Reconstructing the Sequence of Conquest and Dating the Events:

Interpreting the Historical Facts within My Model[[1]](#footnote-1)

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1. Reconstructing the Possible Sequence of Conquest

There are suggestive records in the accounts of *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* from which to reconstruct the life story of the conquerors, telling how they masterminded the conquest, who was the leader, when they crossed the sea, where they landed, and in what manner they fought and wrought. This chapter endeavors to reconstruct the possible sequence of conquest on the basis of the passages in *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* that seem to be related to the actual sequence of conquest, taking the freedom of selecting and weaving the recorded materials into a coherent story. All the statements below “between quotation marks” are the records of the *Nihongi* translated by Aston or of the *Kojiki* translated by Philippi. Those words inserted between the [square] brackets represent my own efforts to correct what I contend to be the distortions in the original texts.

Among the *Nihongi* dating between 660 BCE and 460 CE, the 30-year period of 375-405 CE is the one and only period that can be dated accurately from external evidence. The two-cycle correction method may, however, be extended at least nine years backward as to include the 366-374 period. Aston believes that, although the year 461 CE “is noteworthy as being the first in the *Nihongi* which is confirmed by Korean history,” the narrative from the year 246 CE (366 CE with the two cycles correction) down to 265 (385 CE) “contains a solid nucleus of fact.” 1

This section of my work attempts to trace the possible route of conquest and also to establish the exact dates for some important events that occurred during the formative years of the Yamato Kingdom, identifying the “nucleus of fact” asserted by Aston, and reinterpreting the related *Kojiki-Nihongi* records as well as the other associated historical facts.

**the *Nihongi* Records for 366-9**

According to the *Nihongi* record for the year 366, King Keun Chogo of Paekche had dispatched scouts to a Kaya state (Tak-sun) in July 364 in order to collect information about the passages to the Japanese Islands.2 Tak-sun seems to have been located in an area along the Nak-tong River which, flowing south to the modern Pusan area, constituted the shortest route from Paekche to the Japanese Islands. What the *Nihongi* tells us is that the King of a Kaya state (Tak-sun) suggested to the Paekche envoys the need for large ships.

In the ensuing narration, the *Nihongi* records a large-scale Wa invasion of Korea with “Paekche generals.” According to the *Nihongi*, it was Jingū who dispatched an army to the Korean Peninsula in March 369 to invade “Silla.” It is said that, when the Wa army arrived at Tak-sun, they discovered that the size of their army was too small and hence had to ask for reinforcements. They were soon joined by troops led by a Paekche general. They then together invaded and conquered “Silla,” and pacified Tak-sun and six other places. From here the armies turned west, conquered the southern savages, and then “granted” the conquered lands to Paekche. At this point they were joined by the Paekche King Keun Chogo and his son Prince Keun Kusu, whereupon four more localities spontaneously surrendered. The Kingand the Crown Prince of Paekche offeredtheir congratulations, and sent the Wa soldiers off with cordial courtesy. What are we able to understand from these *Nihongi* records?

**How do we understand theSe *Nihongi* records?**

If one tries to understand these military activities described in the *Nihongi* as the work of Wa, then there is no way to understand the “Paekche generals” associating with the Wa troops. Neither can we understand, as pointed out by Ledyard (1975), the story that the Wa armies somehow got to Tak-sun first without passing through the areas they later conquered, nor the story that the Wa armies then turned around and conquered the areas from north to south. But once we take those series of military activities as the work of Paekche, the *Nihongi* records become quite coherent.

By crosschecking the records of *Samguk-sagi*, Ledyard logically deduces that all those stories recorded in the *Nihongi* represent the historical records of Paekche armies moving south. At this point, however, Ledyard commits an altogether unnecessary and surprising error, calling the Paekche king and his followers “Puyeo warriors.” In the *Nihongi*, the above story ends with the Paekche King and the “Wa soldiers,” who are heading to the Japanese Islands, pledging eternal friendship and bidding farewell. If we take the departing “Wa soldiers” as a contingent of Paekche warriors led by a Paekche prince named Homuda, without invoking Puyeo warriors out of the blue, then the entire story becomes coherent.3

The foundation legend of the Paekche Kingdom presents the elder brother Biryu who had failed and the younger brother Onjo who had succeeded in founding a new state. After the death of the fourth King Kae-ru (r.128-66), the kingship in Paekche had alternated between two royal clans, the Chogo clan and the Koi clan, until the time of King Keun Chogo (r.346-75), when the succession was at last consolidated into the Chogo clan. Thereafter the Koi line simply vanished from Paekche history. Perhaps the Koi clan was persuaded by King Keun Chogo to open a new dynasty in the new world. It could have been the clan heir-cum-leader, Homuda, who had agreed to leave Han-seong with his followers in 369 and, with the full support of the Paekche court, succeeded in founding the Yamato Kingdom in the Japanese Islands by 390.

As of 364, Wi-rye in the south of the Han River was the capital of Paekche, while Ma-han still occupied the southwestern corner of the Korean Peninsula. 4 Hence it is quite probable that the Paekche people would have possessed no detailed information about the passages to the Japanese Islands. At that time, the Paekche court seems to have been planning not only the conquest of the Japanese Islands by sending an expeditionary force, but also the conquest of the Ma-han states in the southwestern part of the Korean Peninsula by a force led by King Keun Chogo himself in collaboration with the expeditionary force on its way to the Japanese Islands. The movement of Homuda and his followers to the Japanese Islands must have occurred not long after 364, which was the year they had dispatched scouts to gather information about the passages to the islands.

2. The Starting Point: At the Paekche Court in Han-seong

According to the *Samguk-saki*, Paekche moved its capital from Wi-rye (慰禮城) to Han-san (漢山) in 371 CE during the reign of Keun Chogo (r.346-75), and then to Han-seong (漢城) in 391. Before Paekche moved its capital south to Kong-ju in 475, the capital was always located somewhere in the Han River basin (the modern-day Seoul area), and therefore the entire period of 493 years between 18 BCE and 475 CE is often called the era of Han-seong Paekche.5

The *Nihongi* reads: [On a day, at the Paekche Court in Han-seong, Jin Zeong, a relative of the Queen, who had been appointed as the Chief Minister by King Keun Chogo in 347, told Prince Homuda and his elder brother, Itsuse] -- “Now I have heard from the Ancient of the Sea, that in the East there is a fair land encircled on all sides by blue mountains. The remote region does not yet enjoy the blessings of Imperial rule. Every town has always been allowed to have its lord, and every village its chief, who, each one for himself, makes division of territory and practices mutual aggression and conflict. I think this land will undoubtedly be suitable for the extension of our Heavenly Realm, so that its glory should fill the universe. … Moreover, there is a person [from our own country] who flew down [there] riding in a Heavenly Rock-boat. Why should we not proceed thither, and make it the capital? … The Imperial Princes answered, and said: --‘The truth of this is manifest. This thought is constantly present to our minds also. We may well proceed thither as soon as possible.’ This was the year Kinoye Tora [甲寅 354].”6

According to the *Kojiki*, Amaterasu and Takaki are in-laws. I take Amaterasu for Keun Chogo and Takaki for Minister Jin Zeong. I also take Ninigi, Jimmu and Homuda, all together, as representing the one and only founder of the Yamato Kingdom.

3. Sending Scouts to the Upper Nak-tong River Valley

The Paekche court sent scouts over the Sae-Jae Pass (聞慶鳥嶺) to the upper Nak-tong river valley to collect information about the passage to the Japanese Islands. The Nak-tong River makes a sharp turn to south at the modern-day Mun-gyung area and flows down to the Pusan area.

The *Nihongi* records the statement made by King Seong-myung (r.523-54) of Paekche: “In former times, during the reign of my ancestors, King Sok-ko [Keun Chogo, r.346-75] and King Kwi-su [Keun Kusu, r.375-84], the Kanki of Ara, Kara and Tak-sun first sent envoys and entered into communication. We became knitted together by cordial friendship, and they were treated as children or younger brothers.” 7

The record of *Nihongi* for the year 366 (246, without the two-cycle correction) contains the following statements made by the King of a Kaya state, Tak-sun: “In the course of the year Kinoye Ne [364], three men of Paekche named Ku-zeo, Mi-ju-ryu, and Mak-go came up to my country and said; - ‘The King of Paekche [Keun Chogo], hearing that in the Eastern quarter there is an honorable country [the Japanese Islands], has sent thy servants to this honorable country’s court. Therefore, we beg of thee a passage so that we may go to that Land. If you wilt be good enough to instruct thy servants and cause us to pass along the roads, our King will certainly show profound kindness to my Lord the King.’ I (the King of Tak-sun) then said to Ku-zeo and his followers: - ‘I have always heard that there is an honorable country in the East, but I have no communication with it, and do not know the way. There is nothing but far seas and towering billows, so that in a large ship, one can hardly communicate. Even if there were a regular crossing-place, how could you arrive there?’ Hereupon Ku-zeo and the others said: - ‘Well, then for the present we cannot communicate. Our best plan will be to go back again, and prepare ships with which to communicate later.’ ” 8

What the *Nihongi* tells us is that the King of a Kaya state (Tak-sun) suggested the need for large ships to Ku-zeo.Thus they went back. Apparently, the King of Tak-sun wanted to know what he would get in return for his cooperation and preparation of large ships for the King of Paekche.

The *Nihongi* continues: “Hereupon [the King of Tak-sun] sent a man [in company with the returning Paekche envoys] to the Land of Paekche. … King [Keun Chogo] of Paekche was profoundly pleased, and received [the man from Tak-sun] cordially. The King presented to him a roll each of five kinds of dyed silk, a horn-bow and arrows, together with forty bars of iron. Thereafter he opened his treasure-house, and pointing to his various rare objects, said: --‘In my country there is great store of these rare treasures. I have wished to pay tribute of them to the honorable country, but not knowing the way I was unable to carry out my intention. I shall now entrust them to envoys, who will visit your country in order to offer them.’ [The man from Tak-sun] took charge of this message, and on his return informed King.” In 367, “The King of Paekche sent Ku-zeo, Mi-ju-ryu, and Mak-go with tribute. Hereupon the [King of Tak-sun was] greatly delighted and said: --‘People from the country wished for by our late Sovereign have now come to Court.’ ” 9

The metaphor of *Kojiki* reads: --“Then, by command of Takaki and Amaterasu, the eight-hundred myriad deities assembled in a divine assembly in the river-bed of [Han River], who were told that ‘This Central Land of the Reed Plains is the land entrusted to our child as the land to be ruled by him.’ **Two deities** were **dispatched** to **make inquiries** intothe **path to the land**, and they in due course returned and reported on their mission. Thereafter, Takaki and Amaterasu caused Ninigi to descend from the heaven.” 10

4. The Paekche Armies Advance South in 369

According to the *Nihongi*, in March 369 (249, without the two-cycle correction), “Hwang-jeon and Rok-a were made generals. Along with [Homuda, Itsuse], Ku-zeo and the others they prepared a [spearhead] force with which they crossed over [the Sae-Jae Pass] and came to Tak-sun. They were accordingly about to invade [Ma-han] when some one said:--‘Your troops are too few. You cannot defeat [Ma-han]’ They respectfully sent back again Sa-baek and Kae-ro to ask for reinforcements. Mong-na Keun-ja, Sa-sa and No-kwe were forthwith ordered to take command of choice troops which were sent along with Sa-baek and Kae-ro. (The *Nihongi* notes that ‘the surnames of Sa-sa and No-kwe are unknown, but Mongna Keun-ja was a Paekche general.’) They all assembled at Tak-sun, invaded [the Ma-han states], and conquered them. Seven provinces were accordingly subdued. Then they moved their forces, and turning westward, arrived at Ko-hye-chin, where they slaughtered the southern savages of Chim-mi-ta-rye and granted their country to Paekche. Hereupon, their King Chogo [Keun Chogo], together with [Crown] Prince Kuisu [Keun Kusu], came to meet them with more troops. Then four villages spontaneously surrendered. Thereupon the Kingsof Paekche, father and son, met [Homuda, Itsuse], Hwang-jeon, Mong-na Keun-ja, and the rest at the village Ui-ryu, and at an interview offered their congratulations and dismissed them with cordial courtesy. … [Before the farewell, the King of Paekche and Homuda] ascended Mount Pi-ji and made a solemn declaration. …[T]hey ascended Mount Ko-sa, where they sat together upon a rock, and the King of Paekche made a solemn declaration, saying:--‘I make this solemn declaration of alliance to show that it will remain undecayed to distant ages …and … [we] will attend your Court with tribute.’ … [The King] also made Ku-zeo and the others escort [Homuda and his followers].” 11

**369 CE: the year Paekche conquered ma-han vs. the year Yamato conquered southern Korean peninsula**

The records of *Samguk-sagi* for the years 366 and 368 CE only note that King Keun Chogo sent envoys bearing gifts to the Silla court. The record for the year 369 CE simply states that Keun Chogo held a grand review of his army at the southern bank of the Han River, fluttering the yellow flags.12 The *Samguk-sagi* records for the years 366-9 themselves barely allude to the event of sending envoys to a Kaya state and Paekche army moving south.

The *Samguk-sagi*, however, has recorded that, in 6 CE, the king of Ma-han sent an envoy to the Paekche court and reproached the king, saying, “When you first came across the [Han] River, I had ceded the northeastern part of our land for your settlement, but now that your state is fully established and heavily peopled, you make invasions of our land;” that, in 7 CE, a diviner told the king of Paekche that he would annex a neighboring state; that, in 8 CE, the king declared his intention to occupy Ma-han before some other state seizing its territory; that, in the 10th month of 8 CE, the king of Paekche left the capital with an army to launch a surprise attack on Ma-han, and occupied all the fortresses except two; and that, in 9 CE, the two remaining fortresses surrendered, extinguishing the Ma-han state. 13 If we project these *Samguk-sagi* records forward exactly by six cycles (360 years), as suggested by Ledyard (1975), both the *Nihongi* and *Samguk-sagi* indeed corroborate each other’s story.

After 266, the Japanese Islands are never mentioned until 413 in the Chinese dynastic chronicles. Most Japanese historians dealing with this period, however, make the records of *Nihongi* for the year 369 the very foundation of their well-publicized claim that there existed a powerful Yamato state already by the mid-fourth century, and that the Yamato army conquered Silla and Kaya in 369, starting the administration of the colony called Mimana in the southern Korean Peninsula. Most Western experts habitually echo the Japanese contentions. 14 Jonathan W. Best (2006: 68, 88) may be regarded as representing the great majority of Japanese historians when he states, as recently as 2006 through the publication of the Harvard University Asia Center, that “it is clear that neither Paekche nor Silla ceased to function as independent states,” but “it is evident that the Yamato exercised significant influence in southern Korea from late in the fourth century to the end of the fifth.”

According to the *Samguk-sagi*, Keun Chogo, together with crown prince Keun Kusu invaded Koguryeo in 371, and killed King Koguk-won in the battle at Pyung-yang. According to the *Jinshu*, the Jin court granted Keun Chogo the title of “General Stabilizing the East and Governor of Lelang” in the following year.15 Paekche under the reign of the martial kings Keun Chogo and Keun Kusu (346-84) represents the most dynamic and expansionist era for the kingdom. I contend that, not only the entire Ma-han area, but also the Japanese Islands were conquered by the Paekche people sometime around this period.

5. Embarking on the Expedition to the Japanese Islands

Leaving the southeastern shore of the Korean Peninsula, crossing the Korea Strait, and passing the islands of Tsushima and Iki, the expeditionary force led by Homuda and his elder brother [Ituse] lands on Kyūshū Island, not on the northern plain area crowded by the Yayoi aborigines but, passing the Kammon Straight (at the modern-day Shimonoseki City), on the secluded eastern shore called Hyūga.16 The epic Eastern Conquest commences from the Hyūga base.

The *Nihongi* reads: “In that year, in winter, on the fifth day of the 10th month, [Homuda] in person led the Imperial Princes and a naval force on an expedition against the [Japanese Islands]. When he [was to embark] there was there a fisherman who came riding in a boat. [Homuda] asked him: ‘Canst thou act as my guide?’ He was accordingly made pilot. Proceeding on their voyage, they arrived at Usa...in Tsukushi (the modern-day Usa-shi, Oita Prefecture, North Kyūshū). [The people there] built a palace raised on one pillar on the banks of Usa River, and offered [Homuda] a banquet.”17 Homuda and his followers seem to have been welcomed by those who had migrated from Paekche to this area a long time ago. Homuda further proceeded southward, and arrived at the harbor of Oka. The destination at which he eventually arrived is the modern-day Hyūga, Miyazaki Prefecture.

Now we read the metaphor of *Kojiki* as follows. “[Minister Jin Zeong commanded Homuda] to leave the Heavenly Rock-Seat. Pushing through the myriad layers of the heaven’s trailing clouds, pushing his way with an awesome pushing, [Homuda] stood on a flat floating island by the Heavenly Floating Bridge, and descended from the heavens to the peak of Kujifuru of Mount Takachiho of Hiuga in Tsukusi.” 18

According to the *Kojiki*, immediately after Ninigi descended from heaven to the peak of Kuji-furu (of Takachiho in Hyūga), he made this statement: “This place faces towards Kara Kuni (向韓國 Korea); it is a place to which one comes directly through the Cape of Kasasa, a land where the morning sun shines directly, a land where the rays of the evening sun are brilliant. This is the most excellent place.”19 According to Egami (1964: 55-6), this conspicuous mention of Korea at the very starting point of the foundation myth leads us “to regard Korea as the original home of the gods of heaven.”Chamberlain (1981: 137-8), who had translated the *Kojiki* into English, notes the Motowori’s attempt to delete the word *Korea*: “though not daring actually to alter the characters (of the original text), assumes that they are corrupt and in his Kana rendering” omits the sentence mentioning Korea. 20 Chamberlain further notes that: “His evident reason for wishing to alter the reading is simply and solely to conceal the fact that Korea is mentioned in a not unfriendly manner, in the traditional account of the divine age. … [There] is no excuse for so dishonest a treatment of the text he undertakes to commentate.”

A modern-day tourist will find the “Paekche Village” (also called Nan-go Village) about forty kilometers inland from Hyūga city towards the Kyūshū Mountains, whose 3,000 inhabitants still believe they are descendants of the Paekche people. Numerous artifacts used by the Paekche conquerors were excavated from the area, and hence the Japanese government had financed the construction of West Shōsoin, an exact duplicate of the Shōsoin (Imperial Treasure House) in Nara, using Kiso cypress. 21 Inside the museum, tourists first find introductions to the history and legends of Paekche, along with an ancient bronze bell said to have been brought there from Paekche.

6. Eastern Conquest Commencing from the Hyūga Base

In 372 (252, without the two-cycle correction), “Ku-zeo and the others again came along … and presented a seven-branched sword and a seven-little-one-mirror, with various other objects of great value” [to Homuda].22 Quite surprisingly, this Seven-branched Sword is still preserved at the Ison-kami Shrine. (See Appendix 6.1.)

The *Kojiki* states: “[Homuda], dwelling with his elder brother Ituse in the palace of Takachiho, consulted him and said: ‘Where (would it be best) to dwell in order to carry on the government of the kingdom peacefully? I am thinking of going eastward.’ Thus, departing from Hiuga, he journeyed to Tsukusi [northern Kyūshū]. From there he sailed to...the land of Aki [the modern-day Aki District, Hiroshima Prefecture].” 23

The *Nihongi* states: “Going onwards, [Homuda] entered the land of Kibi [the modern-day Oka-yama City], and built a temporary palace, in which he dwelt. It was called the Palace of Takashima. Three years passed, during which time he set in order the helms of his ships, and prepared a store of provisions. It was his desire by a single effort to subdue the Empire. ” 24 King Keun Chogo of Paekche died in 375.

The *Nihongi* continues: “The imperial forces at length proceeded eastwards, the prow of one ship touching the stern of another. Just when they reached Cape Naniha they encountered a current of great swiftness [at the Akashi Straight]. Proceeding upwards [from the Gulf of Ōsaka] against the stream, they went straight on, and arrived at the port … in the township of Kusaka [a wharf nearby the modern-day Kusaka-cho, East Ōsaka City], in the province of Kawachi. The imperial forces in martial array marched on to Tatsuta. The road was narrow and precipitous, and the men were unable to march abreast, so they returned and again endeavored to go eastward, crossing over Mount Ikoma [a small mountain range on the limits of Kawachi and Yamato]. In this way they entered the inner country. Now when Nagasune heard this, he said: --‘The object of the children of the Heavenly Deity in coming hither is assuredly to rob me of my country.’ So he straightway levied all the forces under his dominion, and intercepted them at the Hill of Kusaka. A battle was engaged, and Itsuse was hit by a random arrow on the elbow. [Homuda said]: --‘I am the descendant of the Sun-Goddess, and if I proceed against the Sun to attack the enemy, I shall act contrary to the way of Heaven. Better to retreat and make a show of weakness. Then sacrificing to the God of Heaven and Earth, and bringing on our backs the might of the Sun-Goddess, let us follow her rays and trample them down.”25

The *Nihongi* continues: “From this place they journeyed on and arrived at the river-mouth of Wo in the land of Ki [at the mouth of the Ki River of Wakayama City], where Ituse died in the army. [At Han-seong, King Keun Kusu] summoned and commanded …, saying: --‘I still hear a sound of disturbance from the Central Land of Reed Plains. Our offspring seem to be in difficulties. Here is the [long] sword with which I pacified the land. Send it down!”26 The *Kojiki* records that the “Pacifying Long Sword” is also preserved at the Isonokami Shrine, the place where the Seven-branched Sword [that was sent to Homuda by Keun Chogo in 372] is now preserved. Apparently, the “Pacifying Long Sword” was lost sometime after the *Kojiki* was compiled.

Homuda and his army apparently could not make their way up the Ki River towards the Yamato hinterland, which constitutes the logical short-cut, most likely due to the presence of an adversary blocking the route.

The *Nihongi* continues: “The army arrived at the village of …, where they put to death the… Here they embarked in the rock-boat of Heaven, and proceeded onwards by slow degrees. In the midst of the sea, they suddenly met with a violent wind. [Homuda] cried: --‘My ancestors were Heavenly Deities, and my mother was a Goddess of the Sea.’ Leading his army forward, [Homuda] arrived at Port Arazaka in Kumano [the modern-day Shingū City], where he put to death the… A person called Takakurazi of Kumano came bringing the sword [i.e., the Pacifying Long Sword sent by King Keun Kusu]. All of the unruly deities in the Kumano Mountains were of themselves cut down. [Homuda] then endeavored to advance into the interior, but among the mountains it was so precipitous that there was no road by which they could travel, and they wandered about not knowing whither to direct their march. [At Han-seong, King Keun Kusu] said:--‘I will now send thee the Yatagarasu. Make it thy guide through the land.’ Guided by the direction taken by Yatagarasu, [Homuda] arrived at the lower reaches of the Yoshino River [in Yoshino District, Nara Prefecture]. From here they pierced their way across and came to the district of Lower Uda [the modern-day Uda District, Nara Prefecutre].”27

The metaphor of *Kojiki* reads: “Takaki commanded, giving these instructions … do not proceed further … we will now dispatch a giant crow … Follow after it and continue your journey… Following the giant crow, they arrived at the lower reaches of Yoshino River.” 28 A modern-day tourist traveling the winding, narrow roads from Kumano to Yoshino River will come across a large flag with the crow symbol at a mountain village junction. Over the mountain, one sees another mountain. In the old days, one would surely have gotten lost without an expert guide. The Yoshino River rises in the Kamagamori Mountain, passes through Awa, and enters the Pacific Ocean. It is considered the third longest river in Japan.

7. Pacifying the Yamato Region and Founding a New Kingdom

The *Nihongi* continues: “[In 382, Homuda] wished to inspect the Land of Yoshino, so taking personal command of the light troops, he made a progress round by way of… Again there was the army of Yeshiki, which covered all the village of Ihare. There were in the province of Yamato, in the village of …, eighty Shiki bandits. [Homuda] first of all attacked the eighty bandits at Mount …, routed and slew them. … [Homuda] in person (N1: 122)” performed a memorial service for [Jin Zeong].29 King Keun Kusu of Paekche also died in 384.

The *Nihongi* continues: “There were … Tsuchi-gumo at the village of Takawohari (in Yamato). The Imperial troops slew them. Wherefore, the name of that village was changed to Katsuraki. It is in the land of Ihare. Its ancient name was Kataru. When the Imperial forces routed the enemy, a great army assembled and filled that country. Its name was accordingly changed to Ihare.”30

The *Nihongi* continues: “The Imperial army proceeded in great force to attack the… They arrived at Osaka [in the modern-day Sakurai City, Nara Prefecture]… [Homuda] crossed …, and, going round the rear, attacked … from two sides and put them to the rout. The [Homuda’s] army at length attacked Nagasune and fought with him repeatedly. … Now Nagasune sent a foot-messenger, who addressed the [Homuda], saying: ‘There was formerly a child of the Heavenly Deity [a Paekche person], who came down from Heaven to dwell here. … His name was Nigihayahi. He took to wife my younger sister. … Therefore I did take (him) … for my Lord, and did service to him. Can it be that there are two seeds of the children of the Heavenly Deity?’ [Homuda] said: ‘There are many children of the Heavenly Deity.’ …[Homuda] showed to Nagasune the single Heavenly-feathered-arrow [appearing in the Koguryeo An-ak Tomb No. 3 mural] and quiver which he wore. When Nagasune saw the heavenly token he became more and more embarrassed. But the murderous weapons were already prepared, and things were in such a state that he was unable to pause his career. Therefore, he adhered to his misguided scheme, and would not alter his purpose. Nigihayahi, knowing from the first that the Heavenly Deity had simply generously bestowed the Empire on the Heavenly Grandchild [Homuda], and that in view of the perverse disposition of Nagasune it would be useless to instruct him in the relation of Heaven to Man [Lord and Vassal], put him to death. … [Homuda], who from the first had heard that Nigihayahi had come from Heaven [Paekche], finding that he now had actually performed faithful service, accordingly praised him, and was gracious to him. He was the ancestor of the Mononobe House.” 31

On a day [in 388], Homuda proclaimed:--“During the six years that our expedition against the East has lasted, … the wicked bands have met death. It is true that the frontier lands are still unpurified, and that a remnant of evil is still refractory. But in the region of the Central Land there is no more wind and dust. Truly we should make a vast and spacious capital, and plan it great and strong. At present things are in a crude and obscure condition, and the people’s minds are unsophisticated. … Their manners are simply what is customary. Now if a great man were to establish laws, justice could not fail to flourish. When I observe the Kashihabara plain, which lies southwest of Mount Unebi [a hill between the villages of Shiraka City and Masuge in Yamato], it seems the Center of the Land. I must set it in order. Two years later, Year [390], Spring, 1st month, 1st day, [Homuda] assumed the Imperial Dignity in the Palace of Kashihabara.”32

8. Paekche Congratulating the Birth of New Kingdom in the Japanese Islands

The *Nihongi* records: “Ku-zeo and the rest arrived from Paekche [in 391], and said to [Homuda]: ‘The vast blessings of the Celestial Court reached afar to our mean village, and our king [King Chin-sa, r.385-92, the second son of Keun Kusu] capered with delight. Out of the fullness of his heart he has sent a mission in token of his great sincerity. Though it comes to the ten thousandth year, in what year shall we fail to attend thy Court?’ Hereupon [Homuda] addressed the [ministers], saying: --‘We owe it to Heaven and not to man that we have a friendly country like Paekche. It brings constantly…tribute of trinkets and rarities… We, seeing this true affection, are always rejoiced at it, and so long as we live will heartily bestow on it our favor. We, in accordance with the divine testimony, having for the first time laid open a road, subdued the lands west of the sea [Ma-han] and granted them to Paekche, would now again draw closer the bonds of friendship and make lasting our loving bounty.’ ”33

Paekche discovered iron at the Mount Cheol-san and promised to supply the iron acquired from this mountain to the Yamato court.

The *Nihongi* records: “Ku-zeo and the others again came along and … addressed [Homuda], saying: --‘West of…country there is a river-source which issues from Mount Cheol-san in Kong-na. … [H]aving gotten the iron of this mountain, [we will] wait upon the sage Court for all ages.’[King A-shin, r.392-405, the grandson of Keun Kusu] addressed his [son], Prince [Cheon-ji, r.405-20], saying: --‘The honorable country east of the sea with which we are now in communication has been opened to us by Heaven. Therefore does it bestow on us Celestial bounty, and dividing off the land west of the sea [Ma-han], has granted it to us. Consequently the foundation of our land is confirmed for ever. Thou [Cheon-ji] shouldst cultivate well its friendship, and having collected our national products, wait on it with tribute without ceasing.”34

The quantity of iron excavated from the burial sites of all types in Japanese Islands grew dramatically in the early fifth century and, what is more, the source for all of this iron must have been the Korean Peninsula, at least until iron sand was finally discovered in the Japanese Islands in the sixth century.35

Some of the *Nihongi* is touching: “We owe it to Heaven and not to man that we have a friendly country like Paekche … [S]o long as we live will heartily bestow on it our favor. … We…would…draw closer the bonds of friendship and make lasting our loving bounty,” that were told by the ruler of Yamato Kingdom, and “East of the sea … has been opened to us by Heaven. … Consequently the foundation of our land is confirmed for ever. Thou shouldst cultivate well its friendship,” that were told by the ruler of Paekche to his son.

Appendix 6.1. The Seven-Branched Sword

The Seven-branched Sword that is preserved at the Isono-kami Shrine is believed to be the sword that is spoken of in the *Nihongi* as having been sent by the King Keun Chogo of Paekche to the Jingū’s court in 372 (252, without the two-cycle correction).36 The *Nihongi* portrays Prince Homuda as a 52-year old (second) son of the 83-year old Regent Jingū, and the heir apparent to the throne at that time.

According to the *Nihongi* record on the extensive pen/insular military activities in 399 (involving the Yamato soldiers, Paekche generals, King Keun Chogo, and the Crown Prince Keun Kusu), Homuda and his followers seem to have departed the Korean Peninsula c.369-70. Apparently as a symbolic gesture of well-wishing for his endeavor and solidarity with his new kingdom, the king of Paekche seems to have bestowed the Seven-branched Sword upon Homuda, who was undertaking the conquest of the Japanese Islands. The inscription on the Seven-branched Sword says that the sword was manufactured on the sixteenth of April or May in 369, and the *Nihongi* says that the sword was delivered to Homuda in September 372, most likely soon after he landed on the Japanese Islands.

Taking account of the fact that so many people from the Korean Peninsula had already crossed the sea to settle in the Japanese Islands, official evidence to testify visually to the mandate of the Paekche court (bestowed upon Homuda as the ruler of the new kingdom) was presumably expected to enhance the cooperation of the old settlers and facilitate the conquest. It is a real surprise that this Seven-branched Sword is still preserved at the Isonkami Shrine in Tenri City, Nara Prefecture.

The full translation of the inscription on the sword may be read as follows: “On May sixteenth, the fourth year of *Tai-he* [369], the day of Byung-O, at noon, this seven-branched sword was manufactured with hundred-times-wrought iron. As this sword has a magical power to rout the enemy, it is sent [bestowed] to the king of a vassal state. Manufactured by □□□□. Never has there been such a sword. The Crown Prince of Paekche, who owes his life to the august King, had this sword made for the king of Yamato [or the king of vassal state]. Hope that it be transmitted and shown to posterity.”37

As usual, most Japanese scholars have tried to turn the inscription around and cast Paekche as the “vassal state” by reading the inscription “respectively presenting the sword to the Emperor by the Paekche King.”Ueda Masaaki is rather an exception among Japanese historians because he “has maintained that the Seven-branched Sword was ‘bestowed’ on the Wa ruler by the king of Paekche.” Ueda “based his interpretation on the argument that the term ‘*koo*’ [*hou-wang*] appearing in the inscription is written in the commanding tone of a superior addressing an inferior, exemplified by the sentence reading ‘hand down [this sword] to posterity.’ ”38

Appendix 6.2. The Mimana [Imna] Story

Morishima (1982: 21-30), a distinguished economist, writes: “Since about 370, the Japanese had occupied the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula. This Japanese territory … was called Mimana … Japan had also had extensive influence in Paekche and Silla from about the same time, and they paid tribute to her.” Morishima’s story is simply a faint recitation from his childhood memory of the Meiji-style history textbook. A typical Japanese version of the Korea-Japan relations goes as follows (Kuno, 1937: 193, 234-42): “The power of Japan to rule in Korea began with the creation of the State of Mimana as her protectorate. … It is a widely accepted historical fact that prior to the seventh century a sort of suzerain and tributary relationship existed between Japan and the kingdoms and states in southern Korea. … In 1910, when Korea was annexed to Japan, the Japanese magazine *History and Geography* … issued a special edition … [and] the chief editor made the following statement … ‘This great accomplishment may be regarded … as the restoration of Japan’s ruling power in Korea that she lost in the seventh century’…”

The *Nihongi* writes “Imna” in Chinese characters and reads it “Mima-na,” and then lets it represent either the entire Kaya Federation, the Imna state ruled by the King of Imna, or the place where, the *Nihongi* claims, the *Omi* [Minister] of the Mima-na Yamato Authority had resided.39 The *Kojiki* contains no references to Mima-na.

The list of 12 Pyun-han states recorded in the *Dongyi-zhuan* includes “**Mi***oya***ma**” [presumably indicating Mima] and “Kuya” [presumably indicating Kaya or Kara]. These Pyun-han states had evolved into the Kaya Federation that often appears in the Chinese chronicles by the two representative names, Imna (read Mima-na in the *Nihongi*) and Kara. According to the *Songshu*, the Yamato rulers listed “Imna and Kara” together with the extinct “Ma-han and Chin-han” with “Yamato, Paekche and Silla,” putting them on an equal footing. Since the names of “Imna and Kara” appear side by side as a rather conspicuous couple also in the Kwang-gae-to’s epitaph as well as in the *Samguk-sagi*, one might well assume that Pyun-han had evolved into the Imna League and the Kara League, and these two minor leagues constituted the whole Kaya Federation.40

According to the *Nihongi* (N1: 166-7), a prince of the Great Kara came to the Japanese Islands, and the Emperor Suinin urged him to change the name of his country to the name of his father, Mima-ki (Sujin), and that was the reason why the Great Kara came to be called Mima-na. Egami (1964) notes that “it is more probable, however, that the derivation is in the opposite direction, and that the element *mima* in the name of the Emperor Sujin is derived from the word Mima-na [Great Kara].” 41

The *Nihongi* (NII: 80) records in 562: “Mima-na [Kaya Federation] was destroyed. The general term Mima-na includes the states called separately Kara, Ara, Saiki, Tara, Cholma, Kocha, Chata, Sanpanha, Kwison, and Imnye, in all ten states.”42 To this list we may add Tak-sun, Tok-ki-tan and South Kara that had been conquered by Silla in the early sixth century. The rulers of both Paekche and the Yamato Kingdom did their best to reestablish the Kaya Federation (called *Mima-na* here), an effort that turned out to be futile.

The *Nihongi* records the dying words of Yamato King Kimmei (r.531-71), exhorting the Heir Apparent to restore Mima-na [the Kaya Federation], and “renewing a relationship like that of a husband and wife just as it was in former days (N2: 89).”43 Japanese historians apparently read the “husband and wife relationship” as the “suzerain and colony relationship.”

In the *Nihongi*, we find such expressions as Yamato Authorities of Mima-na, Governor of Mima-na, and Yamato Government House in Mima-na which, by themselves, may lead one to believe in some kind of colonial status for the Kaya Federation with respect to the Yamato Kingdom. However, in the *Nihongi*, there also appear entities with such titles as: King of Imna, King of Tak-sun, King of Kara, King of Ara, Kanki of Kucha, Lord of Cholma, Lord of Saiki, Lord of Sanpanha, and Kanki of Chata. The titles of these entities indeed are not consistent with any kind of colonial status for any member states of the Kaya Federation.44

The *Nihongi* (NII: 44-5) records a statement made by the King Seong-myung (r.523-54) of Paekche: “In past times, my ancestors, King Keun Chogo and King Keun Kusu, were first joined in amity with the former Kanki [of Kaya Federation]. They became as if they were brethren. I therefore look upon you as my children or younger brothers, and you regard me as a father or elder brother. … From that time to this, I have sedulously maintained friendship with my neighbors and always dealt honestly with the allied countries.”45

In the *Nihongi*, we further find various expressions which suggest the existence of a Yamato entity clearly separate from the native Imna entity within the Imna area itself, such as: “disputes between the people of Yamato and the people of Imna”; “the high Yamato officials … long resident in the land of Imna … maintain a false appearance of amity with Imna”; “the Agent of Imna and the Agent of the Yamato authority”; “instructions to the Yamato authorities and to Imna”; and “villages of the Yamato domain of Imna.” The *Nihongi* even contains a passage suggesting the existence of Paekche people as a separate entity in Imna: “the Paekche prefects and governors of castles resident in the part of Lower Kara which belongs to Imna [called *Mima-na*].”46

In the seventh year of Ōjin [396], the *Nihongi* records: “Men of Koguryeo, men of Paekche, men of Mima-na (written Imna in Chinese characters), and men of Silla all together attended the Court.” In this sentence, the Imna (read *Mima-na* in the *Nihongi*) is placed on an equal footing with Koguryeo, Paekche, and Silla, apparently indicating the entire Kaya Federation and without implicating any colonial status for it.47

Because of the intimate relationship that had been maintained with Paekche, the successive Yamato rulers apparently tried to maintain a port facility at the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula “to serve as a station in going and returning (N1: 250).”48 According to the *Nihongi*, there was a “port of passage” with Yamato troops and residents, and there existed an official entity called “Mima-na Yamato Authority.” The efforts by Yamato rulers to secure a crossing route to Paekche seem to have been exaggerated out of all proportion by those Japanese who wanted to justify the invasion of Korea in the late nineteenth century into the story of Japanese colonization of the southern part of the Korean Peninsula for more than two centuries.

The status of the port facility called Mima-na may be compared to that of the Dutch trading station at Nagasaki (1609-1856) or the port of entry for Japanese ships and cargoes called *Wae-gwan* at modern-day Pusan, where a large number of Japanese were allowed to reside (after 1512) under the surveillance of Chosun officials.49

<http://www.wontackhong.com/homepage2/data/2080.doc>

<http://www.hongwontack.com/homepage2/data/2080.doc>

<http://www.hongwontack.pe.kr/homepage2/data/2080.doc>

1. See Wontack Hong, *Ancient Korea-Japan Relations: Paekche and the Origin of the Yamato Dynasty*, Seoul: Kudara, 2012, Chapter 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)