Egami (1964: 66) argues that the Japanese imperial ancestors came from a horseriding race of Northeast Asian provenance, possibly from among the Puyeo of central Manchuria, and that immediately prior to their invasion of the Japanese islands, they were based in the southern peninsula. Egami contends that the horseriders occupied Kyūshū in the early fourth century, and their descendant Homuda (Oujin) carried out the conquest eastward to the Kinki region at the end of the fourth century, establishing the Yamato kingdom, the first unified state on the Japanese islands. The most crucial evidence for his theory is the sudden appearance of various horse-related archeological findings dated to the period after “the middle of the latter half of the fourth century.”

Egami has attempted to ground his thesis on historical sources by identifying a Nihongi figure called Mima-ki (Emperor Sujin), who presumably came to the Japanese islands from a southeastern corner of the Korean peninsula called Mima-na, as the leader of the horseriding invasion force. The Dongyi-zhuan records that there were kings of Chin in southern Korea who ruled in the state of Yue-shi in Ma-han and brought under sway twelve out of a total of twenty-four Han states. Egami believes that the leader of horseriders became the kings of Chin up to the late third century, and Mima-ki, one of the descendants of the third century Chin...
kings, left Mima-na to conquer the Japanese islands in the early fourth century.2

A flaw in Egami’s argument is his contention that Mima-ki belonged to the horseriding conquerors, while archeologically it appears that only Homuda could have belonged to them. Since Egami places Mima-ki in the early fourth century, he has to backdate the invasion to around that time, at least half a century or more before the advent of archeological discontinuity. If Egami’s hypothesis is correct, we should be able to observe an introduction of Middle and Late Tomb materials in the early fourth century, at least in Kyūshū where Egami contends the invasion began. According to Egami, such evidence constitutes a missing link which, he believes, will certainly be found in the future.3

Ledyard (1975) has attempted to reformulate Egami’s theory in order to make it more consistent with the appearance of the archeological break. Ledyard contends that the Paekche kingdom in the southwestern part of the Korean peninsula was founded by the Puyeo refugees from Manchuria sometime in the twenty-year period between 352 and 372, and immediately thereafter, the Puyeo warriors reached the sea, boarded boats and founded the Yamato kingdom in the Japanese islands. The core evidence for Ledyard’s thesis is twofold: the historical fact that Puyeo was destroyed in 346, and the chaotic stories of the period between 350 and 380 recorded in Nihongi.

The record of Nihongi for the year 366 (246, without the usual two-cycle correction) contains the following statements made by the King of a Kaya state, Tak-sun: “In the course of the year Kinoye Ne [364], three men of Paekche named Ku-zeo, Mi-ju-ryu, and Mak-go came up to my country and said: ‘The King of Paekche [Keun Chogo], hearing that in the Eastern quarter there is an honorable country [the Japanese islands], has sent thy servants to this honorable country’s court. Therefore, we beg of thee a passage so that we may go to that Land. If you wilt be good enough to instruct thy servants and cause us to pass along the roads, our King will certainly show profound kindness to my Lord the King.’ I (the King of Tak-sun) then said to Ku-zeo and his followers: ‘I have always heard that there is an honorable country in the East, but I have no communication with it, and do not know

and the establishment of the Yamato court . . . Emperors of Japan were kings of Wo ruling a Japanese-Korean confederation. [F]rom the time of the Emperor Tenji . . . the Emperor of Japan finally became sovereign over the islands of Japan alone.” Egami (1964: 65-66) also argues that “the kings of Wo still retained a historical basis for ruling, or a latent right to rule, the whole of south Korea . . . Paekche, like all the other states of south Korea, should be considered a dependency of the state of Wo.” Egami seems to have coated his theory of horseriding people with enough sugar to win the Cultural Medal from the Emperor in 1991.

4 神功 攝政卅六年 . . . 百濟肖古 王 . . . 曰 . . . 不知道路 有志無從 . . . 卓淳王末錦早岐 . . . 曰 甲子年七月 中 百濟人久氏流莫古三人 到於我土曰 百濟王 間東方有日本貴國 願通之等 令朝其貴國 故求道路 . . . 令通道路 則我王必深德君王 . . . 曰 本間東有貴國 然未曾有通 不知其道 唯海遠浪 崎 則乘大船 僅可得通 若雖有 路津 何以得達耶 於是 久氏等 曰 然即當今不得通也 不若 更 眦之船 . 以後通矣 (NI: 353)

5 神功 攝政卅九年 . . . 以荒田別 龍我別為將軍 則與久氏等 共勤 兵面度之 至卓淳國 . . . 時或曰 兵衆少之 不可破 . . . 更復 奉上 沙白蓋盧 請增軍士 郎命 (木羅斤
資沙奴跪...木羅斤資者百濟將也，領精兵與沙白蓋盧共遣之。俱集於卓淳。...而破之。因以平定比自㶱南加羅。仍移兵廻至古奚津。屠南蠻忱彌多禮以賜百濟。於是其王肖古及王子貴須亦領軍來會。四邑自然降服。所以百濟王父子及荒田別木羅斤資等共會意流村。相見欣感。厚禮送遣之。與百濟王登辟支山盟之。而送之。 (NI: 355-357)

百濟始祖溫祚王二十六年。...王曰馬韓漸弱。冬十月王出師陽言田獵。潛襲馬韓。...十七年。馬韓遂滅。 (S2: 16)

百濟始祖溫祚王二十六年...王曰將使吾子孫立於此。汝其避之。解慕漱。河伯之女。誘於。卽往不返。...幽閉於室中為日所炤。因而有一男兒。弓矢射之。百發百中。扶餘俗語善射為朱蒙。故以名云。行至淹遞水告水曰。我是天帝子河伯外孫。魚鼈浮出成橋。...天孫河伯甥。避難至於此。魚鼈騈首尾。 (東國李相國集: 33-36)

三國志.魏書.夫餘傳.魏略曰。...the way. There is nothing but far seas and towering billows, so that in a large ship, one can hardly communicate. Even if there were a regular crossing-place, how could you arrive there?’ Hereupon Ku-zeo and the others said: ‘Well, then for the present we cannot communicate. Our best plan will be to go back again, and prepare ships with which to communicate later.’”

What are we able to understand from these statements? As of 364, Han-seong was the capital of Paekche, and Ma-han was still occupying the southwestern corner of the Korean peninsula. Hence it was natural that the Paekche people would lack detailed information about the passages to the Japanese islands. The movement of the Paekche people must have occurred not long after 364, which was the year they had dispatched scouts to gather information about the passages. In the ensuing narration, however, Nihongi records a large-scale Wa invasion of Korea with “Paekche generals.” According to Nihongi, it was Jingū who dispatched an army to the Korean peninsula in 369 to invade “Silla.” It is said that, when the Wa army arrived at Tak-sun, they discovered that the size of their army was too small and hence had to ask for reinforcements. They were soon joined by troops led by two generals with unmistakably Paekche names. They then all together invaded and conquered “Silla” and pacified Tak-sun and six other places. From here the armies turned west, conquered the southern savages and then “granted” those conquered lands to Paekche. At this point they were joined by the Paekche King Keun Chogo and his son Prince Keun Kusu, whereupon four more localities spontaneously surrendered. 5

If one tries to understand these military activities described in Nihongi as the work of Wa, then there is no way to understand the “Paekche generals” associating with Wa troops. Neither can we understand, as pointed out by Ledyard (1975), the story that the Wa armies somehow got to Tak-sun in the first place without passing through the areas they later conquered, nor the story that Wa armies then turned around and conquered the areas from north to south. But once we take those series of military activities as the work of Paekche, these Nihongi records become quite coherent.
By crosschecking the records of Samguk-sagi, Ledyard logically deduces that all those stories recorded in Nihongi represent the historical records of Paekche armies moving south. At this point, however, Ledyard commits an altogether unnecessary and surprising error, calling the Paekche king and his followers “Puyeo warriors.” In Nihongi, the above story ends with the Paekche King and the “Wa soldiers,” who are heading to the Japanese islands, pledging eternal friendship and biding farewell. If we take the departing “Wa soldiers” as a contingent of Paekche warriors [led by a Paekche prince named Homuda], without invoking Puyeo warriors out of the blue, then the entire story becomes coherent.

In searching for the principal figures in the formation of the Yamato kingdom, Egami resorts almost exclusively to the Dongyi-zhuan and contends the conquest by horse-riding people led by Mimaki. Ledyard resorts almost exclusively to the Jingū’s section of Nihongi, and contends the conquest by the Puyeo people fresh from Manchuria.

Alloting appropriate weight to the post-Oujin records of Kojiki and Nihongi, I contend that a member of the Paekche royal family represented by Homuda and his followers, with the blessing of Paekche’s King Keun Chogo (346-375), carried out the conquest of the Yamato region via Kyūshū in the late fourth century. I contend that not only the entire Mahan area, but also the Japanese islands were conquered by the Paekche people during the latter half of the fourth century (to be more specific, 370-390) when the Paekche’s military might reached its peak.

THE FOUNDATION MYTH: TRINITY

The close similarity in kingship myths between Koguryeo and the Yamato kingdom has already been suggested by many Japanese scholars (see Ōbayashi, 1977). I believe that the recorded foundation myths in both countries are consistent with my own foundation theory: it was the Paekche people who had established the Yamato kingdom on the Japanese archipelago, and the roots of the Japanese imperial clan were the Paekche royal family whose origin, in turn, can be traced to the founder of the Koguryeo kingdom, Chu-mong.

The foundation myth of Koguryeo as recorded in 有高離之國者 其王者... 婢云有氣如雞子來下 我故有身後生子... 王疑以爲天子也... 愚明善射 王恐奪其國也 欲殺之 東明走 南至施掩水... 魚鼈浮爲橋... 東明因都王夫餘之地 廣開土王碑文 始祖都牟王... 出自北夫餘 天帝之子... 剖卵降世... 巡行南下 路有夫餘奄利大水 王臨津言曰 我是皇天之子 母河伯女郞... 爲我連葭浮龜... 造渡

Samguk-sagi and Old Samguk-sa, on the one hand, and the foundation myth of the Yamato kingdom as recorded in Kojiki and Nihongi, on the other, reveal surprising similarities in essential motives. In both myths, a son of the heavenly god or sun goddess descends to earth from heaven and marries a daughter of the river god or sea god (after being tested for godliness by the bride’s father). Their romance terminates with the birth of a founding forefather of the earthly kingdom (being destined to be separated from each other), and the earthly founder leaves the initial settlement, crossing the river or sea, getting the help of turtles or of a man riding on a turtle.6

Öbayashi (1977) points out that among the three different types of animals appearing in Kojiki myth, such as tortoise, crow, and bear, only the bear (the land animal) has a negative value and, analogously, among tortoises, birds, and beasts appearing in Chu-mong myth, only the land animals (beasts) have a negative value. Öbayashi states that “the structural similarity between the two stories becomes apparent when they are codified.”

In the finale, the foundation myth of Kojiki and Nihongi also matches the legend of Paekche itself: the elder brother Biryu went to the seashore and failed while the younger brother Onjo stayed inland in a mountain area and succeeded in founding a kingdom in the new world. In Kojiki and Nihongi, Jinmu’s grandfather was a second child who was partial to mountains; the elder brother was partial to the sea and failed, subsequently submitting to his younger brother. Jinmu himself was the younger child, and the elder brother did not merit so much as a single word of description in Kojiki and Nihongi.7 A historical event in the formation of Paekche might well have been an additional source of inspiration for the writers of the Kojiki-Nihongi myth. According to Egami, the foundation myth derived from the same source as Puyeo and Koguryeo was brought to the Japanese islands by an alien race and, with minor adaptations, became the foundation myth of the Yamato kingdom.8

Öbayashi (1977: 19) states that the “striking correspondence in structure between the Japanese myths and the kingdom-

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8 Since the principal actor of the Yayoi era was the Karak (Kaya) people, the foundation myth of the Yamato kingdom could not avoid some trace of the Karak foundation myth. According to Kojiki and Nihongi, after receiving the order of the heavenly god to rule the land, Ninigi descends on the peak of Kuji-furu (in Kyūshū) that is identical to the name of the place Kuji (in southern Korea) where the founder of Karak descended from heaven. See Egami (1964: 56, 59).

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天降坐于竺紫日向之高千穗之久士布流多気（K: 128）

天神之子則常到筑紫曰日向高千穂穂魂之峯（NI:149）
foundation legends of Koguryeo and Pakeche … provides a clue to the origins of the ruling-class culture in Japan,” and also states that (ibid.: 22) “the monarchial culture … came to Japan from Korea … in the fifth century” and “the people who were responsible for this monarchial culture had absorbed the Altaic pastoral culture to a substantial degree and it had become an integral part of their culture.”

The Age of the God narrated in Book One of Kojiki introduces the mythical founder Ninigi, the grandson of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. Book Two of Kojiki begins the Age of Man with the earthly founder Ihare (Jinmu) and ends with the fifteenth king Homuda (Oujin). In the preface of Kojiki, one reads that “Ninigi first descended to the peak of Takachiho, and Ihare (Jinmu) passed through the island of Akitsu” in one breath.9 In Book Two of Kojiki, Ihare, who was born in Kyūshū, commences the epic Eastward Conquest while Homuda, who was also born in Kyūshū, wages a miniature Eastward Conquest with his mother (Jingū), who has just crossed over the sea from the Korean peninsula and landed on the Japanese islands.

The Sun Goddess Amaterasu orders her child to descend from heaven to rule the Japanese islands, while the earthly mother Jingū accompanies her child and herself sees her son through becoming the king at the capital city named Ihare in the Yamato area.10 According to Kojiki, the divine oracle tells Homuda’s mother (Jingū) that “it is the intention of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu to bestow the country upon her unborn child and let him rule it … and hence if the country is really desired … cross the sea!”11

I contend that Ninigi, the scion of the Sun Goddess recorded in Book One, and Ihare the earthly founder, and Homuda the fifteenth king recorded in Book Two (at the beginning and at the end, respectively) of Kojiki portray three different aspects of the real founder of the Yamato kingdom. In Kojiki as well as in Nihongi, the mythological aspect was covered in the Ninigi section, the records of battles and conquest were covered in the Ihare (Jinmu) section, and the massive arrival of the Paekche people was covered in the Homuda (Oujin) section. Homuda, Ihare and Ninigi constitute the trinity in the foundation legend of the Yamato kingdom.
16. The official title of the founder (Jinmu) of the Yamato kingdom, “Kami Yamato Ihare,” implies “Divine Yamato King” that lacks the personal name. Only by adding Homuda, we get the full title for the founder of the Yamato Kingdom. Nihongi often uses the expression “since the days of Homuda,” but never uses the expression “since the days of Jinmu.”

17. Ledyard (1975) calls our attention to the expression “Ihare” found in the title of Jinmu (Kami Yamato Ihare) and in the name of the capital for Homuda. According to Nihongi, Homuda was appointed Prince Imperial in the third year of Jingū’s regency, and accordingly, the capital was made at Iha-re. In Kojiki, Iha-re is written Ipa-re. The first capital of Paekche was the Wi-rye Castle. The third character with which I-pa-re is written is also the second character of Wi-rye suggesting a connection between Ipa-re and Wi-rye.

Ledyard (1975) notes that the Korean variant of Ihare is I-par, and is written as Keo-bal. According to Bei-shi, Sui-shu and Tong Dian, the Keo-bal Castle was the name for the capital of Paekche. Since the Korean kun reading of Keo is I, Keo-bal yields the reading of I-bal or I-par.

Samguk-sagi records that the second Koguryeo King Yuri established his capital at Kug-nae in AD 4, and constructed the Wi-na(-am) Castle. According to Zhou-shu, the king was also called Eo-ra(-ha) in Paekche. Do (1972) regards that Wi-na, Eo-ra and Wi-rye represent the same reading, and Yi (1990) further notes that Wi-rye implies king. That is, both the Wi-rye Castle and Wi-na(-am) Castle represent the King’s Castle.

We may now hypothesize that Iha-re, the capital for Homuda, represents Wi-rye, the first capital of Paekche, that may correspond to I-bal in Bei-shi and Eo-ra-ha in Zhou-shu. That is, we may contend that Homuda established the Yamato kingdom and called its first capital Iha-re (Ipa-re) after the name of the first capital of Paekche, Wi-rye (I-bal or Eo-ra-ha).

The official title of the founder (Jinmu) of the Yamato kingdom, “Kami Yamato Ihare,” implies “Divine Yamato King” that lacks the personal name. Only by adding Homuda, we get the full title for the founder of the Yamato Kingdom. Nihongi often uses the expression “since the days of Homuda,” but never uses the expression “since the days of Jinmu.”

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