and widely spread on both sides of the Korea Strait (SEYOCK 2004: Figs. 11, 30, 55, 57 and tables I and III).

⁵ Ring-pommel iron knives and swords have been excavated for example from Nopo-dong 老圃洞 (PH08) in Busan, from Tsushima Island sites, from the Itoshima 糸島 Peninsula (Hirabaru) (IT06), and from the Fukuoka 福岡 plain (Tate'iwa 立岩) (YY03) (SEYOCK 2004: tables I and II).

⁶ Bronze buttons are among the earliest complexes classified as belonging to the Proto Three Kingdom culture, such as from Dasong-ri (MH33) in North Jeolla Province or Ipsil-ri 入室里 (CH12) near Gyeongju City 慶州[市]. Items like these continue through to the late Yayoi complexes from Tsushima Island (Takamatsunodan (TS04), Tōzaki (TS11)), the north Kyūshū plains (Dōzō 道藏) (YY17), and spread even further south to Kumamoto 熊本 Prefecture (Kuwanizuru 神水) (YY16) and east to central Japan (see Fig. 7).

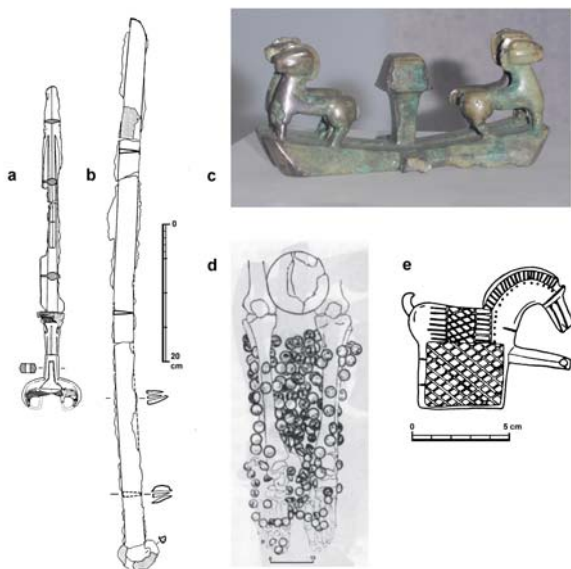


Fig. 6: The nomadic heritage: a) bronze antenna dagger (Kashiwazaki), b) iron ring pommel sword (Hirabaru), c) bronze pommel ornament (Yangdong-ri), d) bronze buttons in situ (Eoeun-dong), e) bronze belt hook (Cheongdang-dong) (photo by author; pictures after OKAZAKI 1982:201; HARADA 1991:261; KIM Weon-yong 1987:278; SEO/KWEON/HAM 1991:1).

parently in use as boot ornaments (see Fig. 6d), at least in this case, while the boots themselves – as their existence is obvious from the findings – offer additional evidence for a culture carrying the knowledge of horse riding.

Similarly successful in the geographical range of their appearance, but much less frequent than the bronze buttons, are bronze belt hooks in the shapes of either horses (Fig. 6e) or tigers. These items as well have a strong linkage to nomadic culture, although the specific kind of shaping seems peculiar for the Korean southeast (see GANG 2004).⁷

Bird shaped ceramics may as well link to a nomadic heritage. They have been mainly found in the Korean southwest and do not show on the Japanese side of the same period, except one example from the north of Kyūshū from a very early Kofun 古墳 site, which is of the same type as the pieces from Proto Three Kingdom sites (mainly) in the Korean southwest. This cultural tra-

⁷ Early examples of animal shape belt hooks are known from the Bisan-dong (CH03) and Eoeun-dong (CH07) sites in the Daegu area or from Tsushima Island (in a fragment from Sakadō (TS03)). Later examples have been found at Joyang-dong 朝陽洞 (CH11), Sara-ri (CH08) and Daeseong-dong 大成洞 (PH03), again in the southeast, while items belonging towards the end of the Han and Wa period show in complexes of Chungcheong Province (Cheongdang-dong (MH01), Songdae-ri 송대리 (MH02), Bongmyeong-dong 鳳鳴洞 (MH03)), and moreover in central Japan (Sakakiyama 榊山 (KF03), Asakawabata 浅川端 (YY11)). Interestingly, the finds from younger assemblages comprise a much higher number of pieces, thus leading either to the assumption that social changes gave rise to a more and more unequal society, or to the perception that the tradition of using animal style belt hooks as prestige objects already was declining, so that only singular groups in geographical peripheries still collected and kept the belt hooks, which were, moreover, then easier to obtain.

dition actually did not cross the Strait.

THE PENINSULA AND ISLAND TRADITIONS

At the time Han Chinese and epi-nomadic traditions entered the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese islands, these regions of course have not been blank, but had developed their own respective traditions contributing in different ways to the later developments (Fig. 7). The Korean Peninsula had a strong Bronze Age tradition, especially in the region of the Geum River, with a set of bronze weapons, or later ritual objects – dagger, halberd and socketed spear (Fig. 7a), that developed into one of the major finds also of the Proto Three Kingdoms period and the Middle and Late Yayoi period in the western Japanese Archipelago. The *mumun* 無文 or undecorated pottery, which is typical for the Bronze Age, can also still be found in Han and Wa sites up to the 3rd century CE. Proto Three Kingdom so-called *wajil* 瓦質 pottery (Fig. 7b), moreover, turns up at north Kyūshū sites, while Yayoi

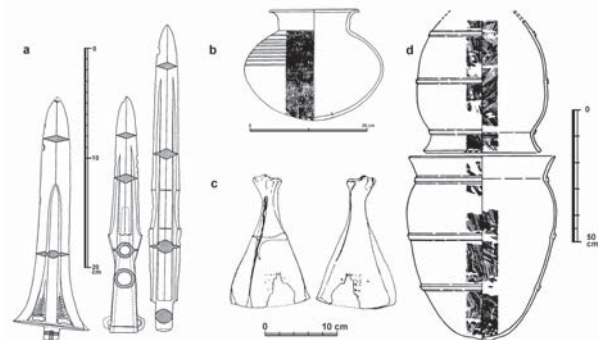


Fig. 7: Peninsula and island traditions: a) bronze weapons (Mizuki, Kuhara), b) wajil vessel (Karakami), c) oracle bone (Gun'gong-ri), d) double jar coffin (Harunotsuji) (after ODA/HAN 1991:(I)97, 175; CHOE 1991:291; Nagasaki-ken kyōiku iinkai 1978:20).

pottery from a north Kyūshū tradition can be found at the Korean coasts.

In the Japanese Archipelago, the late Jōmon and early Yayoi period jar burial (Fig. 7d) grew into a strong tradition that spread on both sides on the Korea Strait and later even developed into the main feature of the elite burials of the Baekje 百濟 Kingdom in the Korean southwest.

Another interesting find that may be placed within an early Yayoi tradition is the oracle bone (Fig. 7c), which actually is mentioned in the *Dongyi zhuan* section concerning the Wa people. Most of the numerous finds of oracle bones come from sites in western Japan, but there are also several finds from the Korean side, again exemplifying how close the cultures around the Korean Straits were in the centuries between the 1st century BCE and the 3rd century CE, and how not only commodities reached the opposite coasts, but also entire sets of cultural traditions (SEYOCK 2004: 227–228; EUN 1999).

JEJU'S POSITION IN THE HAN AND WA CULTURAL SPHERE

After reviewing the different traditions of the early cultures around the Korean Straits, their interrelations, concurrences and local differences, and after emphasizing the impact of the establishment of the Chinese commanderies at the end of the 2nd century BCE, the question arises to what extent Jeju Island, the second largest island in the waters between the Korean and Japanese coasts, took part in the development of this vivid and closely connected Han and Wa cultural sphere.

Much can be learned from a 3rd century Chinese text, the *Weizhi Dongyi zhuan*, which provides the cultures discussed here with a historical dimension. The chapters on the Han communities in the Korean south, and the detailed chapter on the Wa people on the Japanese islands, contain various information on the geographic position of the specific community, on their subsistence and their social life, on their conflicts, on their trade and diplomatic relations, and so forth. Jeju as well is mentioned in the *Dongyi* accounts (Fig. 3). The last phrases of the Han chapter refer to an island called (Chin.) Zhou-hu 州胡 (Kor. Juho), a passage commonly interpreted as being the oldest reference to Jeju Island. Zhou-hu, or Jeju, does from a Chinese point of view not belong to the Samhan (Mahan 馬韓, Jinhan 辰韓, Byeonhan 弁韓), which comprise the major territorial and/or political units in the south of the Peninsula. Jeju is instead located beyond the border of the Han cultures. The Chinese text runs as follows:

“Furthermore there is [the land of] Zhou-hu. It is situated on a large island in the sea west of Mahan. The inhabitants are of small stature. Their language is not like [the language of] Mahan. They all shave their heads like the Xianbei 鮮卑. Their clothing is all made of leather. They like to raise cattle and pigs. Their clothing has upper parts, but no lower parts, almost as if they were naked. Going back and forth by boat they buy and sell in the Han [area].” (*Sanguo zhi, Weizhi Dongyi zhuan, Han zhuan*) [translation after SEYOCK 2004:48].

According to the Chinese documents the inhabitants of Jeju had no rice agriculture, no proper clothing, and were in language (and stature) different from the rest of the (Kor.) Han. Jeju is moreover not even listed as one of the about 80 Han communities in the *Dongyi* accounts. It is therefore necessary to now include the material heritage of Jeju Island into the discussion and compare the archaeological finds from Jeju sites to the different layers of the Han and Wa cultures in Proto Three Kingdom Korea and Yayoi period Japan.

The last decade has seen interesting new discoveries of archaeological sites on Jeju Island, which may shed new light upon the situation of early cultures within – or beyond – the Han and Wa cultural sphere. It is first of all the Samyang-dong 三陽洞 site (JJ02) that received a lot of attention due to the size of the site and the excavated material.



Fig. 8: Samyang-dong house reconstructions (photo by author).



Fig. 9: Samyang-dong house pits (photo by author).

Samyang-dong has been excavated in the years 1997 to 1999 (after trial surveys in 1996-1997) and revealed the largest dwelling site yet found in Korea, and up to that time the only one on Jeju Island (Jeju-si Jeju daehakgyo bangmulgwan 2002:346).⁸ Parts of the site, which is situated at the coast in the east of Jeju City, have been reconstructed for public access (Fig. 8), and the neighboring Samyang-dong Prehistoric Museum (Samyang-dong seonsa yujeok jeonsagwan 三陽洞 遺蹟 先史館) opened soon after. 155 house pits have been fully excavated; another 81 confirmed during the first survey. Most of the pits show circular ground plans with small oval pits in the middle holding postholes on either side of it (Fig. 9). These peculiar features are also seen at Bronze Age sites in the Honam 湖南 region, first and foremost at Songguk-ri 松菊里 (Fig. 10), a type site of the Bronze Age dating back from around the 5th century BCE, thus pointing towards an early connection between Jeju and the Peninsula, or – as the house pits rather precisely correspond to the Songguk-ri type – even suggesting an immigration route.

Other features of the dwelling site comprise 28 above ground houses, eight of them apparently storehouses, small storage facilities, a production place for pottery, stone alignments dividing the settlement, drainage facilities, a dumping place (shell midden), and dolmen burials in the vicinity. Important for a reconstruction of the subsistence of the Samyang-dong inhabitants were car-

⁸ The dwelling site of Yongdam-dong was excavated later in the year 1999 (Jeju-si Jeju daehakgyo bangmulgwan 2003).

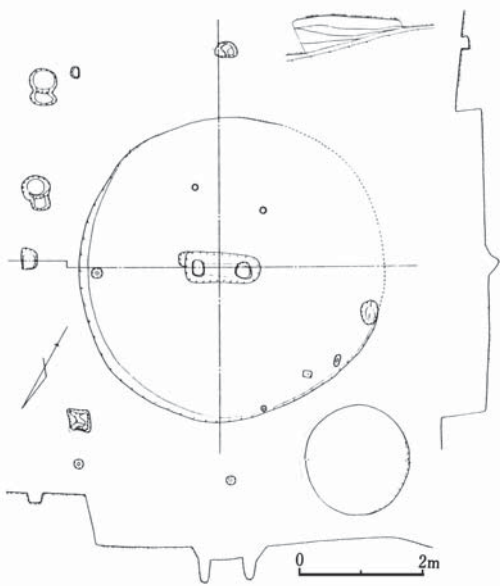


Fig. 10: Songguk-ri house pit (after: ODA/HAN 1991:249).

bonized grain finds (barley, beans) from several house pits. Rice is also extant (Jeju-si Jeju daehakgyo bangmulwan 2001:106–108; 2002:346), thus disproving the *Dongyi* accounts. The house sites, their shapes, and their arrangement around a central square, as well as the general features of the complex recall a typical late Bronze Age village, especially that of the Songguk-ri site (see NELSON 1993:142–143; YI Geon-mu 1991:249) in South Chungcheong Province (Chungcheong namdo 忠清南道). Finds from both sites comprise a polished stone dagger, stone arrowheads, spindle whorls, whetstones, grooved stone adzes, and bronze objects.

The bronze finds from Samyang-dong, however, are different from the Songguk-ri specimen, as they not only set the complex in a younger time stratum – that is up to the beginning of the Proto Three Kingdoms period. They moreover show that there actually are archaeological traces of an interrelationship with the Han and Wa area. Only two small bronze fragments have been found at Samyang-dong, one (Fig. 11) clearly belonging to a slender bronze dagger of the so-called Korean style type, which is – as has been elaborated above – a main find from the Proto Three Kingdom and Middle and Late



Fig. 11: Bronze dagger fragment from Samyang-dong site (photo by author).

Yayoi sites. An almost complete specimen has, moreover, been excavated at Jongdal-ri 終達里 (JJ03), in the East of Jeju Island (Jeju-si 2002:77) (Fig. 12), while a bronze dagger fitting comes from the Sanjihang 山地港 (JJ01) site in central Jeju (Fig. 13).

Direct influences of a Han Chinese or epi-nomadic quality are not detectable at the Samyang-dong site. Up to the present day, there actually is no site on Jeju Island that revealed finds of an epi-nomadic kind, such as animal style belt hooks or bronze buttons. Han Chinese horse-and-carriage utensils are moreover completely missing from the archaeological record, whereas some Chinese bronze coins (Fig. 14) together with two small mirrors (Fig. 15) – one being only a fragment – were discovered at the Sanjihang (JJ01) site (Jeju-si 2002:73–75).



Fig. 12: Bronze dagger fragments from Jongdal-ri (photo by author).



Fig. 13: Bronze dagger fitting from Sanjihang site (photo by author).

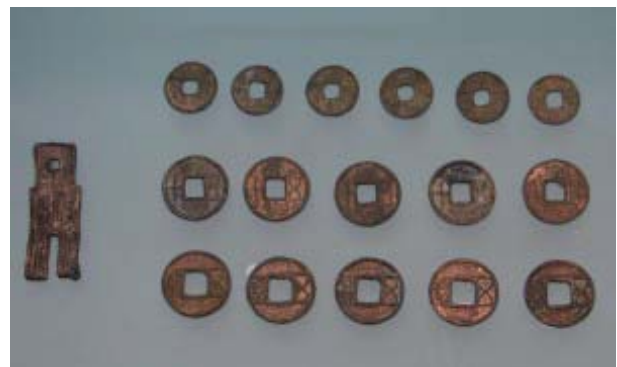


Fig. 14: Chinese bronze coins from Sanjihang site (photo by author).



Fig. 15: Small bronze mirror from Sanjihang site (photo by author).



Fig. 16: Jade ornament from Samyang-dong site (photo by author).



Fig. 17: Glass bracelet from Ōburo-minami site (after: Ōsaka furitsu Yayoi bunka hakubutsukan 2002:21).



Fig. 18: Jar coffin from Yongdam-dong site (photo by author).

However, one interesting artifact found at Samyang-dong (JJ02) suggests looking into a different geographic direction. Among the other finds, most of which come from the central parts of the village, the fragment of a jade ornament, possibly a pendant, with hexagonal cross section was uncovered during the excavation (Fig. 16). A possible counterpart for this specimen is a cobalt-blue glass bracelet with hexagonal section (Fig. 17) from the Tango 丹後 Peninsula (Ōburo-minami 大風呂 site) in central Japan, although the bracelet is both larger in size and found in a younger complex (see Ōsaka furitsu Yayoi bunka hakubutsukan 2002:21–22). This piece comes from a Late Yayoi mound burial, which moreover produced a very rich assemblage of burial goods. There are, all in all, only three such ornament finds known from the Japanese islands, another one from Kyōto 京都 Prefecture (Ōmiya-machi 大宮町), and one from the Itoshima 糸島 Peninsula in Fukuoka (Futazuka 二塚 site, see SHIRASU 1999:34–35). It is not quite clear where these items actually have been produced, but at least their owners seem to have shared a particular cultural tradition, or satisfied a similar taste.

A site from a period a few hundred years later than the Samyang-dong dwelling site may further enlighten the extent of contact between Jeju and the surrounding

areas. The mound burial site of Yongdam-dong 龍潭洞 (JJ04) (Jeju City) was already excavated in 1984 (Gun-grip Jeju bangmulgwan 2001:82–85). It yielded small sized jar coffins (Fig. 18) and several burials with stone alignments. Jar coffins, as was elaborated above, are typical burials from the Han and Wa cultural sphere; stone alignments can especially be seen in the Korean south-east.

Burial goods from Yongdam-dong comprise two iron swords and a dagger, stemless iron arrowheads, socketed iron spearheads and socketed iron adzes. All of these items have their counterparts in the latter or end phase of the Han and Wa culture (Fig. 19). Comparable iron swords come from the Yangdong-ri (PH05) site near Busan 釜山, from Tsushima Island (Shimo-gayanoki) (TS05), and from the North Kyūshū plains (Tate'iwa (YY03), Suku-okamoto 須玖岡本 (NA01)). Iron spearheads have been found again at Yangdong-ri (PH05), as well as at Tate'iwa (YY03) site in northern Kyūshū.

Stemless iron arrowheads, such as those discovered at Yongdam-dong, are spread widely throughout the Han and Wa cultural sphere (Fig. 20). They are extant in archaeological complexes from the Jinhan (Hwangseong-dong 皇城洞) (CH10), Byeonhan (Samdong-dong 三東洞 (PH07), Nopo-dong (PH08)), and Mahan (Daegong-

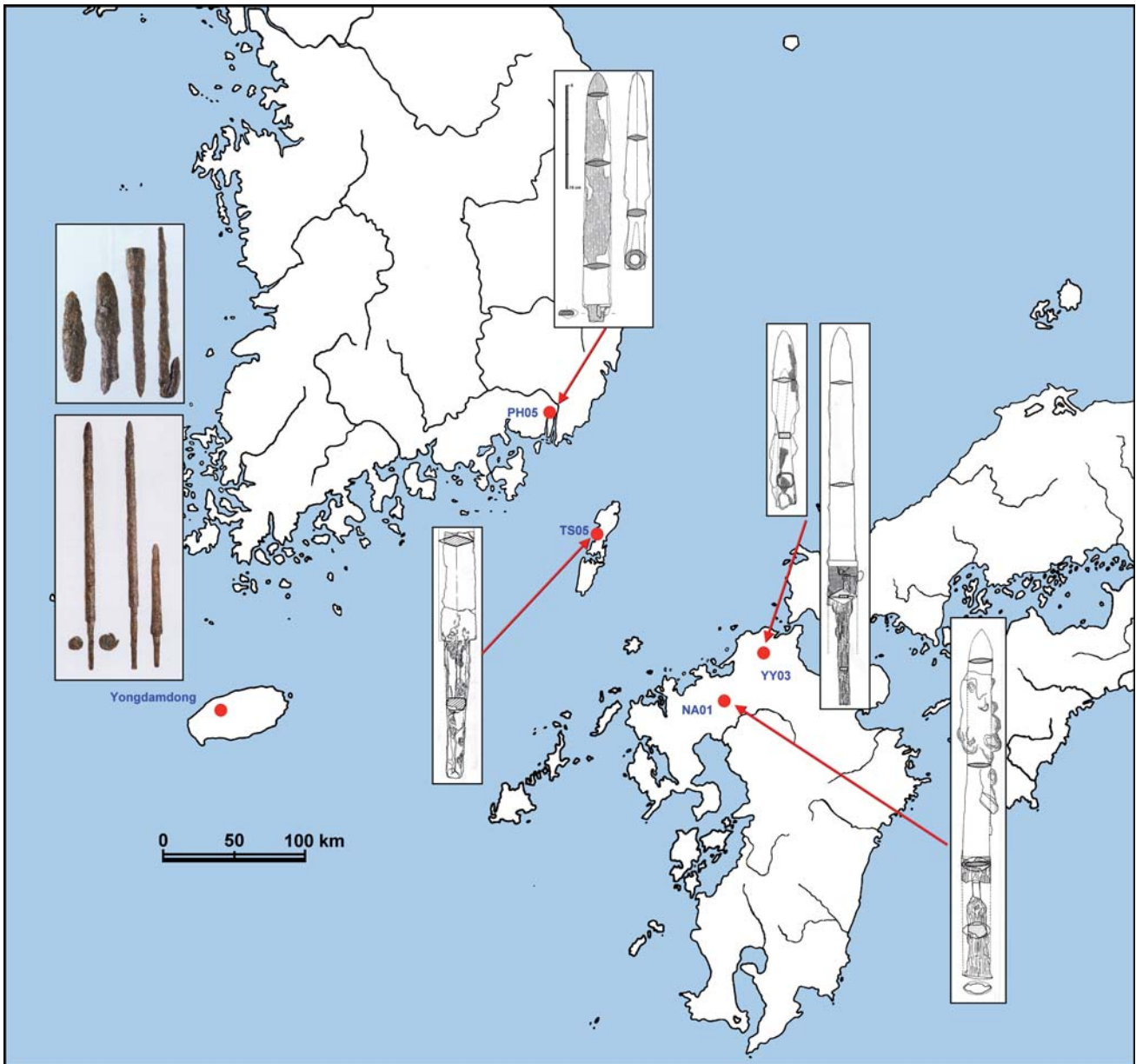


Fig. 19: Iron swords and spearheads in the Han and Wa sphere (photos from Gungnip Jeju bangmulgwan 2001:83; pictures after ODA/HAN 1991:(I)141, 184, 185, 186, 196).

ri 大谷里) (MH24) areas, from Tsushima Island (Shigenodan) (TS09), Iki Island (Karakami カラカミ (IK02), Harunotsuji 原の辻 (IK01)), and from different parts of Kyūshū (see Kitakyūshū shiritsu kōko hakubutsukan 1995). The socketed iron adze from Yongdam-dong, on the other hand, matches a piece found at a site in Hiroshima 広島 Prefecture. A Yoshinogari 吉野ヶ里 (YY01) find (Saga 佐賀 Prefecture) comes also very close in shape, as well as a piece from the Honam region (Gundong-ra 郡洞라, MH10).

However, the Yongdam-dong site, with its assemblage from the 2nd or 3rd century CE, just like the 1st century BCE Samyang-dong site before, does not show any find belonging to the epi-nomadic or Han Chinese tradition.

CONTACT AND EXCLUSIVITY OFF THE KOREAN COAST

The archaeological heritage of Jeju Island – up to

this stage of research – comprises for the period under discussion, which means the 1st century BCE to the 3rd century CE, a remarkably large settlement in late Bronze Age tradition, a burial site with some jar coffins and four burials with stone alignments, which have apparently been furnished with several iron burial goods each, and moreover a few finds of Han Chinese bronze coins as well as two small bronze mirrors. The point of departure for this study was to question the concept of remoteness and distinctiveness of the Jeju culture with a focus on the archaeological material. After having compared the Jeju finds to the archaeological record from the Korean Peninsula and from the western Japanese Archipelago, the general impression actually is that of a peripheral region, contrary to recent attempts to set Jeju culture into the general Iron Age developments of the Korean Peninsula (see Jeju eui yeoksa wa munhwa 2001). Finds that are rare or even singular on Jeju Island are abundant and

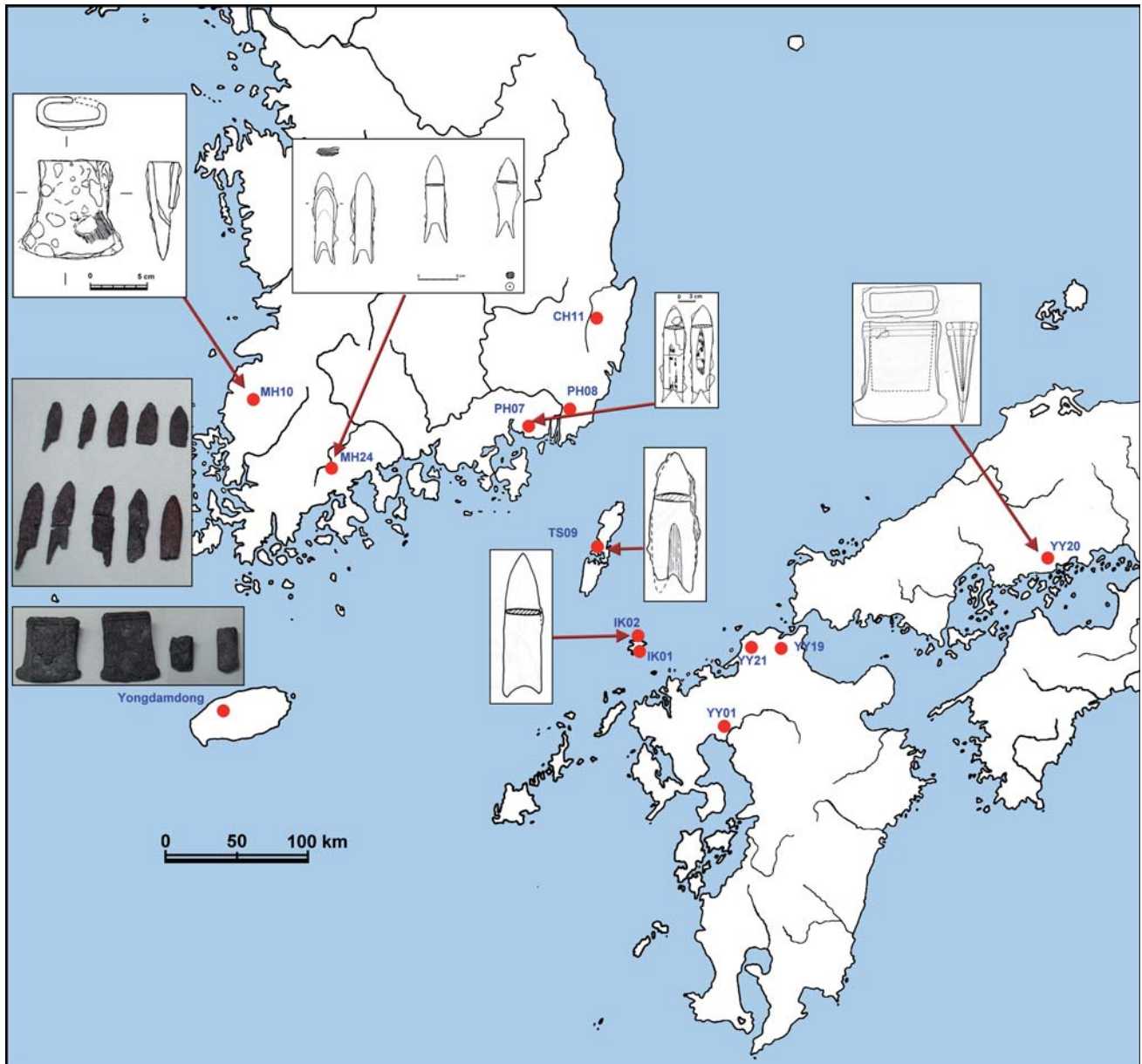


Fig. 20: Iron arrowheads and socketed adzes in the Han and Wa sphere (photos by author; pictures after Gungnip Gwangju bangmulgwan 2000:38; SEO/SEON 1989:517; AN 1984:142; ODA/HAN 1991:(I)187, 193, 195).

widespread in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula and in western Japan. Parts of the archaeological complex typical for the Han and Wa cultural sphere, such as finds from the Chinese Han or the epi-nomadic tradition are sparse or do not even show in Jeju complexes (Fig. 21).

However, Jeju was never completely isolated. The historical document informed us about Jeju boats going to and fro the Han coasts. The Jeju people apparently were trading with the Han area, as some elements of Han and Wa culture, which are typical trade objects, namely bronze daggers and iron weapons, are extant in the archaeological record of Jeju Island. Even the – in its origins apparently Japanese – tradition of using jars for burials reached this island, although the Jeju examples are of a rather small size.

The jade ornament, in this context, is a singularly

exceptional find. This ornament, together with the stone alignments separating the Samyang-dong settlement, along with the burials of Yongdam-dong, suggest a certain kind of hierarchical structuring of an early Jeju society. Elite burials, however, or complex settlement structures and workshops comparable to the Proto Three Kingdom sites in the Korean southeast or the sites in the Kyūshū plains were not extant on Jeju Island for the time under discussion. Jeju, unlike Tsushima Island in the Korea Strait, was no trade center or passage area. Neither was it important as a place for collecting source materials such as the Izu islands.⁹ It therefore seems, for the time being, not appropriate to include Jeju Island into the general concept of a Han and Wa cultural sphere, which I identified for the South of the Korean Peninsula and the western Japanese Archipelago. Jeju culture instead developed exclusive features, such as specific pottery types,

⁹ See SUGIYAMA Cohe (BSEEA 2, 2008).

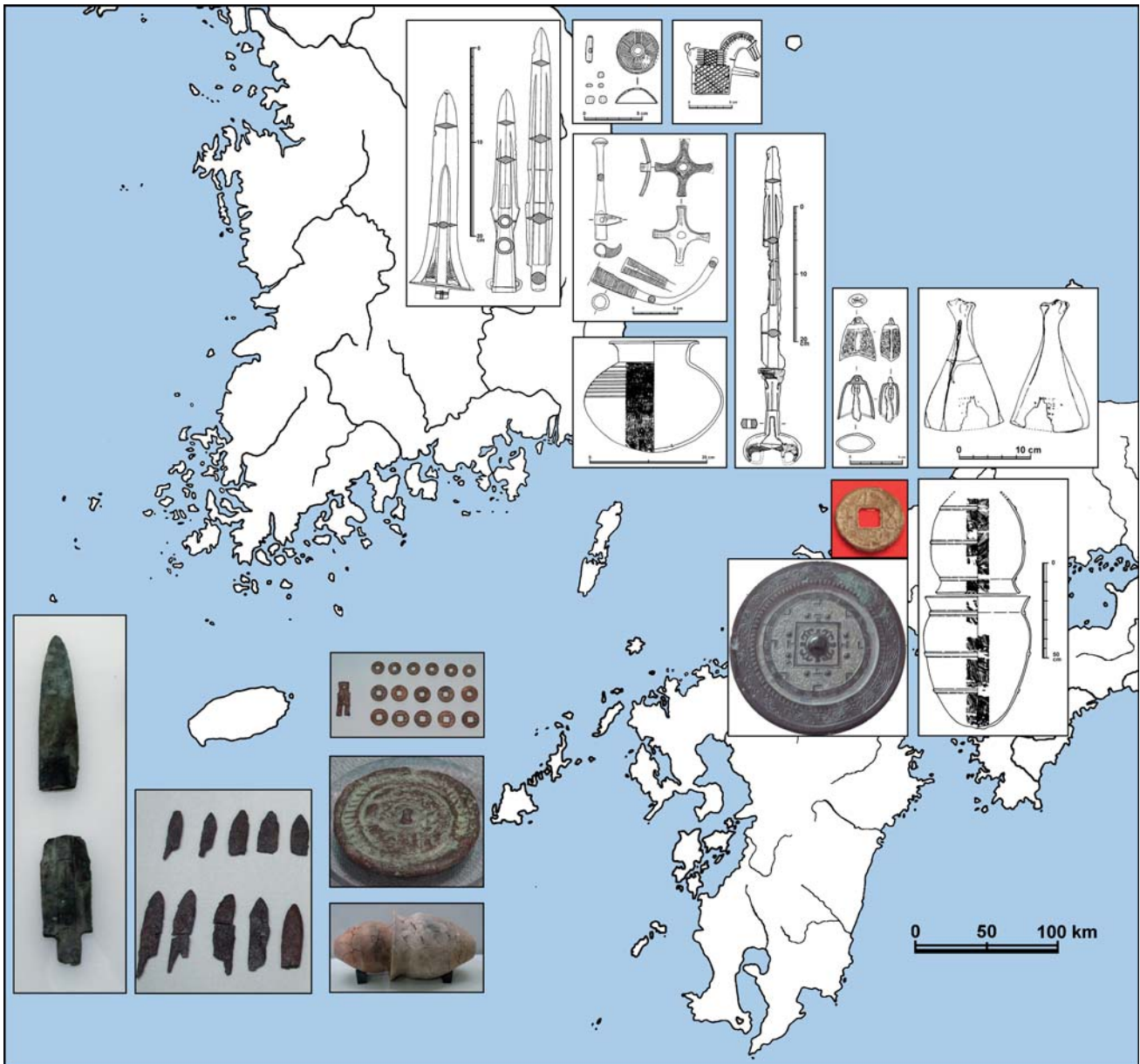


Fig. 21: Type finds from Jeju Island and the Han and Wa sphere (photos by author; pictures from ODA/HAN 1991:(I)97, 175, 291; Nagasaki-ken kyōiku iinkai 1974:533; 534; SEO 1991:1; KIM Jeong-hak 1972:129; Nagasaki-ken kyōiku iinkai 1978:20)..

and it may be fruitful for future research to address the early cultures of Jeju Island independently.

Relating to the specific framework of the panel on island archaeology, where this paper has been presented, I would like to postulate that comparing Jeju with other East Asian islands suggests that the archaeology of islands needs to generally distinguish between passage areas, consumption areas and areas of partial contact towards the respective mainland region. On the other hand, the smaller (inhabited) islands of Japan and Korea cannot be underestimated concerning their role within the general cultural development of peninsular and insular East Asia.

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