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**Japan’s Connection to Korea A Series of Three Essays**

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Inariyama Sword Revisited

In a previous article, published in Transactions (1999), I wrote about the gold-inlaid sword from the Inariyama Tumulus in Japan, and its inscription of 115 Chinese characters. In the succeeding years, I have uncovered further interesting and revealing facts which describe the intimate relationship between the owner of the sword and the Paekche Kingdom, and consequently the relation between Paekche and Wa (or Wae) Japan.1

We find three key words, 加利 (ga-ri), 世世(sae-sae), and 獲加 (hoek- ga), in the inscription. These three words are crucial in interrelating historical events taking place in both Paekche and Wa Japan in the fourth and fifth centuries C. E.

The first word, 加禾stands for placenames in the southeastern region of the Korean peninsula. Historical records and ages-old traditions point to the existence of 5 or 6 states known as Gaya or Gara, which were situated along the Naktong River. Additional inscriptions on the sword contain the names of seven generations, which are thought to be related to the placenames of their residences or territories under their control in both Korea and Wa Japan. These seven names, according to the Korean government Romanization system, are (1) Gana Gari, (2) Gori Gari, (3) Daga Bisi, (4) Dasagi, (5) Bara Gobi, (6) Gasa Biri, and (7) Ho Hoekgo. I’ve ascertained the readings of these names according to the findings of Ryu Ryol in his I-du research, as reported in the following essay below.

Gari is a variant of Gara, or the name of the small federation of states located in and around the present-day Kimhae region of southeastern Korea.

1 Kim Y.D., I-du: Writing the Korean Language with Chinese Characters, Transactions (vol. 74), Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 1999. p. 49

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It seems plausible, then, that the ancestors of Ho Hoekgo, the owner of the sword, resided in the Gara region of Korea for at least four generations, including Gana Gari, Gori Gari, Daga Bisi, and Dasagi.

Gori Gara is especially known to refer to the present Sangju area in Gyeongsang Province. Daga Bisi could not be specifically identified with any currently known placename, but it may have been located south of Gori Gari in the vicinity of Imna Gara under the rule of Paekche. Daga may refer to present-day Changwon, while Bisi may be identified with Changnyeong.

Accoding to the Samguk Sagi, Silla took over Sangju from Paekche in 250 C. E., which is perhaps why Lord Gori Gara moved to the Sungsan area from Sangju.

We believe Gori Gara was under the rule of Paekche since Lord Ho states in the inscription of 世世:(sae-sae), that his family served Paekche “generation after generation.” As will be seen later, the great king, whom Lord Ho served, turns out to have been King Gaero of Paekche. Thus, Ho’s ancestors in Gara must have been vassals of Paekche, as is noted in the inscription. Dasagi may be identified with the present-day Hadong on the border between Jeolla and Gyeongsang provinces.

As will be presented in my essay on the seven-branched sword, the ruler of Imna Gara was Yeo Ji of Paekche who moved to Wa Japan by the middle of the fourth century. We believe they participated with the Paekche military in conquering the Gara states along the Namgang River, a tributary of the Naktong, circa 369 C.E.2

Sometime shortly after this time, four states, Biri, Bidi, Pomigi and Barago along the Seomjin River, surrendered to Paekche as recorded in the proper and correct interpretation of related records in Nihongi. Perhaps Lord Gori Gara or Lord Daga Bisi took part in the campaign and may have been appointed to govern Dasagi at the estuary of the Seomjin River for some time prior to moving to Wa Japan, since the name of the next Lord Gasa Bari can now be identified with Kasahara near the Inariyam Tumulus in Japan,

2 Cheon Kwangy, Study on Kaya History, Iljeogak, 1993.

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while Bara Gobi, or Blue Sea, cannot so far be identified.

The Tamno Lord Jin Nyeh at Komanaru or Kongju, fleeing the assault of Koguryo in 396 C. E., went over to Wa Japan and took over the state in the Nara area which was ruled by Nigihayhi or Yeo Ji, the progenitor of the Mononobe clan, and founded the new Yamato court of Wa Japan. Perhaps Jin Nyeh went through Dasagi on his way to Wa Japan, picking up military support from the troops of Lord Dasagi.

Now we come to the crucial detail of the name of the great king, whom Lord Ho and his ancestors served, must be dealt with. The five Hanjas preceding 大王 or “great king” are: 獲加多支贼 I recently found the I-du word 或加or Hokga, used in the list of lords’ names in the Mahan entry of the chronicle of Wei China (220 C. E. to 265 C. E.). “King Jin ruled the Mokchi state whose lords are Hokga (或加), or Supreme Lord Uh Ho, and etc.”

In this record, Hokga stands for “supreme lord.” So we can deduce that “hokga” is Paekche’s term for a great king. Now this word “hokga” may be identified with “hoekga” in the inscirption, since their usage and their sounds are identical.

Choen Kwanuh argues in his book “Study on Kaya History” that the King of Jin, mentioned in the above Chinese chronicle, may be identified as King Koyi, Paekche. Cheon indicates that Mahan, or later Paekche, extended its power over the Gara (Kaya) statesin the south and other states in the west of Korea. Hanweon, another Chinese chronicle (early seventh century), records that Imna Gara belonged to Mahan.

Since Mahan was absorbed by Paekche, it is evident that Imna Gara belonged to Paekche. This is entirely consistent with the statement in the sword’s inscription that

Lord Gori Gara was a vassal of Paekche.

Now the I-du reading of the Chinese character 多 is Gana according to Ryu Reol and it means “Great”, Amazingly, Samguk Sagi records that the name of King Gaero may be also written as Geun Gaeru where Geun is equivalent to Gana, or great. King Gaero reigned from 455 C. E. to 475 C. E.

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If this is the correct reading of the great king’s name, “Hoekga great Gaeru” may be identified with King Gaero, and the inscription testifies that Lord Ho and his ancestors served Paekche for seven generations at first in Gara in the southern part of Korea, and later in Japan. So the Inariyama sword must have been made in 470 C.E. during the reign of great King Gaero.

The implications are startling:

First, in the view of Lord Ho the kings in Wa Japan were vassals to the great king of Paekche.

Second, the brother Konji of great King Gaero went to Wa Japan in 461 C. E., most likely to become king as a feudal lord of Paekche.

Third, King Muryong of Paekche, who returned to Paekche from Wa Japan in 501 C.E., was definitely the King Mu or Bu, who sent a state epistle to Liang China in 478 C.E., three years after the death of his father King Gaero and his brother the crown prince which occurred at the same time during the invasion of Koguryo in 475 C.E.

Fourth, the owner of the Funayama sword in Kyushu must have been a feudal lord of Paekche since the inscription is quite similar in style to the Inariyama sword.

This new interpretation of the inscription on the Inariyama sword means that Japanese ancient history must be viewed from quite a different perspective.

Seven-Branched Sword and the Conquest of Yamato Region by Wa King Ji

Introduction

Many scholars have studied the seven-branched sword with the inscrition of sixty-one ideograms on its blade, which have resultedin far-reaching implications in understanding the ancient history of Wa Japan and its relationship with Paekche. The inscription indicates that the sword’s owner, the Mononabe clan, along with Paekche’s feudal lord Yeo Ji, conquered the[page 121] northern shore of Kyushu. In time, they turned their attentions eastward, eventually subduing and occupying the Yamato region (Nara) to found a kingdom prior to the arrival of Ojin (alias Jin Nyeh), the founder of the Yamato court of Wa Japan3 at the turn of the fifth century C. E.

In this study we summarize first the argument of So Jin-Chul4 that the seven-branched sword was handed down to Yeo Ji, a member of the Paekche royal family, upon his appointment as the feudal lord of the new occupied land, which in our view was somewhere in northern Kyushu. This view will be prfesented in the third section. In the second section, we will present information regarding the origins of the Mononobe clan, which owned this sword

Also in the third section, we will study known archaeological evidence that provides the essential link between Wa Japan and Imna Kara, which we believe is the original home of the Mononobe clan.

In the fourth section we will present our arguments, through mythological connection, that Yeo Ji was depicted as King Sujin in the Nihongi, an early Japanese chronicle.

Finally, we will summarize our findings that the owner of the seven- branched sword ruled first in Imna Kara, and then the Yamato region of Japan as a state, eventually to yield the land to a new conqueror, Jin Nyeh, who became King Ojin, the founder of the new Wa state, as described in the Nihongi.

I. Yeo Ji: a feudal lord of Paekche

The text of the inscription on the seven-branched sword is as follows;

3 Kim YD, Japan’s Korean Roots, RAS Transactions, Volune 76，2001

*4 Sughara Mastomo, On the Seven-Branched Swork, 1907, collection of papers by S. M. So, Jin-chul, King Muryong’s world in metal and stone inscriptions, Sairyusha, 2001*[page 122]

 Our interpretation

[In front] [In front]

秦? 四年? 月 十六 日丙午正陽 in the year C.E. 349 on sixteenth of

造百練鋼七支刀生 百兵 certain month at noon the seven

宣供供侯王 ？？?? 作 branched sword was made with

branched sword was made with steel wrought one hundred times. This sword should be offered to feudal lords, made by…?

[In rear] [In rear]

先世以來未有此刀百慈王世? This sword has never been

寄生聖音故爲倭王旨造傳示後世 possessed before by our ancestry.

The king of Paekche, owing his life to the holy supreme one, prepared this sword for Wa king Ji to preserve it for posterity.

This inscription was first found by Sugahara Masatomo5, the priest at the Isonokami Shinto Shrine in 1874. He found not only an iron sword and comma shaped jewelry in a sanctuary but also the seven-branched sword in the divine storehouse. It is said some of the characters in the inscription were damaged in the process of removing rust, which caused much confusion and controversy in the interpretation of the text. Nonetheless the inscription offered a crucial clue in understanding the correct relation between Paekche and Wa Japan in the fourth century. Among sixty-one characters, seven were illegible. One missing crucial character in the era name makes it very difficult to date the sword.

So J.H.6 asserts that the inscription definitely indicates that the sword was offered to the feudal lord Ji, not dedicated to a superior as many Japanese

5 Ibid.

6 Op.Cit. Kim YD*.*

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scholars suggest or as the Nihongi records.

So J.H. reasons that since Koguryo was already using its own era name (Yongnak) by the early fifth century and since the bronze mirror of Shidahachiman Shrine carries an inscription with the era name Dae Wang or great king, there is no reason why Paekche would not have its own proper era name, which is usually the prerogative of an emperor or a great king with feudal lords.

Since the inscription does not specify who was in charge of producing the sword as in the case of Shidahachiman bronze mirror, So J.H. thinks that the sword was made in Paekche and offered to the prospective feudal lord Ji, a member of the royalty.

According to a long held tradition in Asia, the offering of a weapon such as a sword symbolizes trust in the recipient and certain rights to rule politically or militarily.

In all the diplomatic documents sent to China by Paekche, royalty had personal names written with a single Chinese character, such as Ku, Yeong, Keon, Kyeong, etc.

Thus the feudal lord Ji, with a single syllable name, must be a member of the Paekche royal family. For instance, Wa king Mu sent a diplomatic document to Liang China in the style of that sent by King Kaero to northern Wei China. In this document, Koguryo is described as a mortal enemy, which must be destroyed while King Mu was very compassionate with Paekche, which was thought to be under jeopardy. His hostile action was held in check only because his father and brother died suddenly. Thus by implication King Mu must be the son of Paekche’s Kaero and so must the preceding kings Chan, Jun, Jeh and Heung, who sent diplomatic missions to China, So J.H. concludes that feudal lord Ji, the recipient of the seven- branched sword, was dispatched to rule the feudal land Wa Japan in the fourth century. Since the sword was offered in the fourth year of reign of the Paekche king Keunchogo, ruling the exact year the sword must be 349 C.E., and we think Paekche was already ruling Imna Kaya before that year. [page 124]

But where could this feudal land of lord Ji have been in Wa Japan? This is the question we must address now. For the purpose we study first the origin of the Mononobe clan, which preserved the seven-branched sword in their ancestral Shrine.

**II. The Mononobe clan**

It is a well-known historical fact that the Mononobe clan exercised great power in the military, political, judicial and religious affairs in Wa Japan from the founding of Ojin’s Wa state at the turn of fifth century until its overthrow by the rival Soga clan for its opposition to the introduction of Buddhism into Wa Japan in the late sixth century.

We know the Mononobes’ Paekche connection from its possession of the seven-branched sword and another iron sword with a phoenix-motif pommel, of a type possessed by Paekche’s rulers.

Now we look into their original strongholds. For the purpose it is useful to study the clan’s chronicle, the Sendai Kyuji Hongi, which was the only clan chronicle allowed by the Wa state. Many scholars have done this research.

Mayuzumi7 studied the Mononobe chronicle to find that the mythology in it records the descent of a heavenly god, Nigihayahi into the world, riding a rock boat with many attendant gods and eventually reaching the Yamato area to rule. He noticed that in essence the mythology in the Nihongi and this mythology are similar in organization. This Mononobe ancestral tradition is also mentioned in the Nihongi. In particular, Nigihayahi is recorded in the Nihongi as one who yielded his kingdom in Yamato, when Ojin (alias Jinmu), the legendary founder king, made his assault on this land in his war of eastern conquest.

Mayuzumi pursued the Mononobes’ earlier settlements by analyzing placenames associated with the above attendant gods, since gods’ names are often associated with place names of their former settlement, where the

7 Mayuzumi H., The Mononohes the the Sohas in relation to the ancient kingdom of Japan, Kobunkan co., 1995

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Mononobes moved in to occupy and settle on their way to the Yamato area from northeastern Kyushu. It turned out that placenames with gods’ names, such as Nida, Shimado, Tajiri, Akama or Tsukushi, are located in the northeastern part of Kyushu.

On the other hand, another scholar, Torikoshi K.8, concludes after studying the Kyujiki that the Mononobe clan’s original homeland was near Kurate County, Fukuoka prefecture, east of Hakata. He finds the Mononobes settled at Tsuruta, Nida, Sotake, Akama, Shimato, Kiku and Umami along the Toka River in Fukuoka Prefecture.

The Mononobes eventually moved on to Yamato to found a kingdom there, which had a ruler named Nigihayahi. Could this be the Japanized name for the original. Yeo Ji.

It is most surprising and intriguing that characters Yeo Ji(余 旨) maybe put together by kana Ni(二), Gi(キ), Ha(ハ) for eight, Ya (ヤ) and hi(ヒ) which make up the parts of the Cninese characters. Could this be a way of codifying the original name, which may have been forcefully Japanized when the Nihongi was compiled? Even today in northern Kyushu, one finds many Shinto Shrines where the ancestral gods of the Mononobe clan are worshiped witnessing how widespread and powerful the Mononobe influence was in olden times.

In ref.(7), one learns about the Kohra Shrine in Kurume city, Fukuoka Prefecture, which has a detached Shrine, called Isonokami Mononobe，which houses four wooden figures that carry a wooden seven-branched sword. All these facts suggest that northern Kyushu was undoubtedly the original stronghold of the clan in Wa Japan.

Now we wonder about their connection to Paekche on the Korean peninsula? The link may be found through Imna Kara, which was under the control of Paekche, as we shall see, in the fourth century. Just as the homelands of the Mononobes in Kyushu were tracked down with their ancestral gods’ names, the link may be found through the name of the god

8 Torikoski K., the Great Yamato Kingdom, kodansha Co.

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Tamul, an important ancestral god of the Mononobe clan.

Tamul is the Korean pronunciation of the god Ohmono’s name just as the name of Tsushima island may be read as Tamai in the Korean Idu way. Placenames Tamal or Tamul may be found strung along the western coast of Korea and reaching even Tsushima Island and other Japanese places, according to Kim Sungho9.

Imna Kara, which existed in the Pusan area, is referred as Tamul Imna in the Chinese chronicle Hanwon. In the same text, Imna Kara is recorded as being a part of the Mahan state, which ruled the southwestern part of Korea from the first century B.C.E. until Paekche’s takeover in the fourth century.

So we argue that the god Tamul of the Mononobe clan may have derived from their ancestral land, Tamul Imna.

Another piece of evidence is provided by the Nihongi, which records that the mother of the tenth king Sujin was from the Mononobe clan and gives his Japanese style name, which suggests that Sujin’s family can be traced back to Imna, as many scholars conclude. Curiously the Samguk Sagi never mentions Imna in the main text, in spite of numerous contacts between Imna and Silla.

However, the Kwang-gae-to stele, monk Jin-Kyong’s stele, on which Jin- kyong claims his ancestry to be Choji or the clan of Chora of Imna, and Gangsu’s biography in the Samguk Sagi, which describes Gangsu as a descendant of the royal family of Imna with the family name Suk, all indicate the existence of Imna Kara without any doubt.

Kim S.H.10 argued that the placename Imna was the Idu way of writing the Korean placename Masara, Im for Mas, meaning takeover, and Ra or Na, meaning iand’. The word Tamul has connotation of take-over. So he suggests that Imna perhaps means a land taken over by Paekche or one of its feudal lands, called Tamno or Tamul.

Imna is said to have been located near the present Yongdu hill in Pusan.

9 Kim Sungho, Biryu Paekche and Japan’s Origin Chimunsa Co., 1982.

10 Ibid.

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Yong-du is again an Idu way of representing Korean word Mi, or ‘dragon’ for Yong and Mari, or ‘head’ for du. Mi-Mari later became Mimana, Japanese for Imna in the vicinity of Yongdu hill.

Evidence for Imna as a territory of Paekche sometime in the fourth and fifth centuries may be found in many other places.

Archeological findings such as the custom of direct burial of coffins in ditch overlapping the Kara’s cyst burial, horse armor, and ritual cylindrical earthenware of Paekche origin all suggest Imna’s relation to Paekche.

More directly, the inscription on the seven-branched sword suggests that Yeo Ji was awarded with the sword after the conquest of the northern shore of Kyushu sometime early in the fourth century.

The overthrow in C.E. 314 of Luolang, a Chinese commandery in North Korea, by Koguryo heralds the beginning of the direct clash between Koguryo and Paekche. Now at this time Paekche established its own colony, or Tamno, in the northeastern area of Liaoxi Province in the Beijing area to counterattack Koguryo, which had became a menace to Paekche, which was expanding at this time, overthrowing Mahan, which ruled the southwestern part of the peninsula, and also Imna, according to the Chinese chronicle Hanwon.

One evidence for the link between Paekche and Imna is provided by the New Compilation of the Pegister of families (C.E. 815) of Japan as noticed by Kim S.H. In the book one finds that prince Mimana (or Imna) is a descendant of king Mo Ruchi of Imna and the Kudara clan is related to lord Mori Kaza of Paekche, where we note Mo as the family name of both. Imna and Paekche lords Mo is one of eight great family names of Paekche and it is surprising to find Imna’s royal name as Mo, which indicates the close political association of Imna with Paekche.

So it is plausible that Paekche took over Imna in the process of conquering Mahan.

Finally we mention the Chora fortress of Imna, recorded in the Nihongi and the Chobara fortress of Imna, where the Wa army was crushed by the[page 128] Koguryo army in C.E. 400, and Chora under Paekche’s power mentioned in the ambassador’s portraits of Liang China. All these fortresses are believed to be identical and one of Imna’s strongholds.

We conclude from these pieces of evidence that Yeo Ji, who was the ruler in possession of the phoenix pommel sword, led his people, including the Mononobe clan, to conquer northern Kyushu and set up a Tamno for Paekche, earning him the seven-branched sword. Eventually they moved eastward to found a kingdom in the Yamato plain. We believe Yeo Ji is the mans who is called Nigihayahi in Japanese in the Mononobe chronicle and recorded in the entry about the fictitious tenth king, Sujin, in the Nihongi. Sujin has a Japanese name, which suggests his origin in Imna or Mimana. This again provides evidence for Imna as a feudal land of Paekche.

Later this kingdom was yielded to the later conqueror Jin Nyeh, alias Ojin, and another Tamno lord, who founded the Yamato court of the Wa State. No wonder that the Nihongi proclaims that Wa Japan was born of Tamno or Tamnuro as its placenta.

Imna Kara and the other Karas must have been very prosperous and powerful in the third and fourth century, judging from ample archeological findings in the Imna Kara area and also from records in the chronicle of Wei China.

Kara people traded far and wide, according to the Wei chronicle. Since they traded overseas, they must have been good seafarers also. The existence of iron weapons and armor iron armors” indicates a powerful military capability, too.

It is very plausible that they were aware of the weakened political and military state of affairs among smaller Wa states in Kyushu after Himiko’s unified Wa state in Kyushu disintegrated in the late third century. After the fall of Chinese colonies Luolang and Dafang in the early fourth century in the northern Korea, which was good trade partners for Kara, the Kara states must have felt the shrinking and unstable trade with the north, while they felt

11 National Museum at Bokcheondong, Catalog, 1996.

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the need for expansion to the south.

So sometime in the middle of the fourth century, the Mononobes, under the rule of Yeo Ji in Imna Kara, made a push to Kyushu. Now we have to examine in detail the archeological evidence and the geopolitical situation that support this conquest of the Kyushu by the Mononobe clan and eventual advance to Yamato in the middle of the fourth century.

IIL Archeological evidence for the conquest of the Yamato region by the Paekche feudal lord，Wa King Ji

The chronicle of the Mononobe clan and the Nihongi both record that the Yamato region was ruled by the Mononobe clan under the ruler Nigihayahi, who was the progenitor of the Mononobe clan.

Now we present some of archeological evidence in support of this proposition.

First is the similarity of old tombs of Yayoi Japan and those of Kara in the Yayoi period.

In the Yayoi period (300 B.C.E. to 300 C.E.), Kara tombs and Yayoi tombs were made of a stone chamber with a top opening and a round mound on top. The four walls of the chamber are built up with slabs or boulders and the floor is covered with dirt or pebbles.

In the fourth century several key-shaped tombs (with a square front and round rear) over two hundred meters long, have been found in the Kinki area of Honshu but none in Kyushu.12

Recently several key shaped tombs are found to our amazement in the Eesong Mountain fortress of Early Paekche near Seoul.13

In the vicinity an old tomb in the style of Puyeo kingdom，from which Paekche originated in the first century B.C-E., was also found.14 These are amazing discovery since these tombs must have been built in the

12 Ishiwatari S，Emperor Ojin Came from Paekche，Sanichi Co., 2002.

13 Han Jong-Seop，Hanam City cultural heritage committee，private communication.

14 Ibid.

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early period of Paekche’s history, perhaps in the first or second century C.E. These findings immediacy suggest that the origin of Japanese key shaped tombs must be found in Paekche. As we believe, Paekche ruled Imna Kaya through the feudal lord Ji, who was appointed as the king of Wa by Paekche’s great king and conquered the northern shore of Kyushu and eventually reached the Kinki region to set up a kingdom in the middle of fourth century.

Since the key shaped tombs in Japan are built after C.E. 380 according to Japanese findings,15 it is very reasonable that the Wa kings or descendants of feudal lord Ji started building the key shaped tombs in their ancestral way in Paekche late in the fourth century.

Most scholars agree that the burial custom is usually preserved strictly and the similarity of tomb shapes and structure is a strong indication of cultural links.

Second evidence is that hundreds of broken bronze bells for religious rituals from the fourth century were found in the Kinki area, indicating the arrival of a people with new religious practices.16

The third evidence is that two hundred fifty-five ancient Chinese bronze mirrors have been found in Kyushu but only six in the Kinki area, while more than five hundred bronze mirrors of triangular edge with an animal motif, which were mostly made in Japan sometime between C.E. 380 and C.E. 410, have been found in the Kinki area but only a few in Kyushu.17

Thirdly iron ingots and other iron products have been found abundantly (139 pieces in Kyushu and six pieces in Kinki) dating from C.E. 240 to C.E. 340 in Kyushu, while 524 pieces have been found in Kyushu and 73pieces in the Kinki area dating from after C.E. 340.18 Fourthly, a Sueki pottery of peculiar shape, called Hasouh in Japanese with

15 Op. Cit, Ishiwatari.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

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a round bottom, wide mouth and a hole at the side are found in the Kinki area，Imna Kara area and the Yeongsan river basin area under. Which was the Paekche’s rule.

In addition, numerous placenames of Kara origin are found in northern Kyushu, in the Okayama region along the Seto inland sea as well as in the Nara region in concurrence with abundant old tombs in these regions.

All this evidence supports the argument that people from Imna Kara of Paekche crossed the sea to conquer Kyushu and pushed on to occupy the kibi region along the Seto inland sea, and eventually reached the Osaka bay area and the Yamato region to found a kingdom.

This is in essence our argument in support of Sujin founding a kingdom in the Yamato plain, and Sujin is none other than Nigihayahi or feudal lord Ji in our view.

**IV.Mythology of Tamul god**

Not only the archeological evidence but also the religious tradition of the Wa court provides strong support to the argument that Mononobe clan with ancestral god Tamul and ancestral ruler Nigihayahi, moved to Yamato and ruled until the arrival of Ojin.

To find out more about the religious role played by the Mononobe clan and its Tamul god, related to the founding god of Wa Japan, it is useful to study relevant passages in the Nihongi.

The Nihongi relates in its opening chapter about the mythological era that the seventh generation gods Izanagi (identical in name to Kaya’s founder king) and Izanami produced three gods Amaterasu, Tsukiyomi and Susanowo. Susanowo was to rule this world but in consideration or his violent nature he was banished from Kumanari (Kongju, Korea) peak to reach the Hyuga region of Izumo in southeastern Kyushu, where a son, Ohmuchi, was born. He chased away this time by a native Futsu/Tamul and fled to the Shimane region of Izumo to found a state here.

Now the Tamul god was forced to marry the daughter of Takamusubi, [page 132]whose son Ninigi founded a state in the Hyuga region.

In these narrations, Tamul, the ancestral god of the Mononobe clan, plays a crucial role.

Now we turn to the Kyujiki, the Mononobe chronicle. Umashimichi, the son of Nigihayahi, the legendary ruler of Yamato, dedicated his family treasures to Jinmu, the legendary founder of Wa Japan, on the occasion of his enthronement ceremony, while divine shields and a new shaman tree were set up and the curiously Tamul god was worshipped.

After that, all ceremonies of enthronement, new year’s day, national foundation day and the periodic rebuilding of the national Ise Shrine, followed the ritual precedents of the above first enthronement, including the role of a maiden priestess of the Mononobe who leads the ceremony in offering divine clothes, divine food, divine drink and chanting, which were shared by participants.

In these religious practices, old and new, one sees the important legacy of the Mononobe clan in the establishment of Wa Japan.

Therefore, the Mononobe clan enjoyed a privileged position in the Yamato court of Wa Japan in the centuries following the turn of the fifth century.

It is evident that the Tamul god was accorded a special importance by the Yamato court of Ojin’s Wa Japan, as the native god of earlier settlers and the earlier ruler of Yamato.

In the Nihongi, Nigihayahi was made into the fictitious tenth emperor, Sujin, just as Jinmu became the fictitious founder, reflecting the deeds of Ojin and Jingu as the fictitious ruler reflecting the legendary shaman queen Himiko.

**V. Conclusions**

We have reached the conclusion that Yeo Ji, the Wa king named on the seven-branched sword, was formerly the ruler of Imna Kara and conquered northeastern Kyushu to become the Wa King, a feudal lord Paekche, in C.E. 349 and eventually moved on to the east to conquer and rule the Yamato[page 133]region, founding a new state only to yield it to the later conqueror, Jin Nyeh, another feudal lord of Paekche, or Ojin, in C.E. 396, who founded Great Wa as related in the Nihongi.

Once these findings are accepted as true, it is easy to understand why Wa soldiers took part in the war of conquest over the seven Kara states along the Nam River, a tributary of the Naktong River, in C.E. 37219 in collaboration with Paekche and why Wa soldiers occupied a Silla fortress and were chased out to the Imna Kara fortress Chobara by the Koguryo king’s army in C.E. 400 and took part in a battle against Koguryo in the Dafang region in northern Korea in 404.

These wars were carried out as the army of Paekche’s feudal land or in defense of the Wa’s ancestral land in alliance with the former suzereign of Paekche. This is indeed a totally new view of the historical relations between Paekche and Wa Japan and requires an open mind and a drastic rethinking of history.

**Shinto Shrines and their origins**

Introduction

Buddhist temples and Shinto Shrines are found in great number all over Japan. The origin of Japan’s Buddhist temples is well known. Paekche transmitted Buddhism to Japan in the middle of the sixth century by the religious zeal of Paekche kings, who sent monks, sutras, temple builders and other artisans.

More obscure and ancient are the origins of Shinto Shrines in Japan. Shintoism itself is not well known, either. Perhaps it is related to the shaman and ancestor worship customs, which were observed by settlers from the Korean peninsula since the sixth century BCE, when rice farming was introduced to Wa Japan from Korea.

In this article I will try to present some characteristic features of Shintoism and Shinto Shrines through examination of some prominent Shrines, which

19 Op. Cit, Kim YD

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Korean settlers influenced with their older tradition from Korea.

(I) Examples of Shrines Inary Shinto Shrines20

At Kohryuji, a Buddhist temple in Kyoto, one finds not only the famous wooden sculpture of the smiling and meditating Maitreya Buddha, Japan’s National Cultural Treasure, but also the wooden images of Hata Kawakatsu couple, who had contributed much in establishing this temple and in enshrining the Maitreya image brought over from Silla. Many scholars believe that this Hata clan originally immigrated from Patara, located near Ulchin, Kyongsang Province, Korea.

Patara is the ancient Korean word for sea, or Pada in modern Korean. Now Patara is said to have become the family name Hata of the Hata clan. This Hata clan became very prolific, productive, prosperous and powerful through their skills and industriousness in various fields of industry and agriculture such as rice farming with skillful irrigation, wine making, sericulture and fabric industry.

In C.E. 701, a certain Hata clan member named Torii founded the huge Matsuo Shinto Shrine at the foot of Mt. Matsuo in Kyoto.

Its grounds cover an area of about 430,000 square meters. It serves as the head Shrine for one thousand and several hundred-branch shrines.

Formerly they were dedicated to Oyamagui, a mountain god. The Shinto priests are appointed from members of the Hata clan. Passing the huge Shinto gate, one can see a stone pillar with the inscription “nation’s top wine god” and piles of wine casks under the roofs of the Shinto buildings. This wine related symbol were set up after the Edo period, or four centuries ago, reflecting prosperity from winemaking and the wish for continued prosperity.

Interestingly, in 711 Hata Irogu founded the Inari Shinto Shrine in Fushimi, south of the Matsu Shrine, with its characteristic red gate for a

20 Kim Dalsu, In search of Korean cultural remains in Japan, Daewonsa, 1997

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harvest god, as the name Inari or rice growing suggests. It turned out this Shrine also proliferated to branch Inari Shrines all over Japan, forty thousand or so in number.

Here we see that trade related gods were enshrined later. In Bronze-Age Korea, it is known that certain shaman rituals were held during the spring planting season and the autumn harvesting season as attested by the discovery of a bronze ritual plate engraved with scenes of planting and harvesting as well as by records in China. This custom is still observed in the countryside of Korea in spring and autumn festivals.

It is interesting to learn about, or rather to speculate about, why the Hata clan moved to Japan around the early sixth century. A clue may be found in the discovery of a Silla stele.

At the village of Bong-pyung near Patara in the Ulchin area, an old stone stele was found in 1988. Its inscription stated that the Silla king Maezik- kimi, or Bophung, led a campaign to settle conflicts with a local chieftain in the Patara area.

In fact it is known that this area was often contested between Koguryo and Silla, resulting in frequent military clashes. This is also the area where a jade seal, appointing a local chieftain of the Yeh tribe by eastern Jin China in the fourth century, was found. The Yeh tribe is also thought to be the original Koguryo people. Already in the second century BCE some of the Yeh people surrendered to Han China and a seal of appointment for the chieftain was found. Some of the Yeh tribe is known to have occupied the northeastern plain of Korea, eventually moving down to Ulchin area also. The name Kimi Juri of the Yeh tribe shows up also in an inscription on a bronze mirror21 ,which was made by this Yeh governor in the Osaka region of Wa Japan in C.E. 503 at the order of King Muryong of Paekche.

All these series of facts suggest that the Yeh tribes, with a long cultural tradition due to long contacts with Chinese culture, moved out of the Ulchin area either to avoid frequent wars or intolerable taxes often imposed by Silla

21 Kim YD, RAS Transactions, Volume 76,2001

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against hostile people. So it was reasonable to think the Hata clan might have derived from the Yeh tribe and fled to Wa Japan. No wonder that the Hata clan, with its high skills, was very successful in Wa Japan, where they moved to settle in a large number.

(2) Hachimangu Shrine22

In the vicinity of the Ojin Kofun in Osaka, one finds a Shrine called Konda Hachimangu Shrine. As is often the case, a Shrine is found near ancient tombs or kofuns. This supports the idea that Shinto Shrines were originally associated with tombs and their occupants to offer a religious service.

According to the records of the Konda Shrine, it was built 1,400 years ago. Actually this type of Hachiman shrine originated at Usa city in Kyushu, where the Usa clan founded the first Hachiman shrine to commemorate their ancestor god. Actually the word Hachiman is the Japanese pronunciation of Chinese characters for Yahata, which means ‘many banners’. Just as we see many banners at a farmers’ festival or other shaman rituals even today in Korea, many banners were seen also in rituals to commemorate the Usas’ ancestor god.

Eventually the Usa clan’s ancestor god and the Karashima clan’s ancestor god were jointly enshrinea in the Usa Shrine. Obviously Kara in the family name Karashima refers to the kingdoms in the southern part of Korean peninsula from the first century C.E. until the sixth century and the family name Karashima indicate its origin from a Kara State. Besides, the archeological finds in the area such as Korean bronze bells, which were used in shaman rituals, strongly suggest that people from the Korean peninsula with Shaman customs settled in the area.

The nature of enshrined gods became syncretic both with Taoism and Buddhism, which were introduced to Japan by the middle of the sixth century. Syncretism of shaman mysticism and Buddhism took place also in Silla in the formation of the Wharang, the militant elites of Silla who

22 Nakano Hatayoshu, The Beliefs of Hachiman, Hanawa Series, 1985.

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believed the reincarnation of Maitreya in them and became the fierce fighters of Silla. With the popularity of Maitreya Buddhism, the Maitreya is believed reincarnated in the Hachiman god to save the world, and the Hachiman shrine gained more followers. It is also blended with deified king Ojin, and now the Hachiman shrine takes the added role of nation protector with Hachiman believers’ successful campaign in subjugating the riotous Hayato tribe in southern Kyushu. This added a militant nature to the Hachiman shrine.

When King Shobu wanted to build a large guilt Buddha image in the eighth century at the Todaiji temple, he consulted with the Hachiman shrine priest about whether to send a mission to China to secure gold and the oracle is said to have replied in the negative. Soon after, a Paekche prince, resettled in Tohoku after the downfall of Paekche, found gold in the northeastern part of Japan. So the prestige of the Hachiman shrine was very much enhanced, and it was invited to build the head Hachiman shrine in Nara, the capital at the time.

These Hachiman shrines were now favored as the shrines of the god of war, and their popularity and prosperity grew even more.

The Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine in Yamashina, Kyoto, was built in the ninth century, and King Ojin is also enshrined and regarded as the guardian god of this new capital.

The Konda Hachiman Shrine, near the Ojin tomb also enshrined Ojin as the Hachiman god. Interestingly this Shrine has a treasure house with a national treasure of an openwork golden saddle in its custody. This saddle was found in a satellite tomb of King Ojin.

Similar saddles and other equestrian trappings were also found in the satellite tombs of King Inkyo, or Richu, in the same area.

These archeological finds prompted some Japanese archeologists to propose that at the turn of fifth century horse riders from the Korean peninsula came to conquer Japan and established the Yamato court Actually the Tamno lord Jin Nyeh is the one who became the founding king of Wa[page 138] Japan, as shown in my previous paper.23

One of the most common types of Shinto shrine, the Hachiman shrines are now found all over Japan, numbering more than a third of all shrines. There are 12,000 of them in Japan.

I must mention another typical Shrine that enshrines an ancestral god. The Asukabe Shrine, which is found in Asuka, in the Nara region, surrounded by clusters of old tombs whose occupant were Paekche people.

King Konji, or the younger brother of Paekche King Kaero, is enshrined here. According to the Nihongi, he came to Wa Japan in 461 and returned to Paekche in 475 after Paekche moved its capital from Kanaguru, or Seoul, to Komanaru, or Kongju to serve as a minister in Samguk Sagi. His descendants in Asuka founded the Shrine to commemorate him as an ancestral god. But after the Meiji restoration, when Shinto Shrines and Buddhist temples were separated, Shinto Shrines were given government recognition, but the Asukabe Shrine was excluded and it no longer has a Shinto priest to take care of it and is rapidly deteriorating.

(3) Tenmangu Shrine24

In the rear of Domeiji Temple in Fujiyi City, one finds the Tenmangu Shrine，formerly the Haji Shrine, where deified Sugawara Michizane has been enshrined since the tenth century. As the name Haji indicates, this Shrine served originally as the ancestral Shrine for the Haji clan. Sugawara, a descendant of the Haji clan, was an eminent scholar and an outstanding statesman, who was exiled to Kyushu through political intriguery. Sugawara died three years later in exile in Kyushu in 903 and was later enshrined there for his fame and scholarship.

One year later, Masakeno Yasuyuki set up a Shrine after allegedly hearing an oracle that Sugawara was a Tenman god. This eventually became the Tenmangu Shrine in the compound of Tazaifu, Kyushu.

23 Op, Cit, Kim YD.

24 rakeuchi Hideo, Tenmangu Shrine, Yosikawa Kobun Co., 1996.

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Sugawara is a descendant of Nomi Sukune, who came to Wa Japan from Korea. Nomi Sukune is considered the father of Japanese sumo wrestling and also an innovator, introducing haniwa, or clay figurines, to replace human sacrifice in burial.

Two Chinese characters, meaning ‘soil artisan’, denote the clan name Haji. However in modern Japanese it doesn’t mean anything, although it means ‘artisan’ in Korean. Actually Haji is related to Pachi in modern Korean, as in the word tongsan pachi, meaning ‘garden (tongsan) artisan (pachi)’ or ‘gardener’, for example.

At any rate, the Haji clan is associated with pottery and haniwa making and other civil engineering. Sugawara Michizane was admired so much for his scholarship and accomplishments that he was enshrined as a god in the Tenmangu Shinto Shrine.

He was also admired as a god of calligraphers, integrity and literature. Some of the Tenmangu shrines have even set up learning institutes where poetry recital and lectures on Shinto books or Confucian classics as well as literary works are taught.

The number of Tenmangu Shrines was 10,442 as of the end of last century.

(4) The Ise Shrine

The Ise Shinto Shrine is special among all the shrines in that Amaterasu the sun goddess is enshrined here. Her descendant Jinmu is recorded as the founder king of Wa Japan according to the Nihongi although many scholars think Ojin is the real historical founder king.

This is the Shrine where new emperors report and perform the religious rite Daijosai, or New Year’s day ritual. This ritual is considered very sacred and is performed in privacy. However it is known that a young Shinto priestess officiates, offering divine clothes, foods, etc

Every twenty years the whole building is rebuilt. The present structure is the fifty-ninth.

The central hall, where the goddess is supposed to descend, is built directly [page 140] above a core pillar, which is retained during the renovation. One thinks this is the shaman legacy that gods are supposed to descend upon a shaman tree when a shaman invokes gods in a ritual. The torii gate at the entrance of a Shinto Shrine is again a legacy of the shaman tradition of a pole with a branch where a bird or the divine messenger from above is believed to perch. Usually a woman or maiden performs the shaman ritual, which is again preserved in the Daijosai ritual. It is amazing how all of these elements of a shaman ritual are preserved in a Shinto Shrine after so many years.

In fact the word Jingu in Japanese for a Shinto Shrine was originally called Shingung in Silla Korean, and the first Shingung was built to enshrine Pak Balkanuri, the founder king of Silla centuries before Japanese Shinto shrines existed.

This shaman practice was in decline in Silla after the introduction of Buddhism as the state religion but not so in Japan, where shamanism evolved into Shintoism with syncretism, chauvinism and other modifications.

But even after its evolution, Shintoism doesn’t provide any organized moral teachings or creeds accept that ancestral or hero gods are prayed to for blessings or protection from evil or for thanksgiving for a good harvest, etc. Shaman Shrines were built near tombs in ancient Korea. In the case of Koguryo, a shrine was built on top of a pyramid tomb of King Jangsu, while the national Shrine was built on a hilltop to commemorate the founder King Tongmyong in Paekche.

So we can see the continuation of the shrine tradition of ancient Korea in the Japanese Shinto shrines, while the Shinto shrine continues evolving in its own way.

**(III) Key-hole shaped tombs**

We now know that Shinto shrines are closely associated with tombs or at least early in history as one can see clusters of old tombs or Kofuns in the vicinity of shrines. [page 141]

Among old tombs of various shapes and structure, the keyhole-shaped tombs stand out and are thought unique to Japan. They number about 2,600. They are found throughout Japan. Japanese kings are associated with 25 of them, although the identification of many of them is not certain. Many of these larger tombs are surrounded by moats, and the burial chamber is usually in the round part with various relics, while haniwa, or ritual terracotta figurines, or cylindrical vessels with rows of holes or other terracotta items are buried around the tomb. Now the question rises as to the origin of the keyhole-shaped tombs.

The oldest keyhole shaped tombs dates from the late third century and they were built until the eighth century.

Lately several rock tombs of a keyhole-shape have been found at Song- am-ri and Unpyong-ri in North Korea25, dated at the turn of the first century. These rock tombs of a keyhole shape were built in a plain near rivers, which seems to suggest a certain religious character.

More surprising is the latest finding of keyhole-shaped rock tombs along the Imjin River26 near the demilitarized zone. A square tomb with cylindrical pots with a moat is also found near the Taejon area and several keyhole tombs are also found in South Korea.

It is known for sometime that this kind of keyhole-shaped rock tombs also existed in Takamatsu and Naruto, Shikoku, Japan. Shikoku also has several rock-pile tombs, which suggests that settlers with this type of burial tradition were quite numerous here.

Undoubtedly these people came from parts of Korea with such a tradition. Presumably, a new fashion to cover the rock tombs with dirt mounds became popular and the keyhole-shaped tombs were built and became fashionable in Japan.

25 Chun Hochon, rock tombs of keyhole shape

26 Yoncheon Culture Center. Excavation Reports on Paekche’s Rock Tombs, 1994.

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The origin of Shintoism in Japan is examined and found to be the continuation of the shaman tradition of Korean settlers, although it has evolved in a uniquely Japanese way by adding Buddhist and chauvinistic elements. We examined typical Shinto shrines such as Inari shrines, Hachiman shrines, Tenman shrines and the Ise shrine, which constitute the majority of Japanese Shrines which number about 15,000 in total They are all related with shaman beliefs, shaman rituals and ancestor worship of early setters and mythology of founding gods of the nation. It is most interesting to compare various common practices between Korean shamanism and Japanese Shintoism, are such as the erection of bird poles called Sotte in Korea and Torii gates in Japan which is said to have evolved from Sotte, divine straw ropes with white pieces of papers in both countries, objects of worship such as rocks, rivers, swords or various deities, etc. A type of Korean shaman music evolved into Samul Nori while Shinto music adheres to the classic court music. Shamanism in Korea has no scripture or original founder or creeds, just as in Japanese Shintoism.

Concerning the founding gods of nations in Korea and Japan, it is interesting to note the similar general structure of myths in which gods in the heaven descend to earth reincarnating as the human founders of nations, as in the Tangun mythology and the myths of founding gods of Koguryo, Paekche, Silla and Kaya as well as Wa Japan.

The shaman shrines of these kingdoms in Korea have almost all disappeared, while Shinto shrines in Japan are going very strong even today. So I have found only partial answer for the origin of Shinto Shrines as evolved shamanism. Perhaps one has to examine the religious tradition but also politics, sociology as well as national psychology to get the complete understanding of Shintoism.

Finally I may add that the new Tang China chronicle recorded the practice in Koguryo and Paekche in dedicating weapons such as spears or swords as divine objects. Perhaps this explains why the seven-branched sword was preserved in the ancestral shrine of the Mononobe clan.