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**On the Problem of International Status and Stages of the Socio-Political Development of Tae-gaya in the Late 5th and Early 6th Centuries**

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The 1970s and 80s were a time when the South Korean academic, historical community became engaged in active and fruitful discussion on such basic theoretical problems of ancient history, as the origins of the ancient state (kodae kukka), stages of socio-political development leading to state-forma- tion, the exact definition of the term ancient state, and last but not least, the dating of state-formation on the Korean Peninsula.1 As a part of these theoretical efforts, the traditional scheme of the process of state-formation, established largely by Japanese colonial scholars and Japanese-trained first generation Korean historians: Lee Byong-do, Lee Hong-jik, Son Jin-t’ae, and others, which in its most generalized form, divided the process of the creation of statehood into the stages of tribal state (pujok kukka), tribal league (pujok yonmaeng), and ancient state (kodae kukka), was sharpley criticized and revised.2 New concepts: chiefdom society (kunjang sahwe), walled town state (songup kukka), proto-state (chun-kukka), and early state (ch’ogi kukka), largely inspired by achievements of Western-cultural anthropology, were gradually introduced, and, as a result, the term state - with certain attributes - started to be regarded as applicable to such societies as Choson in the period of the rule of the Wiman (B.C. 194-108) and Samhan principalities of the first centuries A.D.3 As is generally known, Japanese colonial scholars as well as the first generation Korean historians, refrained from using the chronologically earlier parts of Samguk sagi as a historical source, based their research [page 56] mostly on The Account of Western Outlanders, Tung-I chuan of Sang-guo chih, and considered the degree of state centralization, active external conquests, promulgation of written laws (yullyong), and the official recognition of Confucianism and Buddhism as state ideology and religion, respectively, and official-level contacts with China as the main criteria for the existence of real ancient statehood.4 On the contrary, the younger generation of South Korean historians and archeologists of the 1970s and 80s was mostly in favour of acceptance, albeit critical, of earlier Samguk sagi records as a historical source, and, paying more attention to the underlying structures of the society, put forward such socio-political shifts as increases in agricultural productivity and population density, the existence of a standing army, the sophistication of government organs, changes in the character of the rulers from rule based largely on informal authority to that based on institutionalized power, as main landmarks of the process of state-building. In a word, simpler historical theories, largely based on the 19th C. works of L.H. Moragn (1818-1881) as they were interpreted in Imperial Japan, had to give up their places to more modern schemes of socio-political development mostly inspired by developments in American culture and political anthropology: works of E.R. Service, KV Flannery, MH Fried, etc.5

In connection with general developments in historical and archeological theory, the direction of Kaya studies is also undergoing serious changes. As is well known, Kaya is a general term referring to the polities which existed mostly in the Naktong River valley from the 1st to the 6th century. A.D. and shared many features of material and spiritual culture: cists with vertical entrances, long necked, lidded pottery, propped earthenware, etc. Known also as Imna (Japanese:Mimana), these principalities first appear in the historical records pertaining to the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. in Samguk yusa and Samguk sagi, and are known to have been annexed by Silla in 532 - 562. Traditionally, from the times of sirhak (practical learning) historical scholarship up to the colonial period and the first post-colonial decades, Kaya was studied mostly by both Korean and Japanese historians on the basis of scarce literary sources with attention mostly focused on the location of ancient toponyms and the external relationships of Kaya political entities with Paekche，Silla, and proto-Japanese polities.6 Beginning from the 1970s, with the advent of new anthropological theories and the remarkable progress achieved in archeological excavations in former Kaya lands, the focus of attention shifted to the problems of the socio-political development of Kaya itself, while methodologically, the simultaneous complex use of narrative and archeoological materials became a prerequisite for any serious research.7 Due to the increasing method- [page 57] ological maturity of the researchers and growing interest in the universal schemes of the development of a stratified society put forward by the anthropologists, it became hardly possible simply to characterize Kaya societies as minor states (soguk) or tribal states (pujok kukka), as was customary in earlier works. Instead, new terms with more precise and well-defined meanings, such as hierarchical society (wigye sahwe), territorial state (yongyok kukka), city state (to si kukka), or complex chiefdom society (pokhap kunjang sahwe), were applied to Kaya history by Kwon Hak-su8, Ch’on Gwan-u9, Lee Yong-sikl0 and Kim T’ae-sik,11 respectively.

Typically, Lee Yong-sik attempted to find materials necessary for appraising the degree of social maturity of Kaya polities, in the chronologically earlier records of Samguk sagi concerning border disputes and diplomatic contacts between Shilla and Kaya principalities, records, hitherto usually considered not authentic and disregarded by mainstream historiography. Using as main arguments the scale and methods of Kaya political entities’ wars with neighbouring states, forms of diplomatic contacts between Kaya principalities and Silla, facts concerning the existence of hereditary monarchies and social stratification in Kaya lands, he came to the conclusion that after the late 4th century at the latest, the mightiest of Kaya societies had already achieved the level of city states, city state being one of the various forms of early statehood.12

The present paper is strongly influenced by the methodology and conclusions of Lee Yong-sik,s work. Using the same approach Lee Yong-sik successfully applied to the Kaya-related records of Samguk sagi, I attempted to analyse the content of Nihon shoki pertaining to the social stratification, monarchical power, military organization, wars and diplomacy, and religion of one of the strongest of the Kaya polities, Taegaya, today’s Koryong County in Northern Kyongsang Province also known as Panp’a and, later, Kara. Through this analysis, I want to shed light on the levels of development of social and military organization, scale and methods of warfare, character of diplomacy, and strength of monarchy in Taegaya, with the purpose of defining, at least approximately, the stage of Taegaya’s socio-political development.

Admittedly, most Korean-related records of Nihon shoki, compiled in 720, not only in many cases dated largely arbitrarily, also includes a serious legendary element and many later literary and ideological embellishments in their content. Moreover, the suppliers of Kaya and Silla-related materials to the compilers of Nihon shoki were, besides the descendants of Yamato or Kyushu aristocrats once involved in peninsular affairs, mostly noble families of Paekche origins who had emigrated to Japan after the conquest of Paekche [page 58] by Silla. If the scions of Yamato or Kyushu notables, striving to glorify the past of their clan to earn better positions in the present, spared no efforts to portray their ancestors as no less than plenipotentiary deciders of Kaya’s fate, the offspring of Paekche aristocracy, striving to realize on paper post factum the long-cherished dream of their grandfathers, depicted Kaya, in their turn, as a kind of Paekche vassal territory, sometimes rebellious, but never completely lost by its legitmate Paekche masters, until the time of Silla’s villainous annexations of 532-562 of course. On top of all these manifold hidden agendas, the compilers of Nihon shoki, inspired by the post-Taika new version of Japan as T’ang-level world empire ruled from the very beginning on the basis of Chou-like feudal laws, with the mikado playing the role of the Chinese “Son of Heaven,” of course, and Confucian principles, did their job in full accordance with the rules on which Confucius based his Annals (Ch’un-ch’iu), with only one difference: Chou and its dynasty was replaced by Japan and Yamato’s rulers who claimed their descent from the Sun Goddess. Accordingly, even the earliest relationship between Japan, actually, various proto-Japanese polities, and neighbouring Korean states and sometimes even some Chinese principalities are described in Nihon shoki in terms borrowed from the traditional Chinese notion of a China-centered hierarchical world order: neighbouring vassals pay tribute to a Japanese Yamato Emperor, and, if they fail to do this regularly, are chastised by Imperial government troops. The fact that there was no unified government in Japan until approximately the mid-5th century, and even the simplest Chinese characters, not to mention sophisticated philosopho-political notions of culture and barbarism, were not in wide use until the early 7th century, did not embarrass Nihon Shoki compilers in their crusade for politically correct antiquity befitting the current grandeur of the law-governed state (ritsuryo kokka) of the early 8th century.

It is clear that the character if primary materials used in the process of compiling the Nihon shoki, as well as the biased attitudes of the compilers, limit the credibility of this earliest extant Japanese official historical chronicle. It is also evident that in Samguk sagi, compiled in 1145, which represents a much higher stage of development of Confucianist historiographical tradition, the picture of Korean antiquity is much less distorted than in Nihon shoki. Kim Busak (1075-1151), chief of the committee for Samguk sagi compilation, had subjectivity of his own, but, unlike his colleagues from 8th century Japan, he preferred just to omit the undesirable information rather than indulging in creative writing of flowery pseudo-historical passages. Nevertheless, the dearth of Kaya-related materials in Samguk sagi and the lack of authenticity of Kaya-related chapters of another Korean history, Samguk yusa, compiled in [page 59] 1285 by monk Iryon mostly on the basis of Korean folklore, epigraphs, and narrative tradition, force us to resort to Nihon shoki in our quest for data pertaining to the socio-political development of Taegaya. In the course of our work with Nihon shoki texts, self-evident distortions, mutual trade on an offi- cial inter-state level through envoys being called the offering of tribute; military clashes chracterized as chastisement, will be adequately corrected, and problems of reliability caused by the character of primary materials and the general attitude of the compilers will also be given due attention. Still, I hope to show that Taegaya-related articles of Nihon shoki do contain the nuclei of authentic material usable for historical research.

II

The article on the subjugating of the seven Kara states (加羅七國平定) found under the 3rd lunar month of the 49th year of Empress Jingu’s (神功) reign revised13 dating, cr. 369 hardly can be taken literally in either its dating or its content; still, it seems to have reflected certain historical facts. According to the article, the Japanese expeditionary troops, led by Paekche general Mongna Kunja, using T’aksun, (Kaya polity, presumably located in today’s Ch’angwon County of Southern Kyongsang Province) as their springboard, subjugated (Sino-Japanese: 平定) the seven lands of Pijabol, Nam-Kara, Takkuk, Alia, Tara, T’aksun, and Kara. After this, the son of Paekche King Ch’ogo, named Kwisu, at the head of Paekche troops, came, and four lands, named Piri (Chon- ju or Naju in Northern Cholla), P’ijung (Kimje in Northern Cholla), Fomiji (Yuhung Village in Kongju County, Southern Ch’ungch’ong), and Pan’go (Pannam in Naju County) surrendered on their own. Finally, the king of Paekche twice pledged loyalty and vassalage to the Japanese Emperor. Views of modern scholars on this tale can be very roughly classified into negativist and revisionist with a tiny minority still accepting this at its face value. The negativists, Tsuda Shokichi, Ikeuchi Hiroshi, Lee Yong-sik, etc. regard the article as pure falsification by Nihon shoki compilers meant to explain the emergence of the so-called Japanese Government of Mimana in the reign of Keidai and mostly composed of the distorted fragments of later records projected into the past. Revisionists, Lee Byong-do, his disciples Ch’on Gwan-u, Kim hyon-gu, etc. whose views I largely share suppose that the article is nothing but Paekche materials on subjugating Mahan and partly, Kaya communities by Paekche troops and concluding a Paekche-Japanese alliance all seriously distorted by the compilers: alliance was remade into Paekche vassalage to Japan, [page 60] etc.14 In accordance with the revisionist theory of Ch’on Gwan-u who proves in detail that the real subject of the subjugation was rather Paekche than any of the proto-Japanese polities. I also start with the assumption that, in reality, the sub-jugation was that of the region of today’s South Cholla Province by Paekche and Paekche-employed proto-Japanese subsidiary troops, with a subsequent attack against Naktong Valley-based Kaya principalities and probably Silla. The part concerning the subjugation of Silla is the least reliable here, for most Nihon shoki records on the Silla-Japanese relationship are based mainly on folk memory, anti-Silla prejudices of early 8th century Japan, and the anti-Silla spirit of emigre Paekche historical writings. As we can see, in this Nihon shoki record, the sequence of the enumeration of various Kaya polities is as follows: Pijabol, a.k.a. Pihwa-Kaya; today’s Ch’angnyong County of South Kyongsang Province, and Nam-Kara, a.k.a. Kumgwan, and Pon-Kaya，or Main Kaya; today’s Kimhae County of South Kyongsang Province are listed among the first, and Kara, believed to be the matrix of future Taegaya is among the last. It is therefore surmisable that, rather than target the relatively weak Kara, Paekche, having attracted Japanese sympathies by demonstrating the excellence of its goods and its readiness to trade them,15 strove to wrest the profitable trade with the Japanese Archipelago out of Nam-Kara’s hands and monopolize it. Nam-Kara, Paekche’s traditional rival in the trade with the proto-Japanese, is thought to have been dealt a serious blow by this Paekche- led military operation, but Kara, which still was not strong enough to participate actively in regional rivalries, seems to have remained relatively undamaged. On the contrary, the weakening of Nam-Kara, which resulted from the Paekche-led military onslaught, could provide Kara with the much-needed opportunity to increase its influence in the Kaya region.

According to Ch’on Gwan-u, the subjugation of Kaya territories by Paekche-led forces ushered in a new Kaya region era of dependence on Paekche and a subordinate relationship with the latter. Still, the position of younger scholars, Kim Hyon-gu and Lee Mun-gi, who maintain that the relationship between the Paekche and the Kaya regions was subordinate in form rather than in essence, and that Paekche’s military and trade predominance did not mean Kaya’s complete political dependence on Paekche, seems to be closer to the historical realities.16 In any case, being included to some extent in Paekche’s sphere of influence and forced to maintain various contacts with the Paekche court, Kara’s rulers were likely to have been seriously impressed by the military strength and cultural blossoming of Paekche’s centralized aristocratic monarchy. Admittedly, the most reliable proof of Paekche influence on Kara’s socio-cultural development would have been the discovery of Paekche [page 61] or Paekche-influenced relics in Kara graves of the relevant period. Unfortunately, the burials of the 4th century Koryong region are still relatively poorly known. On the other hand, among 6th century Koryong burial mounds there are three: the Fresco mound of Koa-dong, the neighbouring stone-chamber mound, and the Cholsang ch’onjong mound of Chisan-dong built in the style of a cist with a horizontal entrance (hwaenghyol-sik soksil-myo) which was more widely used in Paekche and Silla than in Kaya. One of these heterogeneous graves, the Fresco mound in Koa-dong, was decorated with a Buddhist- inspired mural painting of lotuses closely resembling that found in Paekche grave No. 6 in Songsan-ni, Kongju County, and the Fresco mound of Nungsan-ni, Puyo County.17 If certain Paekche cultural influences on Kara in the 6th century can be proven, we can also suggest that such influence, or at least, cultural contacts between the Koryong region and Paekche, could have deeper historical roots. Moreover, Paekche diplomatic materials included in Nihon shoki portray Kaya territories as having become culturally, ritually, and politically nothing short of Paekche dependencies in the late 4th century.18 Certainly, there is some grain of exaggeration in the Paekche king’s pompous statements about time-honoured relations of subordination between his kingdom and Kaya lands, but, on the whole, it seems to have reflected historical reality. The Paekche king could hardly completely falsify the history of his country’s relations with Kaya in the letter sent to Kaya rulers, who were, as it was very well understood in Paekche, quite knowledgeable about their own history, although certain rhetorical overstatements could be made. In a word, presumably from the late 4th century onward, the process of socio-political and cultural development in Kara was to some degree influenced by Paekche, which succeeded in winning a position of predominance in the region. In M. Fried’s terminology, Kara can be, to a certain extent, referred to as a secondary state, the socio-political and cultural development of which was catalyzed by a more advanced neighbouring society.

The records, which originated from the Paekche sources, about a Silla- instigated Japanese raid upon Kara, Taegaya, the flight of Kara’s king to Paekche, and the ultimate restoration of Kara with the help of the Japanese Imperial Government can be found under the 62nd year of the Jingu reign in Nihon shoki (revised date-ca. 382 or 442). According to this article, the Japanese court was infuriated by Silla’s failure to offer tribute to the “Esteemed Country”(Japan) on time and sent General Sachihiko to chastise Silla. Silla sent a beautiful woman to seduce him, and as a result of the successful seducation, Sachiko chastized Kara instead of Silla. King (wang) of Kara, hanki Kibon, with his sons Paekkuji, Asuji, Kuksari, Iramaju, and [page 62] Imunji, had to flee to Paekche at the head of his subjects. The king’s younger sister, Kijonji, petitioned the Japanese, revealing to them the fact that Sachihiko, bribed by Silla, had chastised the wrong country. Irritated, the Heavenly Emperor (of Japan) sent Mongna Kunja, who was earlier described as a Paekche general, to restore Kara.

As Paekche materials, these records are thought to be basically authentic, although they were visibly embellished and partially altered by the compilers of Nihon shoki.19 The Japanese General Sochihiko or Sachihiko (Korean Supchinon or Sajibigwe,) who is said to have raided Kara, was probably a pro- Silla proto-Japanese chieftain married to a Silla woman, or a Paekche official of Japanese ancestry. Mongna Kunja, (Japanese Mokura Konichi), who is said to have restored Kara, was, according to Nihon shoki records under the 3rd lunar month of Jingo’s 49th year reign, a Paekche general, so the saviour of Kara was Paekche, where the Kara king had fled rather than to any of the proto-Japanese chiefdoms. In a nutshell, those records initially should have described a conflict between Paekche and Silla over supremacy in the Kaya region, in which Japanese subsidiary troops were somehow hired and used by Silla. Later, in the mid-6th century, some of the officials of a Japanese mission to Ara-Kaya which was blown up into the Japanese Government of Mimana by the compilers of Nihon shoki, were hired and used by Silla in a very similar way, the only difference being the lack of military power on the part of the Ara-Kaya stationed Japanese mission.

One detail of this story germane to our subject is the title of king (Korean wang) which was purportedly used by Kara’s ruler, hanki Kibon. As No Jung- guk maintains, this title could be a later interpolation,20 but it hardly was possible that Paekche historians, who usually considered all Kaya lands Paekche’s natural dependencies and later never called Kara by its proud native cognomen of Taegaya (great among Kaya territories) thus refusing to recognize the latter’s hegemony among Kaya principalities,21 would have consciously elevated the Kara ruler’s position. Then, we should remember that in Paekche materials, included in Nihon shoki, all ancient Korean official titles are usually treated extremely carefully. For example, in the accounts on the Paekche- chaired meetings for the restoration of Imna (Korean Imna puhang hweui)), found under the 4th lunar month of Kimmei’s 2nd year (541) and the 11th lunar month of Kimmei’s 5th year (544), many original Kaya titles including that of hanki (chieftain) descendant of the rulers of previously independent regional or consanguineous communities afterwards included in a bigger principality, or a ruler of smaller independent semi-state, ch’ahanki (junior hanki) descendant of the rulers of a weaker community afterwards annexed by a big- [page 63] ger one, sangsuwi (hanki’s high-ranked retainer), etc, are meticulously listed. Among all Kaya rulers, only that of the two strongest principalities, Kara and Alia, Ara-Kaya, today’s Haman County of South Kyongsang Province, are ever called kings (wang) in Nihon shoki, with all others routinely mentioned as hanki only, hanki being the most widely used title for the rulers of smaller independent Kaya polities. The fact that in the record in question Kara’s Kibon was mentioned as both hanki and king suggests that at that period Kara grew in strength and raised its international status to a degree enabling its hanki to lay claim to the king title which would equate him with the then hegemony of the southern part of the peninsula, the king of Paekche. Judging by the fact that this title, as we can see here, appears in a Paekche source later included in a Japanese history, both Paekche and its proto-Japanese allies must have acknowledged the rise of Kara’s position as implied by the use of this title. We can also suggest that such elevation of a country’s international status must have been backed by a certain strengthening of a centralized government structure and a consequent military build-up. It is very probable that in pursuit of a higher degree of power consolidation, Kara rulers did emulate, consciously or unconsciously, Paekche’s powerful autocrats whose reputed military machine demonstrated its superiority to Kaya people during the raid of 369. Another noteworthy fact is that in the record in question not only the name of Kara’s king, hanki Kibon, but also the cognomina of his sons and younger sister were carefully listed. It would hardly have happened unless the children and relatives of Kibon had played a prominent role in Kara politics.22 Thus, one can suggest that the process of the concentration of power in the hands of one hereditary ruling clan, typical of the chiefdom societies at the stage of the building of an early statehood, did take place in Kara in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, too. It is also surmisable that Kibon’s younger sister’s23 reported negotiations with the Japanese Emperor about military assistance against Sochihiko. Sachihiko’s raid meant that, encouraged by the example of Paekche’s successful alliance with proto-Japanese polities, Kara, on strengthening its administrative and military structure, also attempted to enter the stage of the international diplomacy of the period.24

As we can see above, the main role in establishing the Paekche hegemony in the Kaya region (ca. 369) and repulsing the Silla-sponsored attack against Kara (ca. 382 or 442) was played by Paekche General Mongna Kunja, who is thought to have belonged to the family of Mok (木 also known as Mongna, 木 羅 or Mokhyop, 木協) one of the famed eight aristocratic clans of Paekche known from Chinese sources (Pei Shih, fascicle 90, Account of Paekche; Sui Shu, fascicle 81, Account of Paekche, etc.)25 It seems possible that Mongna [page 64] Kunja-led military and diplomatic actions in the Kaya region had increased his clan’s influence on the affairs of that region. This supposition is backed by the content of interlinear comments on a Nihon shoki article under the 25th year of Ojin (revised date ca. 414).26 Supposedly, the political and military influence of the Mok clan limited to some degree the independence of Kaya polities. Still this does not mean that Kara, as well as other Kaya territories, was completely incorporated into Paekche’s sphere of influence. Nihon shoki says that the Kaya peoples retained their right to maintain independent diplomatic relationships with foreign lands, prominently proto-Japanese polities, and their ability to wage externa] wars. It is recorded, for instance, in Nihon shoki under the 9th lunar month of Ojin’s 7th year (revised date ca. 396) that Kaya envoys participated in diplomatic contacts with the proto-Japanese on an equal footing with missions of the three main ancient Korean kingdoms.27 No less than Paekche kings, Kaya rulers succeeded in winning over various proto-Japanese chieftains to their side and in using the latter to serve their own interests. A typical example of such a relationship is the story of Kungwol-gun (弓月君; Japanese: Yumitsuki-no kimi)28 told in Nihon shoki under the 14th year and the 8th lunar month of the 16th year of Ojin (revised dates-ca. 403-405). According to the tale, a large group of supposedly Paekche and Kaya migrants wishing to move to the Japanese Archipelago, was blocked in Kara by Silla forces. Their leader, Kungwol-gun, successfully solicited the military assistance of the Japanese Imperial Court, but even their representatives could not raise the blockade for three years.29 We should remember that at that period the decisive element of the political situation on the peninsula was the sharp confrontation between Paekche, allied with the proto-Japanese, and Kaya on the one side, and Koguryo in league with its junior partner, Silla, on the other side. Koguryo’s belligerent king, famed Kwanggaet’o (319-413) dealt Paekche a series of crushing blows in the great battles of 395 and 396, and then in 400, wiped out the latter’s proto―Japanese allies who, using Kaya as their military springboard, attempted to invade Silla. During this operation, Koguryo’s armies, and probably the troops of their Silla allies too, are thought to have occupied, at least partly, Kaya lands for some time. A further Japanese attempt to invade Koguryo itself (404) was also successfully repulsed. The still weaker partner, Silla, remained a target for Paekche (403) and Japanese (407) attacks, and even had to establish a friendly relationship with a proto- Japanese polity (402). Devastating war with mightier Koguryo, consequent military drafts and requisitions of property increased the number of refugees in Paekche (399) and probably in Kaya, too.30 It seems only natural that, in such circumstances, a group of Paekche and Kaya refugees tried to reach friendly [page 65] Japanese lands. It is noteworthy that, being besieged by Silla forces in Kara, the group of Paekche and Kaya migrants artfully used their diplomatic relationship with the proto-Japanese to secure their emigration to the Japanese Archiplego.

 Afterwards, in the mid-5th century, Silla managed to break out of its unequal alliance with Koguryo (450-455) and forged an anti-Koguryo alliance with its erstwhile rival, Paekche. Kara (Taegaya), being still under the political influence of Paekche, had to adopt a friendlier attitude towards Silla, too. Basically, the emergence of the tripartite anti-Koguryo alliance of Paekche, Silla and Kaya lands, of which Kara is thought to have played the most prominent role, served also the best interests of Kara itself, for southward expansion of Koguryo threatened its stability and trade ties with the Japanese islands. That was the reason Kara actively helped Silla to solicit the military help of proto-Japanese troops when Silla was attacked by a large Koguryo army some time after the Silla-Koguryo schism.31 This fact shows the active diplomatic role of Kara (Taegaya) within the tripartite anti-Koguryo alliance of southern Korean states and the close connections between Kara and proto-Japanese forces.

 As is widely known, in 475 Koguryo once again scored a big victory in its epochal struggle against its arch-rival, Paekche, sacking the latter’s capital, Hansong, and killing Paekche’s King Kaero (r. 455-475). Forced to move its capital to Ungjin, today’s Kongju in South Ch’ungch’ong Province, since Hansong and surrounding lands of the Han River valley were now lost to the northern enemy, Paekche for some time had its central government extremely weakened, with powerful noble families, Hae, Paek, etc., establishing their power bases in provinces and repeatedly revolting against monarchical authority. On the other hand, the Mok, a.k.a. Mokhyop or Mongna clan, which owed their strong positions in the Kaya region to their proximity to successful Paekche monarchs, Mokyhop Manch’i known as Mok Manch’i from Nihon shoki, is said to have escorted short-lived King Munju after the great defeat of 475. See Samguk sagi, fascicle 25, the 9th lunar month of the 21st year of King Kaero, was strongly affected by the upheaval, and seems to have lost part of its influence at least temporarily. Kim Hyon-gu, who summarized the theories of some Japanese and Korean scholars of the past, maintains that at some time between 475 and 478 a large part of the Mok family had to emigrate to the Japanese Archipelago, where the former Paekche noblemen gradually gained strength and eventually became the ancestors of the mighty Soga clan which virtually ruled Japan in 587-645.32 Due to the temporary weakening of Paekche and the territorial shift in Mok’s power base, Kaya political [page 66] entities with Kara (future Taegaya) the foremost among them, had already reached a certain level of social and political maturity, and could almost completely free themselves from the traditional bonds of subordination to Paekche. Another Kaya neighbour, Silla, was at the time all too busy with checking Koguryo’s southward expansion to pay serious attention to Kaya, affairs.33 Due to so favourable a turn in the international situation, Kara, with strong monarchical power already quite firmly established, could raise itself to the position of Kaya’s regional leader and adopt a new official name, Taegaya (Great Kaya), which fully displayed the seriousness of its ambitions. As the hegemon and representative of the Kaya regional league, which is thought to have taken shape after Kaya bacame a dominant power, and Paekche sustained an overwhelming defeat in 475,34 and Taegaya, still known to the Chinese as Kara, offered its tribute to the Southern Ch’i (479-502) in 479, and the Taegaya King Haji, known as Kasil from Korean sources, was granted an honourary Chinese title as a reward.35 After this meaningful legitimization of Taegaya’s new international status by what was perceived as the civilization’s centre at that time-Samguk sagi fascicle 3 records show how active Taegaya foreign policy had become: in 481, 3rd year of the Soji-maripkan ‘s reign - Taegaya along with Paekche, rendered military assistance to Silla, which had been attacked by Koguryo and malgal troops, and in 496, the 18th year of the same ruler, it approached Silla with presents in an obvious attempt to protect itself from possible future encroachment by Paekche. As we can see, for approximately two decades after 475, Taegaya acted on the international scene as an equal member of the anti-Koguryo alliance of southern Korean states, and displayed a remarkable mastery of the diplomatic techniques of the era.

 At the beginning of the 6th century, however, the political situation in the southern part of the peninsula again began to undergo significant changes. In the last years of the reign of King Tongsong (479-501) and during the reign of King Muryong (501-523), the Paekche monarchy reconfirmed its close relationship with Southern Chi’ in early 490, reinforced its control over the provinces, stabilized general political conditions, and assumed the offensive in the ceaseless war against Koguryo thereby winning some important victories.36 With the power apparatus of the centralized monarchy restored by Muryong’s decisive and balanced measures, Paekche could resume its eastward expansion into Kaya lands. The main objectives of this offensive against Kaya entities were: first, to seize the fertile lands of the Naktong River valley and thus secure new sources of tax revenue, second, to take possession of Taegaya’s famed iron mines in today’s Yaro district of Koryong County to provide raw materials for weapons-making, third, and very important, to capture [page 67] strategically important Kaya fortresses near the Silla border, for example, Kuryemora Fortress in T’aksun territory)37 thus preparing a military springboard for possible future conflict with Silla.38 In fact, some Paekche diplomatic documents quoted in Nihon shoki promote grounds for suggesting that by mobilizing the Kaya populace and building partly locally staffed fortresses in Kaya territories bordering on Silla, Paekche wished to concentrate its own resources on the struggle with its main rival, mighty Koguryo. Paekche kings did not want to see their crack troops diverted to what they perceived as negligible border clashes until in 554 Silla unexpectedly dealt its one-time ally a first serious blow.39 Also, Paekche kings could have been interested in monopolizing burgeoning Korea-Japanese trade and various contacts with the islands, which had traditionally been conducted equally by Paekche and Kaya entities.

According to Nihon shoki in 509 (the 2nd lunar month of the 3rd year of Keidai) Paekche forcibly returned the descendants of its refugees, who lived in Kaya lands, in some cases, 2nd or 3rd generation.40 This action, aimed at repopulating the provinces devasted by wars, revolts, and famines, meant also the resumption of Paekche’s eastward expansion once suspended by the defeat of 475. At the same time, the mention of Paekche migrants who lived in Kaya lands for generations tells us about the scale and depth of Paekche influence on the Kaya culture of the 5th century.

 After this, probably partly due to the lack of any effective immediate countermeasures from the Taegaya side, Paekche continued its advance into Kaya lands. Around 512, Paekche forcibly seized, according to Nihon shoki, four Kaya territories, known from Nihon shoki (the 12th lunar month of the 6th year of Keidai’s reign) as Sang-Dari (上多唎 “Upper” Tari), Ha-Dari (下多唎, “Lower” Tari), Sat’a (娑陀), and Moru (牟婁).41 Received as a grant from the Japanaese government, their exact location will probably never be known; hypotheses are abundant. Suematsu Yasukazu maintained that the territories were located in today’s Southern Cholla Province; Ch’on Gwan-u was in favour of the theory that Paekche’s eastward expansion in the early 6th century had the valleys of Naktong River’s halfway up and downstream as its primary object, etc.42 The most reliable among them is the supposition that the four main territories were located in the Somjin River basin.43 If this theory is to be believed, the main objective of Paekche’s easterly advance must have been to intercept the Somjin Kaya-Japan trading route so that the brisk export of Korean handicrafts to the Japanese Islands could be monopolized by the Paekche court.44 Threatened by Koguryo incursions from the north and constantly on the alert for potential encroachments by Silla on the east, Paekche [page 68] sometimes needed the military assistance of Japanese chieftains and was willing to repay by providing them with exquisite prestigious goods and other items from the advanced Sino-Korean culture. Thus, Kaya entities, proud of their own active and dynamic contacts with proto-Japanese kinglets, were viewed by the Paekche court as dangerous rivals. It is also quite clear that Kaya’s and Paekche’s trading partners on the other side of the Korean Strait must have been aware of the changes in peninsular conditions and have reacted positively to them otherwise Paekche, fully conscious of the potential aftermath from international trading networks, would not have been so audacious. Such an ex post facto positive reaction of interested proto-Japanese chieftains, very probably bought by generous gifts from Paekche’s king, was later called in Nihon shoki “granting” the four territories to Paekche by the Japanese gov-ernment.

Its vital trading interests being seriously affected, Taegaya had to respond to the aggression with a mighty counteroffensive. Around 513, Taegaya attacked and seized the old Kaya territories of Kimun (most historians locate it in today’s Namwon, Koksong, or Imsil Counties of Cholla Province; Ch’on Gwan-u favours Kaeryong in Kumnung County, Northern Kyongsang Province, as a possible location),45 thus securing the valleys of Somjin halfway and an important part of the trade route to the Japanese Islands (Nihon shoki, the 6th month of Keidai’s 7th year). Interestingly, informing their Japanese partners of these events, Paekche envoys contemptuously referred to Taegaya by its old 4th century name, Panp’a, thus refusing to recognize Taegaya’s current leading position in the region.46

Struck by Taegaya’s counterattack, Paekche acted promptly; at the end of 513, the Kimun region was recaptured, and scholar-of-five-classics, specialist in Confucian scriptures, Tan Yang-i, was sent to the Japanese partners to attempt to buy their consent to the Paekche-imposed changes in the control of trade between the peninsula and the islands. As we can see from many Nihon shoki records, Paekche scholars, skilled craftsmen, divinators, healers, and later Buddhist monks and nuns were greatly valued in the Japanese Archipelago where at that time native specialists of such kinds were totally lacking, so Paekche’s attempt at a cultural-exporting diplomacy proved successful, and necessary consent was given. Taegaya’s envoy, Chipchi, tried to overbid Paekche, enticing his hosts with rare treasures (珍寶), probably luxurious handiwork, but unsuccessfully: for the haut monde of early Japanese proto- states needed to import classical Chinese culture, but had only very scarce contacts with China proper at that period; Paekche-supplied Confucian scholars fully knowledgeable about the Chinese writing system were much more [page 69] valuable than Kaya handicrafts.47 Nihon shoki, as usual, refers to this competition between two potential suppliers of advanced culture as “offering tribute,” and states that Kimun was “granted” to Paekche by the Japanese imperial court, but it is quite obvious that the latter, if the entity under such a title existed at all at that time, hardly had the military power on the peninsula able to influence the course of Paekche-Taegaya confrontation (the 11th month of Keidai’s 7th year). Archaeologically, it is interesting to note that in the Namwon region, presumably the location of ancient Kimun, 5th-6th century burials (Wolsan-ni, Konji-ri, and Turang-ni mounds) still dominate Kaya material culture, represented by typically Kaya-style stone cist tombs with vertical entrances, big sabers with inlaid hilts, long-necked lidded pottery, horse armour, etc., sometimes suggestive of Taegaya influence. It co-existed with characteristically Paekche elements: serpent-head-like decorations, long iron arrow-heads, necklesses, or short-necked pottery, etc. Those elements gradually gained more and more important positions, especially from the early 6th century onwards, giving a vivid impression of the border region disputed by mightier neighbours.48

 Defeated in diplomatic competition, Taegaya had to resort to military means. According to Nihon shoki in 514 (the 3rd lunar month of Keidai’s 8th year), Taegaya, still contemptuously referred to as Panp’a, displaying the obvious Paekche origins of the record, built fortresses and beacon-towers in Chat’an. Kim T’ae-sik places it in Koch’ang; there are also Chinju and Ch’irwon theories49 and Taesa (a.k.a.Tasa), the latter being an important port in the vicinity of today’s Hadong in Southern Kyongsang Province50 through which much of the trade with the Japanese Archipelago was conducted. The purpose of those preparations must have been to guarantee the continuation of Kaya trade with the Japanese islands, as well as to beef up the defence of the Kaya League’s western border where incursions of the Paekche army or Japanese bands under its banner could be expected. At the same time, on having built fortresses on Kaya’s border with Silla in places known from Nihon shoki as Iryolbi usually thought to have been located in today’s Uiryong in South Kyongsang Province; also Suematsu pointed to Chain Township in Kyongsan County, North Kyongsang Province as another possible location and Masubi probably, Samga Township in Hapch’on County, South Kyongsang Province, Taegaya troops made several raids against Silla, the Paekche ally of that time, thus enriching Taegaya coffers by plundering Silla inhabitants’ valuables and enslaving prisoners. Probably, it was the Taegaya incursions that forced Silla to build a lesser capital (sogyong) in Asich on, thought to have been located somewhere near today’s Uiryong,52 close to [page 70] Kaya’s borders, and to resettle the populace of central districts there in the same year, thus strengthening the defence of its western periphery (Samguk sagi, fascicle 4, the 1st lunar month, the 15th year of King Chiijung’s reign). Bearing in mind that at that time Silla was still weaker than Paekche, did not possess sophisticated military administration-its Ministy of War, Pyongbu, was established only in 517, and until 500 was a victim of permanent Japanese plundering raids-it is easy to understand why it was easier for Taegaya aristocracy to amass their fortunes by looting Silla villages than to risk their lives in battles with the well-trained and well-equipped Paekche army.

Using their ability to provide their Japanese partners with advanced Sino- Korean logography-based culture as their main bargaining chip, Paekche in 515 succeeded, through the good offices of its envoy, Chomi Mun’gwi, in employing a Japanese mercenary band, led by a certain Mononobe-no Muraji, to attack Taegaya’s newly fortified positions in the port of Taesa. As usual, Nihon shoki (the 2nd lunar month of the 9th year of Keidai’s reign) tells us that Mononobe went to Korea on imperial rescript, but we have grounds to assume that Paekche had its own separate connections with the mighty house of Mononobe and the latter hardly needed formal confirmation from its Yamato soverign whose power still was rather titulary at that period, to help its continental friends. A later Nihon shoki record (the 3rd month of the 5th year of Kimmei) in which a Mononobe naesol, Paekche’s 6th official rank, Kibi is mentioned as a Paekche official dispatched to Kaya, shows that the alliance between Paekche kings and the Mononobe clan went as far as promoting the members of the latter into Paekche officialdom. Phrases like “imperial rescript,” obviously interpolated by the post-Taika zealots of tenno-centered order, should therefore, not be taken seriously.

Mononobe’s expedition was extremely important symbolically for the development of relationships in the triangle, Paekche-Kaya-Japanese islands, for it showed that Japanese partners now favoured Paekche over Kaya and disapproved of Taegaya efforts to retain the Somjin trade route. Militarily, however, it was disastrous for the attacking side; according to Nihon shoki. Mononobe’s band was completely defeated by Taegaya’s troops, even its clothes being taken by victorious Taegaya warriors as their trophies. Panic- sticken, Mononobe and his men fled upstream by way of the Somjin River to the Paekche-held territory of Kimun where they were met by the Paekche envoy, Mokhyop Pulma Kappae. As we may remember, the Mok/Mokhyop clan historically had close connections with the proto-Japanese, who rewarded the hapless warriors with Paekche’s traditional export items: iron weapons and silk (the 5th month of the 10th year of Keidai’s reign.)53 The generous pay- [page 71] ment received by the Mononobe band, despite the failure of its expedition, is thought to have made the ruling class of the Japanese islands even more pro- Paekche and further estranged from Kaya than before. To perpetuate this favourable attitude, Paekche in 516 sent one more Scholar-of-the Five-Classics to the islands, a naturalized Chinese (漢) named Kao An-wu (Korean: Ko An-mu), who probably was meant to alternate with TanYang-i, three years before (the 9th month of the 10th year of Keidai). With the establishment of the system of permanent residence of alternating Paekche scholars in the islands, Paekche’s cultural influence on the islanders increased remarkably. After some time, Paekche at last seized the port of Tasa, which subsequently became an important gateway on the route connecting Paekche with the islands.54 Eventually, it was Paekche influence that, through exporting Buddhism, Chinese literacy, and varied advanced knowledge and techniques, made a decisive contribution to the development of 6th century Japanese culture. The prelude to this monumental series of disseminations of advanced culture was the victory over Taegaya which paved the way for progress in Paekche-Japanese contacts.

On the other hand, Taegaya defeated in the fight for control over trade with the Japanese islands, felt very isolated It also viewed possible further advances of Paekche into neighbouring Kaya territories as a major potential danger to its leadership among Kaya communities, and in the future to its very independent existence. As a countermeasure to the Paekche assault upon Kaya’s western borders, Taegaya chose an alliance with Silla, in the hope of using an imminent conflict of interests between the two biggest states of Southern Korea to its advantage. According to Samguk saki in 522 (fascicle 4, the 3rd lunar month of King Pophung’s 9th year), at Taegaya’s request, Silla, once a victim of Taegaya’s looting raids, agreed to conclude an alliance by marriage with the latter, and permitted the Taegaya king’s marriage to the daughter of a Silla aristocrat, Pijobu. A very similar record can be found in Singjung Tongguk yoji sungnam, fascicle 29. In an article on Koryong County; in Nihon shoki, this marriage is mentioned, but the date is different, and explanations of the circumstances are rather far-fetched. The obvious objective of Taegaya’s new politics of alliance with Silla was to balance Paekche’s growing influence in the Kaya region, and thus guarantee its independence from possible future Paekche encroachment. We should admit that this kind of policy of the balance of forces when Taegaya checked Paekche’s advance through an alliance with Silla, and if necessary, allied itself with Paekche in case Silla became too troublesome, worked well to preserve Taegaya’s independence for more than four decades. Also, the alliance with Silla meant the [page 72] acknowledgement by Silla of Taegaya’s leading role inside the Kaya league, and such recognition on the part of one of the two major states of southern Korea must have raised Taegaya’s status inside the wider Kaya community. On the other hand, on having secured the neutrality of Taegaya, Silla could activate its advance into southern Kaya lands which culminated in the annexation of Nam-Kara in 532. Both the alliance between Taegaya and Silla and Silla’s expansion into southern Kaya territories were anathema to Paekche which regarded it as a serious danger to its eastern borders, and as a result, the Paekche-Silla relationship was damaged beyond repair. The worsening of the relationship between the two main southern Korean states resulted in the war of 554 in which Paekche’s King Song was killed. After this, the more than 100 year-long rivalry between the two, which resulted in the annihilation of Paekche by allied Silla-T’ang forces, began. The fact that, being fully conscious of the possible grim consequences of the alliance with Taegaya because of its relationship with Paekche, Silla did still decide on this course of action bespeaks the importance of Taegaya to Silla policies. As a result of its alliance with Silla, Taegaya succeeded in protecting the Kaya region from further Paekche expansion, but on the other hand, made itself defenceless in the face of Silla agression which began with the annexation of weaker southern Kaya communities but then gradually became a major threat to Taegaya, too. The struggle for independence against both Paekche and Silla expansionist drives (522-562) undeniably made Kaya social and political structures more sophisticated, but the socio-political developments of this period should be the theme of a separate paper and will not be discussed here.

III

Now I will attempt to discuss the stages of Taegaya socio-economic and political development from the mid-4th to early 6th centuries (up to 522), mainly on the basis of the Nihon shoki materials cited above. The general conclusion we can draw from the above sources is that Taegaya’s development was strongly catalyzed by external factors, such as its diplomatic and trading relationships, especially with the Japanese Islands, and the hegemony among Kaya principalities it eventually achieved. Up to the mid 4th century, Kaya, especially southern Kaya, entities were led by the then strongest polity of Nam-Kara (a.k.a. pon-Kaya or Kumgwan) which almost monopolized trade and diplomatic relationships with the Japanese islands, and Panp’a (future Kara, then renamed Taegaya) was relatively small and weak. Due to an almost [page 73] complete lack of any relevant narrative evidence, we can not reach any conclusion about Panp’a’s degree of socio-political development before the mid- 4th century, but it is surmisable that Panp’a, as well as other Pyonjin communities described in the Account of Eastern Outlanders in San-Guo Chih was a chiefdom society in which the process of class stratification had just begun.55

 Circa 369, having established first contacts with the proto-Japanese, Paekche is thought to have attacked Nam-Kara and wrested a virtual monopoly on trade with the islands from them. The final blow to Nam-Kara was dealt by the southward expedition of Koguryo’s King Kwanggaet’o in 400,56 the emerging vacuum of political and military strength in the Kaya region was gradually filled by the growth of Panp’a, which started to use the new name Kara around this time. As we saw from the Nihon shoki records cited above, in 382 (or 442) the hanki, chief of Kara, had already started using the Chinese title of wang, king, and could delegate some part of his power to his sons and relatives, who conducted diplomatic negotiations on his behalf. This means that the hanki’s political and administrative power had already been institutionalized as a clan of hereditary rulers and was duly respected by Kara’s larger neighbours, expecially by Paekche which is thought to have been its main counterpart in the negotiations. Taking into consideration that Paekche wielded a certain influence over the Kaya region at the time, we can suppose that Kara could consciously imitate some elements of the Paekche monarchical system and that the success of this mimicry was acknowledged by Paekche authorities who found it possible and necessary to lend a helping hand to Kara rulers. Certainly, the external stimuli to the development of more sophisticated institutions of government in Kara must have been matched by a corresponding degree of internal maturity: social stratification, formation of a separate stratum of military aristocracy topped by the ruling clan, a certain amount of wealth and political influence accumulated by this stratum. On the other hand, the fact that the indigenous and less prestigious title of hanki was used in parallel with the newly imported, obviously from Paekche, and more exalted title of wang shows the limitations placed on the fledgling monarchical system by the tradition of collective rule of the group hanki, chiefs of the main territorial communities Kara consisted of. Then, the fact that without Paekche assistance Kara could not drive back a band of Silla-employed proto- Japanese warriors bespeaks the weakness of Kara’s military, which probably still consisted of separate detachments formed by the men of constituent communities and headed by the traditional chiefs, and did not have a regular officer corps, and its consequent dependence on Paekche protection. In a nutshell, in the late 4th century Kara still was a chiefdom society, although social strati- [page 74] fication and the formation of institutionalized power structures had made some progress.

In 369-475, the Kaya region is thought to have been under the influence of the Paekche Mok (a.k.a. Mokhyop, or Mongna) clan. The collateral effect of its domination was the stimulus to emulate the Paekche centralized monarchical system it had given to Kara’s ruling stratum. The latter could not but recognize that only a monarchy with a regular standing army and the sophisticated administrative systems, regular taxation, corvee labour, etc., needed to support the strong military can dominate neighbouring regions, and conduct active expansionist policy. In the first half and middle of the 5th century, Kara also learned from Paekche how to use, military force and economic strength for the sake of diplomatic gains. Like Paekche, it maintained diplomatic and trade contacts with the proto-Japanese, used its influence on the latter to help Silla repulse Koguryo invasion, and participated in Paekche and Silla’s battles with invading Koguryo troops. Such trade, and military and diplomatic activity shows the increased degree of Kara’s socio-political maturity and the conse-quent enhancement of its international prestige. On the other hand, the fact that Kara sometimes had to resort to its contacts with proto-Japanese chieftains instead of providing its own troops shows that, militarily, Kara still was weaker than its larger neighbours and did not possess the regular and the bureaucratized professional military organization needed for conquests and external expansion. In a society in which the institutionalized power of hereditary rulers still does not have supra-tribal support, a formalized and professionalized tool of violence and in which, consequently, the ruling stratum can not expand its power externally by conquest and internally by violently destroying the pre-state forms of social organization, should be referred to as an advanced chiefdom, or semi-state, rather than as a state. Still, were it not for its comparatively high level of institutional development, Kara would probably have simply been annexed by its stronger and domineering neighbour, Paekche. In a word, Kara was not strong enough to get rid of Paekche interference, and at the same time it was not too weak, otherwise it would have been completely swallowed by Paekche.

After the great defeat Paekche suffered in 475, the weakened monarchy became aborbed in restoring its power and bringing province-based aristocracy back under its control, so Kara siezed the opportunity to redefine its relationship with its one-time suzerain and recover its independence. Such changes in the international order in southern Korea were expedited by Paekche’s crushing defeat, but were first of all, basically brought about by Kaya’s own economic growth and socio-political development. It is interest-[page 75]ing to compare, for example, the success of the Kara-led league of Kaya polities in breaking away from Paekche’s sphere of influence with the spectacular failure of Yubigi, presumably a Paekche provincial nobleman, who, after his flight to the Japanese Islands, adopted the name and title of Ki-no Ohiha-no Sukune, and his chief lieutenant, Chwaro Nagit’a Kappae, presumably a Kaya aristocrat with very close Paekche connections, who attempted in 487 to establish their own independent state on the territory of Irim which is thought to have been located in the Paekche-dominated border area strongly influenced also by Koguryo and Kaya. Taehung Township in Yesan County, South Ch’ungch’ong Province and Imsil County of North Cholla Province are the most influential of all existing surmises on Irim’s location.57 As we know from Nihon shoki (the 3rd year of Kenjo), Yubigi’s rebellion was successfully quellea by the Paekche army, with its leaders, many of them of Kaya descent, either killed or forced to seek asylum on Japanese islands. As we can see, the attempt to seize the opportunity and get out of the Paekche orbit could lead to grave consequences for a community lacking resources and political consolidation, but that was not Kara’s case. Utilizing the approximate fifteen years of Paekche’s comparative weakness after the catastrophe of 475, Kara succeeded in tying a majority of Kaya polities into one political and military league under its leadership. Kara’s new name, Taegaya, Great Kaya, adopted at this period, symbolized, among other things, the relation of succession between Pro-Kaya, or Main Kaya (a.k.a. Nam-Kara), the former leader of the Kaya confederation, and the new hegemon of the Kaya League. Taegaya’s diplo-matic contacts with Silla, which were as equals, and the most importantly Southern Ch’i, of which Taegaya became a formal tributary on a par with Paekche, meant that, as the representative of the Kaya league, Taegaya, at least, in its foreign relationships, became an equal of its former suzerain, Paekche.58 On the basis of Nihon shoki materials and other narrative evidence cited above we can suggest that by the end of the 5th century Taegaya had developed to the level of an early state capable of sustaining the sophisticated diplomatic and military operations or its rulers.

As we were able to see in the Nihon shoki records, Taegaya maintained close trade and diplomatic relationships with the Japanese islands through the Somjin route. Judging from records that indicated that Taegaya provided its Japanese partners with precious goods: silk, iron weapons etc. we can assume that a separate social stratum of professional craftsmen and artisans did exist in Taegaya, and were the professionals in the crafts who created the artistically excellent pottery, weaponry, and personal ornaments found in Taegaya noblemen’s graves in Chisan-dong and Pon’gwan-dong in Koryong. Such separa- [page 76] tion of farming and handicrafts meant that the process of social stratification had gone quite far. Highly developed handicrafts was the basis of Taegaya’s brisk trade with the Japanese islands which greatly expedited the accumulation of wealth by Taegaya’s ruling class and its further separation from the rest of society, and which, after 512, was constantly endangered by Paekche’s attempts to forcibly monopolize it. Those attempts faced Taegaya’s persistent resistance, for Taegaya’s growing ruling class hardly wished to be deprived of the main source of its wealth and prestige. As could be expected, Paekche’s attacks on Kaya trade routes provoked a series of armed conflicts between Paekche and the Taegaya-led Kaya league. In the process of this trade war, Taegaya successfully attacked Paekche and Silla lands, and repulsed the attack of a band of proto-Japanese warriors on Paekche. Taegaya’s ultimate defeat was, in fact, more of a shift of Japanese attention toward Paekche than a simple military failure. The inhabitants of the islands were lured by Paekche’s ahility to supply them with the Chinese logograph-based advanced continental culture as shown by their sending the Scholars of the Five Classics, Tan Yang- i, Kao An-wu to the land where even indigenous specialists in Chinese writing, not to speak of high-level professionals of Confucian Classis, were far from abundant at that time. This pro-Paekche attitude of the nascent ruling stratum of the Japanese islands, and not merely the military superiority of Paekche over Taegaya-led Kaya troops, was the main reason forcing the Tae-gaya-headed Kaya coalition to evacuate the main Kaya strongholds on the Somjin route, namely Kimun and Tasa port. In fact, in Nihon shoki, which is based largely on Paekche materials, no definite victories of Paekche armies over Kaya people are recorded.

 The strength, shown by the Kaya troops in their confrontation with Paekche, and Taegaya’s victories over Silla and proto-Japanese bands known from Nihon shoki records, demonstrates that a professional and well-organized army had already come into existence in Taegaya in the early 6th century. The existence of professionalized groups of soldiers and craftsmen bespeaks, in its turn, a compartively high level of social stratification and division of labour in Taegaya. Then, the fact that, during the confrontation with Paekche, Taegaya built fortresses and beacon-towers on the territories of other Kaya polities, shows the degree of consolidation of the members of the Kaya league, as well as the existence of a system of corvee labour mobilization in Kaya communities. The existence of such a system implies also the availability of reasonably developed administrative institutions which can guarantee the organized requisition of a workforce, control over the process of construction, supply of materials, etc. We can conjecture, therefore, that, in some form, cer- [page 77] tain variants of a supra-communal ranked, and centrally controlled administrative system capable of extracting surplus value from the ruled, at least, in the form of corvee labour, did exist in Taegaya. The basically aristocratic society ruled by hereditary monarchs and capable of sustaining specialized groups of craftemen, soldiers, and administrators can be viewed as a typical early state.59 In fact, if the Silla court had not perceived its Taegaya counterparts as the rulers of a state equal to their own, the marriage of the Taegaya’s king to the daughter of a Silla aristocrat would hardly have been possible.

Finishing this paper, I feel obliged to note three of its serious limitations. First, Nihon shoki materials are sometimes distorted and embellished to a point that makes rational research almost impossible, although many of them are based on reliable Paekche sources. Second, I used almost no archeological sources, although new findings in Koryong are giving a rare chance to observe the process of development of a Panp’a-Kara-Taegaya material culture from the mid 4th century up to the annexation of Taegaya by Silla in 562. Third, to develop and further prove the thesis of the existence of early statehood in Taegaya before the Silla conquest, I deliberately did not deal with Nihon shoki records for 522-562, because of space considerations. I hope I will be able to analyze these later records in my next work which will be a continuation of the present paper.

NOTES

1. Ch’oe Gwang-sik, Kodae han’gug-ui kukka-wa chesa (State and Sacrifices in Ancient Korea). Published by Han’gilsa, Seoul, 1994, pp. 88-115.

2. Lee Jong-uk, Silla kukka hyongsong sa yon’gu (Study on the Formation of Silla State). Published by Ilchogak, Seoul, 1982.

Lee Jong-uk, Han ‘gug-ui ch ‘ogi kukka hyongsong-gwa Silla-Hi chdngch’i-jok songjang (Formation of the Early States in Korea and Political Growth of Silla)- Hanguk sa yon’gu immun (Introduction into Study of Korean History). Published by Chisik sanop sa, Seoul 1990, pp. 71-79.

Lee Hyonhye, Samhan sahwe hyongsong kwajong yon’gu (Study on the Process of Formation of Samhan Society). Published by Ilchogak, Seoul, 1984.

3. Kim Chong-bae, Han, guk kodae-ui kukka kiwon-gwa hyongsong (Origins and Formation of Ancient State Korea). Published by Koryo University Publishing Department, Seoul, 1986.

4. Mishina Shoei. Chosen shi gaisetsu (Outline of Korean History), Tokyo, 1940. Chindan hakhwe (Association for Study of Korean History), Han’guk sa. Kodae [page 78] p’on (Korean History, Ancient Period). Co-authored by Lee Byong-do and Kim Chae-won. Published by Uryu munhwa sa, 1959.

5. Summary of younger archeologists, opinions on the problem of the origins of statehood in Korea can be found in Han’guk kodae kukka hyongsong non (On the Formation of Ancient State in Korea). Compiled and edited by Ch’oe Mon- nyong and Ch’oe Songnak. Published by the Publishing Department of Seoul National University, 1997.

6. The Iogograph (倭) (Korean: wae: Japanese: wa) which usually refers to the ancient populace of Japanese Islands is usually translated as Japan or Japanese, but it should be remembered that, ethnically, the ancient inhabitants of the islands were laregely heterogeneous, with whole districts and regions populated by various groups of continental migrants. Then, it is thought the Yamato regime of the Kinai region then united various provincial clans into a quite loose kind of confederative proto-kingdom only in the mid 5th century or even later, with Yamato’s military domination over de facto independent entities on Kyushu being established only in the early 6th Century and regional autonomy rights wrested from the hands of powerful regional clans after the Taika reforms. Although in Nihon shoki, compiled with the aim of glorifying tenno’s Imperial dynasty, only Yamato’s rulers, teimo’s ancestors, are described as the subject of external contacts by the Islands in antiquity. In fact, there are strong suspicions, mostly based on archeological materials, that at least prior to the early 6th century, real counterparts of Paekche and Kay a were the rulers of northern Kyushu, and then the records of peninsular contacts were remade into a history of Yamato’s diplomatic relations with Korea. Taking into consideration, therefore, that words like Japan or Japanese, if applied in early times, are easily associated with the Yamato regime, predecessor of post-Taika Japan. I will translate (倭) as proto-Japanese in this paper. Through such translation, I wish it to be remembered that the question of what concrete clan and region of pre-Taika Japan conducted the contacts with Korea described in Nihon shoki as that of Yamato definitely remains unanswered. See: Lee Gi-dong, Paekche sa yon’gu (Study of Paekche History). Published by Ilchogak, Seoul, 1966. pp. 228-237.

7. Kim T’ae-sik. Kaya sa-ui yon’gu-ui chemunje (Problems of Kay a History Research) in Han’guk sanggo sa: yon’gu hyonhwang-gwa kwaje, (Korean Historiography of the Earliest Period of Ancient History: Present Situation and Tasks). Published by Minumsa, Seoul, 1988.

8. Kwon Hak-su, Kaya chegug-Oi songjang-gwa hwan’gyong (The Growth of Kaya States and Environment) Paeksan hakpo (Paeksan Journal of Korean Studies), Vol 30-31, 1985.

9. Ch’on Gwan-u, Samhan-ui kukka hyongsong. Sang (Formation of State in Three Han. Part One), Han’guk hakpo (Korean Studies Journal). Vol. 2, 1976.

10. Lee Yong-sik. Kaya chegug-ui kukka hyongsong munje (The problem of State Formation of Kaya States) - Paeksan hakpo (Paeksan Journal of Korean Stud- [page 79] ies), Vol. 32, 1985

11. Kim T’ae-sik, Kaya-ui sahwe palchon tangye (The Stage of Kaya’s Social Developmen)-Han’guk kodae kukka-ui hyongsong (Formation of Ancient State in Korea). Published by Minumsa, Seoul, 1990, pp. 90, 100.

12. Lee Yong-sik, Op.sit.

Lee Yong-sik, Silla-wa Kaya chegug-ui chonjaeng-gwa wegyo (Wars and Diplomatic Contacts between Silla and Kaya States), in Silla-ui taewe kwan’gye sa yon’gu (Studies on Silla’s External Relationship). 1992. Lee Yong-sik, Kaya chegug-ui wegyo hyongsik (Forms of Diplomacy of Kaya States), in Hanguk kodae sa yon ‘gu (Study of Ancient Korean History). Vol 7, 1994. In this pioneer work, Lee analysed the terms used in the “Chronicles of Silla” in Samguk sagi in describing the diplomatic contacts between Silla and Kaya polities, and found that they mostly designated the relationship between equals rather than that between senior and junior states. It can, therefore, be assumed that, at least in the perception of Silla rulers, Kaya polities’ international status, and consequently, its degree of socio-political development, did not differ much from that of Silla itself.

13. It is generally accepted in Japanese studies scholarship, that in the case of Nihon shoki records pertaining to the reigns of Jingu, or even earlier, or Ojin, the dating was made earlier than the actual by two or three sexagenary cycles. It therfore has to be corrected by 120 or sometimes even 180 years, depending on the mentioning of corresponding events in Korean or Chinese historiography. See Mishina Shoei ed. Nihon shoki kenkyu Study on Nihon shoki. 1969, Vol. 3, pp. 104-117.

14. Lee Gi-dong. Op. Sit., pp 211-220.

15. The scene vividly depicting the Paekche king trying to win the Japanese over by demonstrating to their envoys the superior level of Paekche handicrafts can be found in Nihon shoki under the 3rd lunar month of the 46th year of Jingu’s reign: The Japanese envoys were each given one roll of five-coloured silk, horn- made bows, and arrows, forty iron ingots as gifts. The King said to them that in Paekche such rare treasures were abundant and that he wanted to offer them as tribute to the Esteemed Country (of Japan). It is clear that here the tribute is nothing more than the euphamism preferred by the compilers of Nihon shoki for the concept of international state-level trade.

16. Kim Hyon-gu, Sa-segi Kaya-wa Paekche, Yamat’o-wa-ui kwan’gye (Relationship Between Kaya, Paekche and Yamato in 4th Century) in Hanguk kodae sa nonch’ong (Collection of Papers on Ancient Korean History). Vol. 6, 1994, pp. 132-133.

Lee Mun-gi. Taegaya-ui taewe kwan’gye, (Foreign Relationship of Taegaya), in Kaya sa yon’gu (Study on Kaya History). Published by the Administration of Northern Kyongsang Province. 1995, p. 212.

Ch’on Gwan-u. Kaya sa yongu (Study of Kaya History). Published by Ilchogak, [page 80] Seoul 1991, pp. 23-26.

17. Kim Chong-ch’ol, Pukpu chiyok Kaya munhwa-ui kogohak-chok kochal (Archeological Study of Kaya Culture of Northern Region) in Han’guk kodae sa yon’gu (Study on Ancient Korean History). Vol. 1, 1988, pp. 240-241.

18. In his messages, dated 541, addressed to Kaya rulers, Paekche’s King Song (523-544) described the past of Paekche-Kaya contacts in the following way, “Earlier, in the epoch of my ancestors, Kings Sokko (Kunch’ogo, ruled 346- 375) and Kwisi (Kun’gusu, ruled 375-384), hanki (chieftains,-V.T.) of Alia, today’s Haman County in South Kyongsang Province,- V.T., Kara, T’aksun, and others for the first time sent their envoys to contact us. We firmly established friendly relationships and (Kaya chieftains) became (our) younger brothers and sons” Nihon shoki, the 4th lunar month of the 2nd year of Kimmei’s reign; “My ancestors, Kings Sokko and Kwisu, first began to establish friendly relations with the then hanki (of Kaya). Through (due) ceremonies they became elder and younger brothers, and from that time on we used to regard you as sons and younger brothers, and you used to regard us as fathers and elder brothers,” Nihon shoki, the 7th lunar month of the same year

19. Kim Hyon-gu, Imna Ilbon bu yon’gu (Study of the Japanese Government of Mimana). Published by Ilchogak. Seoul, 1991, pp. 23-26.

20. No Jung-guk. Taegaya-ui chongch’i sahwe kujo (Socio-Political Structure of Taegaya), in Kaya sa yon fgu, p. 156.

21. Kim T’ae-sik. Kaya yonmaeng sa (History of Kaya League). Published by Ilchogak, Seoul, 1993, pp. 102-103.

22. Except only one, all names of Kibon’s sons listed in our record have the ending chi/ji (至) which is thought to have designated a noble person, a respected person. See Yang Chu-dong, Kukhak yon’gu non’go (Papers on Korean Studies). Published by Uryu munhwa sa, Seoul, 1962, p. 155. Interestingly, the person having the name Nimon (泥文) strikingly similar to that of one of Kibon’s sons, Imun-ji (爾汶至)，is mentioned in Samguk sagi (fascicle 32) as a disciple of Uruk, Kaya’s best-known musician of the 6th century. Probably, this kind of name etymologically can be linked to the ancient Korean root nimi (modern Korean nim, 님) meaning the senior, “the chief”. See Lee Byong-son, Han’guk kodae kungmyong chimyong yon’gu (Study on Ancient Korean Names of States and Toponyms). Published by Asea munhwa sa, Seoul, 1988, p.304.

23. The younger sister’s recorded name, Kijonji (旣殿至) is amazingly similar to the name of a later Kara (Taegaya) aristocrat, found in Nihon shoki in two graphic variants, Kijonhae (旣殿奚; the 11th lunar month of Keidai’s 7th year), and Kojonhae (古殿奚); the 4th lunar month of the 2nd year, and the 11th lunar month of the 5th year of Kimmei). In both cases, the traditional Japanese reading is Kotenkei. This name seems to resemble the phonetically popular Silla cognomen of kot’a (cf. Kot’aso-nang, 古陀炤娘 daughter of Kim Ch’unch’u, killed together with her husband during a Paekche attack against Taeya Fortress [page 81] in 642, see Samguk sagi, fascicle 41; Kot’aji,(居陀知), a 9th century Silla archer, mentioned in Samguk yusa, fascicle 2, Article on Great Queen Chinsong and Kot’aji, etc.). A similar sound combination can be found in some Silla toponyms, like Kot’aya-gun (古陀耶郡; today’s Andong County of Northern Kyongsang Province). The attempts of some Korean and Japanese scholars (Kim Son-gi, Inoue Hideo) to link kot’a etymologically to such modern Korean words as big (k’uda), or flower (kkot) are interesting but can hardly be convincingly proven linguistically.

24. Kim Hyon-gu attempts to prove that, in fact, Kara’s solicitations for help were addressed to Paekche. Paekche. not proto-Japanese polities, should be credited with saving Kara from the Sochihiko/Sachihiko raid. He maintains that all mention of Japan in this fragment is no more than a fabrication by the Nihon shoki compilers aimed at proving the existence of the so-called Japanese Government of Mimana (Kim Hyon-gu, Op. Sit., p. 52). On the other hand, Kim Chong-suk admits that in the situation of serious external disturbances, Kara could solicit not only Paekche for help, but also the proto-Japanese allies of the latter (Kim Chong-suk, Taegaya-ui songnip-gwa palchon, (The Formation and Development of Taegaya) in Kaya sa yong’gu, p. 109). Admittedly, Paekche was the undisputed hegemon of the Kaya region in the period in question and the main potential source of assistance for Kara, but the former’s proto-Japanese allies, traditionally hostile to Silla, also could have been interested in checking Silla’s attempts to destabilize the situation in Kaya lands, such as the Silla-provoked Sochihiko/ Sachihiko raid.

25. On the subject of Paekche’s eight noble families, see Lee Hong-jik, Paekche inmyong ko (On Paekche’s Names), in his Han’guk kodae sa-ui yon’gu, (Study of Ancient Korean History). Published by Sin’gu munhwa sa, Seoul, 1971, pp. 333-361.

26. “In Paekche gi” (Paekche Chronicle) it is said that Mok Manch’i was none other than Mongna Kunja’s (son). While chastising Silla, Mongna Kunja took a woman from that country, and that was the way (Mok Manch’i) was born. On his father’s merits, he took complete charge of Imna’s (afrairs), frequented our country and used to visit the Esteemed Country (of Japan). Modelling his laws after those of the Celestial Dynasty (of Japan), he took the helm of affairs of our state. His power was totally predominant in that period. Finally, the Celestial Dynasty (of Japan), on having heard of his violent acts, recalled him.” Based on Paekche sources, this account is thought to contain basically reliable information. It goes without saying that the flowery Chinese expressions, like Celestial Dynasty (天朝), were interpolated into earlier Paekche texts by Nihon shoki compilers. Then it is fully imaginable that Mok Manch, i visited the proto- Japanese allies of Paekche in the capacity of a Paekche envoy. According to Nihon shoki’s records pertaining to the Keidai and Kimmei regions, such members of the Mokhyop family as Mokhyop Pulma Kappae, Mokhyup Maesun, [page 82] Mokhyop Kumdon, and Mokhyop Munja, were dispatched as envoys to Kaya rulers and the Japanese on various occasions, but this hardly played the decisive role in his career. Then, some scholars, (inducing Lee Hong-jik and Kim Hyon-gu) do suppose that Mok Manch’i could have moved to one of the Japanese polities at some point in his career (see below), but it was rather political emigration than recalling by Japanese authorities.

27. People from Ko(gu)ryo, Paekche, Imna, and Silla offered their tribute together. At that time, Takeuchi-no Sukune was ordered to oversee the Koreans and make a pond. That is the reason that pond is called The Pond of the Koreans. It is quite evident that two different historical phenomena, - state-level trade of ancient Koreans with the proto-Japanese through the medium of diplomatic missions, which were later renamed tribute offerings by Nihon shoki compilers, and emi-gration to the Japanese archipelago by the highly skilled Koreans who became responsible for irrigation projects, such as pond-digging, are being mixed into this record. On the other hand, in a very similar record to the Kojiki chapter on the Emperor Ojin, in which it is stated that a group of the migrants from Silla made a pond named Paekche Pond, and no Kaya people are mentioned. Kim Hyon-gu regards this as good proof that the record from Nihon shoki mentioned above is a complete falsification (Kim Hyon-gu, Op. Sit., p. 81), but we should remember that, on the whole, Korea-related accounts of Nihon shoki are much more informative than those of Kojiki, for the compilers of the latter were primarily concerned with the Japanese imperial mythos and did not use Paekche sources much.

28. Two of the heroes of ancient Korea, whose names included the logograph Kung (弓, a bow) as the first component are Kungp’a (弓巴, or Kungbok, 弓福better known under his later sinicized cognomen of Chang Bogo,) (張保阜) overlord of a vast international maritime trade network, was killed in 846 by royal order and Kungye (弓裔 founder of the Later Koguryo, dethroned by Wang Gon in 918 and killed). In Kungp’a/kungbok, his biography in Samguk sagi, fascicle 44, tells us that his native place and ancestry are not known. It can mean that his family name was not known either, and there are some grounds to think that he started to style himself Chang (張) after settling in T’ang China. In Kungye, Samguk sagi, fascicle 50, tells is that his family name was Kim. Thus, in both cases Kung was part of the personal name, not a family name. Therefore, we can suspect that in the case of Kungwol-gun “Kung” is part of a personal name and not a family name. The second component of this name, wol, probably being a phonetic representation of the ancient Korean word al (at) - elder, “chief”(in Silla and Koguryo these names were sometimes represented by such logographs as (乙) or (闕), see: Yang Chu-dong, Op. Sit., p. 171; Lee Byong-son, Op Sit., p.198-199). The name as a whole could mean the elder of the archers, or the eider of the bow makers.

29. No Jung-guk considers Kungwol-gun to be a Paekche aristocrat of Chinese [page 83] ancestry (Sa-o segi Paekche-ui chdngch’i unyong “Politeal Process in 4th to 5th Centuries Paekche,” in Han’guk kodae sa nonch’ong Collection of Papers on Ancient Korean History. Vol. 6, 1994), On the other hand, the fact of Kungwol-gun’s group’s protracted sojourn in Kara shows that it could have connections, ethnical or political, with the Kaya populace, too.

30. See Samgug sagi, fascicles 3, 18, and 25; inscription on the burial stele of King Kwanggaet’o (Kwanggaet’o-wangnung-bimun, in Ho Hung-sik, ed. Han’guk kumsok chonmun (Complete Collection of Korean Epigraphs), Vol 1, pp. 5-11.

31. According to a rather fabulous account in Nihon shoki, Silla initially forged its alliance with Koguryo only out of fear of Japanese invasion. On establishing the alliance, one hundred of Koguryo’s picked soldiers were stationed in the Silla capital. Being on furlough, one Koguryo soldier revealed to a Silla horsekeeper that Koguryo, in fact, was planning to encroach on Silla territories. On hearing this revelation, the king of Silla ordered his subjects to “kill the cocks being reared at home”; Koguryo soldiers usually decorated their hats and helmets with bird feathers. All “cocks” have been successfully slaughtered, except one who managed to flee and told the story to his king. After a large Koguryo army attacked Silla and the king of the latter felt that he was outnumbered, he asked the “King of Imna,” presumably, a ruler of Kara/Taegaya, to solicit the military help of the generals of the Japanese Government. The latter, Kibi-no Omi Konasi, Kasiwade-no Omi Ikaruga, and others, acting on the Imna king’s request, defeated the Koguryo army and then severely reprimanded Silla’s king for the lack of deference towards the Celestial Dynasty of Japan. The next year, Silla, in its turn, attacked and defeated by another Japanese army, (the 2nd lunar month of the 8th year, and the 3rd lunar month of the 9th year of Unryaku’s reign; the generally accepted corrected dates are ca. 464-465).

As we can see, the story includes some typically folklore elements, the universal motif of an accidentally revealed enemy’s conspiracy, etc. and visible later inter-polations, the Japanese Government on the peninsula, Celestial Dynasty, etc. Large fragments of the text are literally copied from such model Chinese histories as Shih Chi, Han Shu and San Guo Chih. According to Kim Hyon-gu, this account is based on Paekche materials later embellished and distorted by Japanese compilers, and Koguryo attack on Silla, which Kim maintains did take place in reality, was, in fact, repulsed by Kaya-stationed Paekche troops (Kim Hyon-gu, Op. Sit., pp. 86-87). Still, in as much as the account also includes concrete personal names and toponyms, it is hard to consider it complete falsification. In fact, it is quite imaginable that being attacked by Koguryo, as he actually was in 450, 454, and 468, the King of Silla asked the ruler of Kara, who was experienced in diplomatic contacts with the proto-Japanese, to find a mercenary band which could augment Silla troops. It also does not seem strange that another proto-Japanese band attacked Silla the next year. Japanese attacks against Silla are recorded in Samguk sagi in 459, 462, and 463, for as Lee Hong-jik [page 84] pointed out, separate proto-Japanese gangs wnich acted as mercenaries or plun-derers on the peninsula, according to circumstances, often had conflicting inten-tions and were not united into one force (Lee Hyon-jik, Op. Sit., pp. 142, 145).

32. Kim Hyon-gu, Op. Sit.,pp.55-61.

33. Lee Mun-gi, Op. Sit,, P. 222

34. As Kim T, ae-sik rightly points out, archaeological evidence shows that Kara, the Taegaya ruling class, gradually strengthened its social positions, built imposing tombs, and possessed large amounts of prestigious luxury goods beginning from the period of the mid 4th century to the early 5th century onward, so this period also can be taken as the starting point of existence for the Kara-led, Kaya league. During this period Chisan-dong tombs 32NE-1, 32SW-1, and later burials No’s. 32-35, where golden crowns, decorated sabres, armour, decorative jade, and the bones of retainers or slaves, who were buried with their master, were excavated and are thought to have been built- See: T’ae-sik, Kaya yonmaeng-ui chegaeny- om pigyo, (Comparison of Various Concepts of Kaya League) in Kaya chegug- ui wangkwon (Royal Power in Kaya Lands). Published by Sinsowon, Seoul, 1997, pp. 36-38; Kim Se-gi, Taegaya myoje-ui pyonch ‘on (Changes in Taegaya Burial System) in Kaya sa yon’gu, pp. 323-327, 357-358, On the other hand, it should also be noted that burials structurally copying those of Taegaya with Tae- gaya-style earthenw, are, started to be built in other Kaya communities only in the second half of the 5th century. (See Kim Se-gi, Op. Sit., pp 361-363; Lee Hui- jun, Togi-ro pon Taegaya-ui kwonyok-kwa ku pyonch’on = “Taegaya’s Sphere of Influence and its Changes, as seen through Pottery,” in Kaya sa yon’gu, pp. 412-427. Thus there are some reasons to regard this period as the time of genuine formation of the Taegaya-led Kaya league which could hardly take full shape in the era of Paekche political dominion in the Kaya region.

35. See Nan Ch’i Shu (The History of SouthernChi’) fascicle 58, Account of Southern and Eastern Outlanders (東南夷傳), Article on the Land of Kara (加羅國條).

36. Samguk sagi, fascicle 26, reign of King Muryong, the 11th lunar month of the first year, the 9th month of the 3rd year, the 9th month of the 12th year. See also: No Jung-guk, Paekche chibae seryog-ui pyonch ‘on (Changes in Paekche Ruling Class) in Hanguk sa yon’gu immun, p. 84.

37. According to the research of Imanishi Ryu, Kim T’ae-sik, and Kim Jong-hak, this fortress is frequently mentioned in Nihon shoki as a strategically important point to Paekche, Silla, and Japanese expeditionary forces, which attacked on various occasions (the 9th lunar month of Keidai’s 24th year; the 3rd and 11th months of Kimmei’s 5th year). It was located in today’s Ch’angwon or Haman County, Southern Kyongsang Province. Kim T’ae-sik even points to an old fortress site in the village (ri) of Kwisong, township (myon) of Ch’irwon, Haman County as a possible location of ancient Kuryemora. See: Kim T’ae-sik, Kaya yonmaeng sa (History of Kaya League). Published by Ilchogak, Seoul, 1993, p. 186 [page 85]

38. According to Samguk sagi, fasicle 26, the 7th month of King Tongsong’s 23rd year, Paekche had already built a palisade on T’anhyon Ridge in 501, thus preparing itself for possible border clashes with Silla. Being allies in the struggle against the contemporary superpower of the peninsula, Koguryo, both Paekche and Silla were fully aware of the inevitability of the conflict of their territorial interests and expansionist ambitions.

39. In one of his 544 letters to Kaya rulers Paekche’s King Song stated that if Paekche’s commanders of fortresses (songju) were not stationed in southern Han counties, i.e. Kaya, it would have been impossible for Paekche to defend itself from the strongest of the enemies (kangjoki, obviously Koguryo), while simultaneously deterring Silla forces from aggression (the 11th lunar month of the 5th year of Kimmei’s reign). At the time the letter was written, Paekche officers had already been stationed in the fortresses in some Kaya territories in the vicinity of the Silla border, their men presumably being drafted from the local populace. Explaining this situation which was viewed from the Kaya side as an infringement upon Kaya entities’ sovereignty, King Song cited the need to maintain simultaneously two lines of defense, one against Koguryo and one against Silla, and concentrate his own main forces against the strongest enemy, Koguryo. More detailed analysis of the fragment can be found in: Lee Yong-sik, Yuk segi chungyob-ui Kaya-wa Wae (Kaya and Proto-Japanese in the mid 6th century) in Kaya sa ron (On Kaya History), Published by the Institute of Korean Studies of Koryo University, Seoul, 1993, pp. 38-39.

40. In Nihon shoki, this action is said to have been directed by “Japanese officials”; Kaya lands where Paekche refugees settled are called Japanese Districts and Fiefs (日本縣邑), but, taking into consideration at least the fact that the name Japan (曰本) first appears in Korean sources in the late 7th century, almost before it was used in Japan itself, and the inhabitants of the Japanese Islands were usually known abroad as wae (倭), a term I translate as proto-Japanese. All mention of the Japanese officials or administrative units in 6th century Korea should be regarded as later falsifications. See Kim Hyon-gu, Op. Sit., pp. 179-180.

41. According to Nihon shoki, Paekche offered tribute to the Japanese court, and asked for the grant of those four territories. They are said to have been granted to Paekche upon the memorial submitted to the court by Oshiyama Hodzumi-no Omi, the Japanese “Governor”(國守) of Ha-dari, who stated that those territories should be granted to Paekche on account of their proximity to the latter and their remoteness from Japan.

Inasmuch as the above record of Nihon shoki includes concrete Korean toponyms, it can be considered a later variation of an earlier Paekche text and, as such, credited with certain historical veracity. Still, it is obvious that the compilers of Nihon shoki had altered the original source to a very high degree, renaming it as was their usual way. Paekche’s state-level trade with ancient inhabitants of Japanese Islands became “offering of tribute”. Various proto-states of the [page 86] islands Paekche had contact with became Japan, and proto-Japanese warlords employed along with their armed retinue by Kaya entities or Paekche became Japanese governors. It is also not impossible, that Oshiyama, with his pro- Paekche sympathies was, in fact one of the earliest Paekche officials of Japanese origin charged with authoring Paekche’s diplomatic documents sent to Kaya’s Japanese trading partners on Kaya-related occasions. In relation with Kaya, Paekche widely employed Japanese officials later, in the reign of King Song (523-554). See Kim Hyon-gu, Op. Sit., pp. 153-154

42. Ch’on Gwan-u Op. Sit., pp. 40-44.

Suematsu Yasukazu, Mimana kobo shi (History of Imna’s Rise and Fall). Pub-lished by Yoshikawa kobunkan, Tokyo, 1949, pp. 115-123.

43. Yon Gap-su, Yuk-segi chonban Kaya chegug-ul tullo-ssan Paekche, Silla-ui tonghyang (Kaya States-related Moves of Paekche and Silla in Early 6th Century) in Silla munhwa (Silla Culture), Vol. 7, 1990, pp. 117~119.

44. Lee Mun-gi, Op. Sit., p. 223.

45. Imanishi Ryu. Chosen ko shi-no kenkyu (Study of Ancient Korean History). Published by Kokusho kankokai, Tokyo, 1970, p. 389.

Kim Tae-sik. Op. Sit.,pp. 114-125. Ch’on Gwan-u. Op. Sit., p 43

46. KimT’ae-sik, Op. Sit., pp. 95-105. On the other hand, some Japanese historians of the older generation denied any connection between Taegaya and Pan’p’a, placing the latter in Songju County, North Kyongsang Province (Imanishi Ryu, Op. Sit., pp. 358-360), or Tanyang County, Northern Ch’ungch’ong Province (Tsuda Shokichi, Chosen rekishi jiri kenkyu. Vol. 1, 1913; reprinted in his posthumous collection of works, Tsuda Shokichi zenshu, Vol. 11, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1964, p.116.)

47. Kim T’ae-sik. Op Sit., p. 132

48. Lee Yong-sik, Paekche-ui Kaya chinch’ul kwajong (Process of Paekche’s Advance into Kaya, in Han’guk kodae sa nonch’ong (Collection of Papers on Ancient Korean History). Vol. 7, 1995, pp. 211~215.

49. Kim T’ae-sik, Op. Sit., pp. 126-128.

50. The Hadong theory is generally accepted, but Ch’on Gwan-u’s supposition that Tasa could have been located in today’s Tasa Township, Talsong County in North Kyongsang Province (Ch’on Gwan-u, Op. Sit., pp. 43-44) also gained some acceptance.

51. Suematasu Yasukazu. Op. Sit., p. 127. Lee Yong-sik. Op. Sit., p. 217.

52. Han’guk kodae kumsokmun (Ancient Korean Epigraphs). Edited by Han’guk Kodae sahwe yon’guso, Seoul, 1992, Vol. 2, p. 107

53. Kim T’ae-sik does not regard the Mononobe band of mercenaries and considers the scene itself a description of Paekche-Japan trade (Kim T’ae-sik, Op. Sit., pp. 132-133). In any case, the record shows the importance of Paekche’s exquisite [page 87] handiwork to the contemporary Japanese aristocracy which is thought to have used them as prestige symbols.

54. According to Nihon shoki (the 3rd month of the 23rd year of Keidai), the port of Tasa was taken from Taegaya and granted to Paekche in 529 by imperial envoys, Mononobe-no Ise-no Muraji Kasone and Kishi-no Okina, who had to travel to the peninsula to enforce the grant. Inasmuch as the record refers to Taegaya as Kara, and not as Panp’a, the oldest name of Taegaya in the days of its complete weakness; Panp’a was considered a somewhat derogatory name in the 6th century. It mentions concrete toponyms and personal names and can be regarded as a relatively reliable source, probably based on Kaya primary materials. However, it is only too obvious that Japanese envoys could hardly grant Paekche the territory the imperial troops had failed to conquer. (As mentioned, in 515 Mononobe-no Muraji’s expedition against Taegaya troops which defended Tasa ended in complete failure, too serious to be ignored even by Nihon shoki compilers. Consequently, we have to surmise that, in fact, the territories in question were just seized by the Paekche army, and this military action was afterwards approved of by Keidai’s mission. Interestingly, the mission was headed by a member of the Mononobe clan which, as we noted before, maintained a very close relationship with the Paekche court. Then, the dating of the entry is arbitrary. At its end, it is stated that, irritated by the granting of Tasa to Paekche, the Taegaya king decided to enter into a friendly relationship with Silla, traditional enemy of the proro-Japanese and a potential rival of Paekche. In fact, alienated by both Paekche and the Keidai court, the Taegaya king did ally himself with Silla, but, as I will show below, it happened in 522 when he married a daughter of a Silla nobleman, and not in 529. Consequently, we can surmise that Tasa was seized by Paekche before 522. See Kim T’ae-sik, Op. Sit., pp. 134-135.

55. Lee Gi-dong，Han’guk kodae kukka kiwon non-ui hyon tan’gye (Current Stage of the Debates on the Origins of Ancient Korean State) in Han’guk sanggo sa-ui chemunje, pp. 170-182.

56. Kim T’ae-sik, Kwanggaet wang nungbi mun-ui Imna Kara-wa Alia in yung- byong (Imna-Kara of the Text of Inscription on the Stele of King Kwanggaet’o and ‘Alia Patrol Troops), in Han’guk kodae sa nonch’ong, Vol 6, 1994, pp. 102-109.

57. Yon Min-su, Op. Sit., pp. 106-112.

Kim T, ae-sik, Kaya yonmaeng sa, p.246.

Lee Yong-sik, Paekche-ui Kaya chinch’ul kwajong, pp. 205-208.

58. Chu Bodon. Kaya myolmang munju-e tae-han il Koch, al (A Study of the Problem of Kaya’s Downfall, in Kyongbuk sahak (Historical Journal of North Kyongsang Provincial University), Vol. 4, 1982, p. 166.

59. On main theoretical criteria of “early statehood” and their applicability to ancient Korean history, see: Hanguk kodae kukka hyongsong non, pp. 246-279.