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KOREA DURING THE AGE OF SOSA NO WO, MIMAKI-IRI-BIKO AND HIMIKO

The Koreans belong to the Northern Mongoloid racial group, and since the appearance of the article of Ramstedt (1926), the Korean language has been believed to belong to the Altaic family.¹ The potteries of the earliest fishing-hunting Korean people were the mouth rim-decorated style which evolved into comb-pattern pottery 櫛文土器 by 4000 B.C., and then into plain pottery from the turn of the first millenium B.C. Song-wei-zi Shi-jia 宋徽子世家 of Shi-ji 史記 records that King Wu of the Early Zhou period (around 1050 B.C.) who conquered the Yin 殷 made a virtuous scion of the Shang 商(殷) royal line called Ji-zi 箕子, the King of Choseon 朝鮮. This story may simply reflect the flow of cultural influences and movement of people from China into Liaoning 遼寧 (the present-day Liao-dong 遼東), southern Manchuria and the northern Korean peninsula during the first millennium B.C. Indeed, by the fifth centry B.C., the iron culture had clearly begun to be transmitted to Korea, where it replaced the Old Bronze culture that began before the ninth century B.C.

¹The Mongoloid racial group consists of the Northern races, the Northern Chinese, the Tibetans, and the Southeast Asians. The Northern Mongoloid racial group consists of Mongols, Tungus, Turks, Manchus, Koreans and the Japanese. The Altaic language family is divided into three principal subbranches consisting of the Turkic, Mongolian and Tungusic languages. Ramstedt obstinately pursued the thesis that there had once been a Proto-Altaic, and that Korean descended from that early linguistic unity. Ramstedt resurrected the Korean language's ancient Altaic substratum from beneath layers of foreign influences and hence established the genetic relationship of Korean to the Altaic languages. Miller (1984) states that "to say that 'Korean is an Altaic language' is not merely to frame an abstraction of linguistic taxonomy; it is to verbalize an entire scenario of early human history, one linking the prehistory of the [Korean] peninsula and its people into the prehistory of Greater Asia."

In 1991, Korean archeologists found rice seeds carbon-dated 2100 B.C. and 2400 B. C. near the modern Seoul area (i.e., Kim-po 金浦郡 and Il-san 一山). According to Eckert, *et al.* (1990: 10), rice cultivation began to be practiced in Korea “as evidenced by the use of crescent-shaped stone knives for cutting rice stalks and grooved stones for hoeing. Since both these tools were used in the rice culture of China, it is thought that rice agriculture itself may have been transmitted to Korea from China.” Nevertheless, the bronze daggers shaped like bipa 琵琶形銅劍, twin-knobbed mirrors, and narrow bronze daggers 細形銅劍 found in Mongol plain (Manzhouli 滿洲里, Hailar 海拉爾), east of the Luan River (赤峰, 西遼河), and in Liao-dong 遼東, extending all the way to the lower reaches of the Yalu River 鴨綠江 and the Puye area (牙山, 扶餘 松菊里) in southwestern Korea, are clearly of Scytho-Siberian origin; similar artifacts have not been found anywhere in the Yellow River 黃河 basin of northern China.² The Chinese used straight-edged daggers (漢式劍). Therefore, although the early Korean bronze articles reveal undeniable Chinese influences, one can still conclude that the essence of Old Korean culture originated outside China. Kim (1986: 345) notes that it was “the culture of a people whom the Chinese called by the generic name of Dong-hu, or Eastern Barbarians 東夷.”³

According to Kim (1986: 110), the Dong-hu in the west of the Liao-dong 遼東 peninsula were mixed with the Mongols and the Chinese both ethnically and culturally, but the Dong-hu east of Liao-dong, extending into the Korean peninsula, were pure-blooded Dong-hu called Yemaek 濊貊 (Waimo) constituting one culture with minor regional differences. Their culture maintained elements of the arts of Ordos and the Siberian steppes, and bronze daggers and mirrors were the two most outstanding cultural artifacts of the Dong-hu. A rock drawing from Korea’s Late-Bronze-Early-Iron period was discovered in Ulchu 蔚州 (not far from the southeastern coast of Korea) in 1971, showing many sea-faring fishermen on a long boat hunting whales and dolphins.

²According to Kim (1986: 348), the bronze articles found in the lower reaches of the Naktong River 洛東江 (which include the two bronze buckles in animal shapes discovered in 1918) are also clearly in the tradition of the Scythian art of the steppes. The paleo-Siberian culture includes bear-worship.

³Sansom (1931: 11) notes that the bronze culture which spread in Korea was not exclusively Chinese but contained Scytho-Siberian elements, and that this point is of special interest “because it helps to account for an important phenomenon in Far Eastern history - the preservation by Korean culture of a strong individual character despite the powerful influence and the propinquity of the advanced civilization of Han China.”

Kim (1986: 170-174) takes this rock drawing as a manifestation of the Siberian tradition (ca. 700-200 B.C.) carried into Korea by the Yemaek Tungus.

At the beginning of the third century B.C., bronze weapons were replaced by iron weapons; hence Kim (1986: 138) regards the period of 1000-300 B.C. as the Bronze Age and the period of 300-0 B.C. as the Early Iron Age in Korea. The remains uncovered at Peomyiguseok 虎谷 (Tiger Valley) in the Musan 茂山 area include many artifacts from the Early Iron Age, including iron axes, sickles, crescent-shaped adzes, swords and fishhooks (see HRI, 1976: 11-12). It is believed that agriculture underwent striking changes with the introduction of iron farming tools like iron hoes, plowshares, and sickles. These cultural influences were eventually transmitted to Japan, giving rise to the bronze-iron Yayoi culture there.

According to Kim (1986: 150-151), the so-called Eastern Barbarians in Old Choseon as well as in the Puyeo area were collectively called Kuaimo (Yemaek) in ancient Chinese. The term Kuaimo "is synonymous with 'kom,' the Korean word for bear, from which the Japanese words 'kuma' (bear) and 'kami' (god) were also derived." The first ancient kingdom of Korea was Old Choseon 古朝鮮. It is recounted that the founder of Old Choseon was Tangun 檀君, who was the son of a heavenly prince and a female bear.⁴ Old Choseon occupied the northeastern part of the present-day Hebei 河北 province, the Liao-dong 遼東 province of China (Liao-ning 遼寧 in the old days, which is the area of concentrated distribution of bipa-shaped daggers), and the northwestern part of the Korean peninsula (see Yoon, 1986: 385). The name of "Choseon 朝鮮" was widely recorded in historical documents such as Guan-zi 管子 as early as the 7th century B.C. Quite a few tombs of Old Choseon, such as the Kangshan tomb [8th-7th centuries B.C.] and the Loushang tomb [7th-5th centuries B.C.] were discovered in the southern tip of the Liao-dong peninsula.

The word "kom" (bear) spread into the southern Korean region, generating such place-names as Kongju 公州 (Kumanari) and Keum River 錦江. The Kuaimo were regarded as a serious menace to the Chinese because of their common origin with the Xiong-nu 匈奴 of the Mongolian plateau. The Great Wall was completed during the reign of Shi-Huang-di 始皇帝 of Qin 秦 (B.C. 247-210) in order to secure the border against Xiong-nu, Xian-bei 鮮卑, and the Kuaimo of Old Choseon. The walls stretch fourteen hundred miles from southwestern Gansu 甘肅, along the southern edge of Mongolia, to Shan-hai-guan 山海關 [according to Yoon (1986), to Jieshi 碣石 in Changli-xian 昌黎縣]

⁴In ancient times, the chief of a tribe was called Tangun [or Hwanung 桓雄].

at the Gulf of Liao-dong. According to Han-shu, Wu-di of the Former Han China (141-87 B.C.) conquered Choseon 東伐朝鮮 and established a commandery in order to “cut off the left arm of the Xiong-nu 匈奴之左臂.”^{<1>}

The Xiong-nu were a nomadic northern Mongoloid people that dominated much of Central Asia (including Mongolia and Siberia) after the end of the third century B.C. until the second century A.D. What the Han emperor Wu-di 漢武帝 called “the left arm of Xiong-nu” were the Choseon people in southwestern Manchuria and northern Korea. The Xiong-nu and Choseon people were a constant threat to the Chinese whose repeated invasions prompted the small kingdoms of North China to begin erecting what later became the Great Wall along the whole of China’s northern frontier during the Qin dynasty (B.C. 221-206). Even after the completion of the Great Wall, the raids by the Xiong-nu and Choseon people against China continued periodically until Emperor Wu-di conquered much of Central Asia and Choseon. The Xian-bei people had originally been located east of the Xiong-nu (somewhere in modern Inner Mongolia) and, after the defeat of Xiong-nu by Han China, the Xian-bei took their place in Central Asia and became China’s mortal enemy.

It is recorded that Old Choseon exported leather, clothes and fur goods to China in the 7th century B.C., and also that Chinese merchants frequented Old Choseon to trade using the metal knife coins of the warring period in China (5th and 3rd centuries B.C.) as a medium of exchange. Such coins have been discovered in the area north of the Cheongcheon River 清川江 and the Liao-dong 遼東 area. A large number of bronze daggers shaped like bipa 琵琶形銅劍 (a mandolin-shaped Korean musical instrument), narrow bronze daggers 細形銅劍, and elaborately polished round bronze mirrors engraved with delicate striped patterns and a protrusion at the top to hold a string have been discovered in excavations in the Old Choseon area; all reflect features very distinct from artifacts found in China. An analysis of the iron axe used in the Old Choseon period reveals high intensity, admirable heat treatment, and a carbon content of 0.7 percent (see HRI, 1976: 18-19).

According to Eckert, *et al.* (1990: 12): “The artifacts from the iron age in Korea include Chinese coins, Scytho-Siberian style animal-shaped belt buckles, a new type of gray stoneware pottery, and molds for casting bronze and iron Such horse trappings as iron bits and bronze bells, as well as axle caps and other components of horse-drawn vehicles, also have been unearthed, and it seems clear that these objects of metal manufacture would have been possessed only by a small elite stratum. It is not difficult to imagine how this ruling elite, armed with sharp weapons made of metal and

mounted on horseback or riding in horse-drawn vehicles, must have imposed its authority, while objects like their multi-knobbed fine-patterned bronze mirrors would have served as symbols of their authority.”

Shi-ji and Wei-lüe 魏略 (Summary of the Wei Dynasty quoted in San-guo-zhi) record that sometime between 194 and 180 B.C. a person called [Wei] Man 衛滿 fled from Yan 燕 (? - 222 B.C.) to Choseon, drove King Chun (?-194 B.C.) 準王 from his throne, and ruled Choseon. Han-shu further records that Wu-di of Former Han China (141-87 B.C.) conquered [Wei-Man] Choseon, killing King Ugeo 右渠, and set up four commanderies in 108-107 B.C. Three of these were abandoned by 75 B.C., and only the Le-lang 樂浪 commandery continued to exist for four centuries (108 B.C.-A.D. 313), serving as a rich outpost of Chinese civilization. The founding of Le-lang spurred the spread of iron and iron casting, and also accelerated the development of political organization in Korea.

It is believed that Le-lang, as an outpost of Han China, served as a model of well-organized government to the Korean people. On the basis of the Chinese Chronicles, Henthorn (1971: 24) notes that “[d]uring the Wang Mang 王莽 interregnum (A.D. 8-23) and the troubles attendant upon the rise of the Later Han dynasty (A.D. 23-220), the opportunity was seized by a certain Wang Diao 王調, (Wang Tiao) in Nangnang [Le-lang] to revolt in an attempt at independence from the Later Han. The rebellion was crushed in A.D. 30, at which time the administration of outlying districts was turned over to native leaders, and Chinese administrative officials were withdrawn from these local areas.”

By the end of the Later Han China period (A.D. 25-220), the Gong-sun 公孫 rulers had created an independent domain in the Liao-dong region. Between A.D. 204 and 220, the Gong-sun rulers took over the Le-lang commandery and also established the Tai-fang commandery 帶方郡 (A.D. 206-313) south of Le-lang. The Wei conquered Liao-dong in A.D. 238 and took over both the Le-lang and Tai-fang commanderies.

Puyeo 夫餘 (? B.C. - A.D. 346) emerged in the region of the Sungari River 松花江 basin in Manchuria sometime around the 5th century B.C. Wei-zhi quotes Wei-lüe, stating that Puyeo was founded by King “Tongmyeong 東明.”
 ⇨ Contemporary Chinese chronicles recorded that Puyeo was a rich country of wide and fertile lands that had never been defeated by other countries since its foundation. Puyeo had written laws that included the provision that anyone who killed another person would be sentenced to death and his family members made slaves (see HRI, 1976: 15). Puyeo eventually was conquered by Xian-bei in A.D. 346, and upon the extinction of the Xian-bei state of

Earlier Yan 前燕 (A.D. 337-370), Puyeo came under the protection of Koguryeo. Lee (1984: 22) notes that, “with the rise of the Wu-chi (Malgal 靺鞨) people in northeastern Manchuria, the Puyeo royal house was driven from its ancient territory and surrendered itself to Koguryeo.”

A homogenous political entity called “Chin” 辰 also emerged south of the Han River basin in Korea at about the same time as Puyeo did. Han-shu records that, some years before B.C. 109, the effort of Chin to open direct contact with the Former Han was frustrated by King Ugeo of [Wei-Man] Choseon.^{<5>} A similar story is also recorded in Shi-ji. During this period, rice agriculture began to be practiced more widely, and a large number of refugees came down to Chin from the Old Choseon area with a fairly advanced knowledge of metalworking (see HRI, 1976: 16-17). It is said that King Chun of Old Choseon, who was expelled by [Wei] Man, came to Chin accompanied by many people. Wei-lüe (CCI: 193) records that, just before the downfall of [Wei-Man] Choseon in 108 B.C., Ryeok Kye Kyeong 歷鞬, who had once served as a minister, came to Chin with more than 2,000 families.^{<6>} Around the period before and after the Christian era, the Chin territory was restructured into three confederated *Han* 韓 kingdoms: Ma-han 馬韓, Chin-han 辰韓, and Pyeon-han 弁韓.

Hou-Han-shu records that Ma-han, consisting of 54 states, was located in the west bordering Le-lang in the north and Wa in the south. Chin-han, consisting of 12 states, was located in the east bordering Wai-mo 濊貊 in the north. Finally, Pyeon-Chin 弁辰 [Pyeon-han], consisting also of 12 states, was located south of Chin-han, bordering Wa in the south. Ma-han was the strongest and had a Chin-king 辰王 presiding in the Mokchi state 目支國 as a titular leader who could reign over the entire three Han region; the ancestors of the Three-Han kings were all Ma-han people.^{<7>} Hou-Han-shu further records that someone from Three-Han sent tribute to the emperor of Later Han, Guang-wu-di (A.D. 25-57), via Le-lang in A.D. 44 and the emperor appointed him a local chieftain under the jurisdiction of the Le-lang commandery. Jin-shu records that the people of Chin-han and Pyeon-han could ride horses 乘馬 just like the Ma-han people.^{<8>}

According to Samguk-sagi, Koguryeo was founded in 37 B.C. by a man from Puyeo, [Ko 高] Chumong 朱蒙, in a region centered on the middle Yalu and Tong-jia river basin. The first capital of Koguryeo, Kugnaeseong 國內城, was located in the present Ji'an 集安 area on the northern bank of the Yalu River. The Koguryeo people called Chumong by the name of “King Tongmyeong 東明王.” Wei-zhi records that the Koguryeo people were a

variety of Puyeo people bearing many similarities in language and customs, though there were some differences in characters and costumes. According to Wei-zhi, the King of Koguryeo sent tribute to Emperor Guang-wu-di of Later Han in A.D. 32, and only after that time was the ruler of Koguryeo officially recognized as “King” by Han China.^{<7>} In A.D. 49, the Koguryeo advanced as far as Daiyuan in northern China, and in A.D. 55, they built ten castles in the area west of the Liao River (see HRI, 1976: 23). Due to their small size, the horses of Koguryeo could easily climb the mountains. The people were strong and adept in fighting, and they conquered neighboring countries. Wei-zhi records that, during the period A.D. 125-167, the Koguryeo invaded Liaodong, attacked Xi-an-ping 西安平 and, on their way 于道上, killed the governor of Tai-fang and captured the wife and sons of the governor of Le-lang.^{<7>} Therefore Le-lang and Tai-fang must have been located on the way to Xi-an-ping or Liao-dong from Koguryeo, if one accepts Wei-zhi’s account.

In both Puyeo and Koguryeo, kings were chosen from among several royal houses by some sort of elective process until the early third century. According to Eckert, *et al.* (1990: 20), “a distinctive feature of succession to the throne in this period was that it often followed the principle of younger brother succeeding older brother. . . .” As revealed by the hunting scene of the Tomb of Dancing Figures discovered in the Ji’an area (ca. 400-450 A.D.), Koguryeo was famous for its mounted archers, who incessantly harassed the peoples on the northeastern border of China.⁵

Ma-han was located in the region of modern Kyeonggi, Ch’ungcheong, and Cheolla provinces, Chin-han to the east of the Naktong River in Kyeongsang province, and Pyeon-han in Kyeongsang province to the west of the Naktong. According to Hou Han-shu, there were seventy-eight states in the Three Han area. At this point, Hou Han-shu specifically mentions that Paekche 伯濟 was one of those states. No other names of states are listed.^{<8>}

Paekche was in the northern Ma-han area around the Han River and, according to Samguk-sagi, was founded in 18 B.C. by Onjo 溫祚 and his followers, who had decided to leave Koguryeo and move southward. The rulers of Koguryeo and Paekche belonged to the same founding family -- that of Chumong-- which originated from the Puyeo area. Samguk-sagi records that King Onjo was a son of Chumong. Wei-shu and Zhou-shu record that Puyeo descendants founded Paekche.^{<9>} Indeed, the family name of the

⁵HRI (1976: 24) notes that: “Military arts were encouraged in every way. In March every year a national contest of hunting and military arts was organized and those who had displayed extraordinary proficiency in the contest were officially commended and taken into government posts.”

Paekche royal family was recorded either as “Puyeo” or “Yeo.”⁶ According to Samguk-sagi, ancestral rites at the shrine dedicated to King Tongmyeong 東明王廟 were conducted by the Paekche royal family throughout its history.^{<11>} The kingdom was also divided into five administrative districts 畿內爲五部 as is the case of Koguryeo.^{<12>} Kim (1986: 140) notes that “[t]wo tombs of the early Paekche period were excavated in 1975 at Seockch’ondong 石村洞 in eastern Seoul. They were cairn-type tombs derived from Koguryeo burials, confirming the recorded historical event that Paekche was founded in the Seoul area by a group of political refugees from Koguryeo.”

The later Silla kingdom emerged from the state of Saro 斯盧國 in the Chinha area which, according to Samguk-sagi, was founded in 57 B.C. by Pak Hyeokkeose 朴赫居世 and the descendants of six clan groups.⁷ According to Nihongi, the brother of the Sun Goddess, Sosa no wo 須佐之男, came to Japan from Silla.

Wei-zhi records that by A.D. 146-188 (during the Later Han period) the Three-Han states had become too strong to be controlled by the provinces of Han China [i.e., by the Le-lang commandery], hence a lot of people from the Han provinces moved into the Three-Han states 民多流入韓國. During A.D. 196-220, Gong-sun-gang 公孫康 established the Tai-fang commandery which was later taken over, together with the Le-lang commandery, by the Wei dynasty in A.D. 237-239. According to Wei-zhi, the Wei Emperor Ming-di let the commanderies of Le-lang and Tai-fang form diplomatic ties with each of the Han states [as well as the Wa state of Himiko] on an individual basis during A.D. 231-239, distributing ribbon seals 印綬 to all those local chieftains. Wei-zhi records that about one thousand Three Han dignitaries received formal dresses and caps from the Wei Emperor.^{<14>} According to Lee (1984: 36) this calculated generosity was a divisive policy designed to disrupt the unification effort among the Three-Han states.

The Three Kingdom period in Korea extends from 57 B.C. to A.D. 668. Koguryeo was apparently a kingdom of substance by the first century A.D. By contrast, during much of the first three centuries A.D., Paekche and Silla

⁶Zhou-shu, Jiu Tang-shu and Xin Tang-shu use the unabbreviated form Puyeo for the surname of the Paekche kings. Bei-shi uses the short form Yeo.^{<10>} Aston (NII: 18n) notes that “Puyeo or Fuyu is an ancient name of Paekche . . . Southern Puyeo 南扶餘 was adopted as the official name of Paekche in A.D. 538, according to ‘Tongkam 通鑑.’”

⁷In Kojiki and Nihongi, Silla is called “Siragi,” which seems to represent “Saro-guk 斯盧國.”

seem to have been undergoing consolidation into kingdoms in a substantial sense through the conquest of neighboring town states, and therefore some Korean historians call this period (0-300 A.D.) the Proto-Three-Kingdom period. According to Kim (1986: 139), it was during the first three centuries after the beginning of the Christian era that iron smelting, along with effective rice cultivation, developed rapidly in the reaches of the Han and Naktong rivers where iron ore was abundant.⁸

According to Liang-shu, Ma-han had 54 states, the large ones having about ten thousand households and the small ones having several thousand households (100,000 households all together). Paekche was one of those Ma-han states which later became stronger and stronger and absorbed many small states. Zhou-shu records that the predecessor of Paekche was a vassal state to Ma-han, and that a person named “Kui” 仇台 founded it in the old Tai-fang area 帶方故地.⁹ Sui-shu also states that a descendant of “Tongmyeong” named “Kui” founded Paekche in the old Tai-fang area and married the daughter of the Governor of Liao-dong, Gong-sun-du 公孫度 (A.D. 190-204). A similar story is recorded in Bei-shi.^{<17>} According to Samguk-sagi, however, this period (i.e., A.D. 190-204) corresponds to the reign of King Ch’ogo of Paekche (A.D. 166-214).¹⁰

According to Samguk-sagi (Lee edition:15-16), the founder of Paekche, King Onjo, established his capital at Hanam Wirye-seong 河南尉禮城 in B.C. 18 and then relocated the capital to the south of Han-su 漢水 at the foot of Han-san 漢山 in B.C. 5. In the same year, Onjo constructed a castle northwest of the Han River 漢江 and settled a group of Han-seong 漢城 people there. (There is another reference to the name Han-song in A. D. 7 漢城人家馬生牛.) The boundary of Paekche reached Pai-ha 溟河 to the north, Ung-cheon 熊川 to the south, and the Sea 大海 to the west.

According to Samguk-sagi, when King Onjo of Paekche constructed a fort (Fort Koma-River or Kumanari 熊川柵) against Ma-han in A.D. 6, the King of Ma-han sent an envoy reproaching Onjo as follows: “when you first came

⁸The iron artifacts of this period were mainly made of white cast iron. The steel pieces were made from sponge iron like Han Chinese steel.

⁹Liang-shu states that Paekche, together with Koguryeo, was originally located east of Liao-dong. According to Wei-zhi, Tai-fang was located on the way to Liao-dong from Koguryeo. These two records seem to be consistent with the records of Zhou-shu and Sui-shu that imply Paekche was at first founded in the old Tai-fang area.

¹⁰According to Samguk-sagi, it was King Ch’aekkye (A.D. 286-298) who married the daughter of the Tai-fang Governor in A.D. 286, and it was he who helped Tai-fang repulse the attacking Koguryeo.^{<16>}

across the river, you did not have any piece of land to settle and thereby I favored you by granting one hundred 'li' of the northeastern area; now instead of trying to repay my favor out of gratitude, since you have established a full state and gathered many people 以國完民聚, and think that no one would dare to oppose you, you construct a fortress on a large scale and invade our territory; can it be done this way if you have any sense of moral integrity 其如義何?"^{<18>}

It is not certain just when the original town-state of Paekche that was recorded in Wei-zhi 伯濟國 emerged as the powerful kingdom that incorporated the various northern Ma-han states in the Han river basin.¹¹ Lee (1984: 36-37), however, summarizes the Wei-zhi record in the following fashion; "By the year 246, when the Le-lang and Tai-fang commanderies launched a larger-scale attack against the Han river region, a new force already was gaining in strength in this area, for the purpose of the Wei army's attack was to disrupt and prevent the consolidation of this new power. In the ensuing warfare, the governor of Tai-fang, Gong Zun 弓遵, was killed in battle. The incident is testimony to the strength of this newly emerging power.¹² This surprisingly strong entity surely was not Mahan but rather the newly confederated kingdom of Paekche led, no doubt, by King Koi, who is known to have been active in other arenas around this time."^{<14>}

Samguk-sagi (Lee: 24-25) records that during the reign of King Koi (A.D. 234-286), Paekche had a system of six ministers (Chwap'yeong 佐平) to conduct affairs of state along appropriate functional lines, as well as sixteen grades of official rank 十六品 and colors for official dress in accordance with rank. Samguk-sagi (Lee edition II: 25) further records that in A.D. 262 King Koi decreed that officials who accepted bribes and those guilty of extortion would be required to pay three-fold compensation and in addition would be barred from office for life. Another Samguk-sagi passage notes that the king performed his sovereign duty with a splendid display of majestic clothes.^{<20>} In its early days, Paekche operated under a feudo-vassalitic system, with

¹¹According to Byung-do Lee (Samguk-sagi, Lee edition: 33n), it was during the reign of King Koi [A.D. 234-286] that Paekche was transformed from a town-state to a nation-state.

¹²Kung Tsun (Gong Zun) was the Governor of Tai-fang who was recorded in Wei-zhi as having "sent Ti Zhun 梯僞, a commandant of the Imperial Guard 建中校尉, with an Imperial rescript and the ribbon seal to visit the Wa country [in A.D. 240] . . . [this emissary] had an audience with the Queen [Himiko] and took with him, together with the rescript, gifts of gold brocade, tapestry, swords, mirrors, and other things."^{<19>} See Tsunoda and Goodrich (1951: 15).

members of royal or aristocratic families appointed as lords or kings of local areas. There were eight major aristocratic family names. According to Jin-shu (CCI: 318), a state in the Ma-han area sent emissaries and tributes to the court of Western Jin 西晉 in A.D. 277 [the 44th year of King Koi's reign], in A.D. 280, in A.D. 281 [the 48th year of King Koi's reign], in A.D. 286 [the first year of King Ch'aekkye's reign], in A.D. 287, in A.D. 289 and also in A.D. 290. This state must have been the Kingdom of Paekche.^{<21>} Samguk-sagi records that King Punseo (A.D. 298-304) of Paekche, by secretly dispatching troops, invaded and captured a western province of the Le-lang commandery 樂浪西縣 in February A.D. 304, but then was murdered in October by an assassin sent by the Governor of Le-lang.^{<22>}

According to Wei-shu (CCI: 508-509), the Paekche King Yeo-Kyeong 餘慶 (King Kaero, A.D. 455-475) wrote to the court of the Northern Wei saying that Paekche together with Koguryeo, originated from Puyeo 源出夫餘, and therefore in the old ages 先世之時 Paekche and Koguryeo had maintained a cordial friendship; King Kogugweon of Koguryeo (A.D. 331-371), however, invaded Paekche and then got killed by King Keun Ch'ogo 近肖古王. Thereafter Koguryeo could not dare to invade south; but eventually Koguryeo became stronger and began to invade Paekche incessantly.^{<23>} This account reveals the friendly relationship that had been maintained between Koguryeo and Paekche on the basis of their identical Puyeo origin prior to the reign of King Keun Ch'ogo (A.D. 346-375) of Paekche, and the broken friendship characterized by growing hostility between them afterwards. Eckert, *et al.* (1990: 25) note that: "Keun Ch'ogo [commanded] . . . the scholar Koheung 高興 to compile the *Seogi* 書記, a history of Paekche . . . and . . . his grandson adopted Buddhism as the state religion (in 384) . . ."¹³

Silla evolved out of Saro (one of the twelve states in the Chin-han area) by forming a confederated structure with the other states in the region. According to Samguk-sagi, Silla had kings from the Pak 朴 clan during 57 B.C.-A.D. 57, from both Pak and Seok 昔 clans during A.D. 57-356 (except during A.D. 262-284), and then from the Kim 金 clan thereafter. According to Wei-zhi, the twelve states in the area 辰韓十二國 belonged to the Chin King 辰王 (see CCI: 196), most likely implying the king of Silla from the Seok clan. The first Silla king from the Kim clan was King Mich'u (A.D. 261-

¹³According to Samguk-sagi (Lee edition II: 33), a Serindian monk 胡僧 (Mā ānta 摩羅難陀) arrived from Eastern Jin in A.D. 384 and formally introduced Buddhism to Paekche.

284). Archeologists (Kim, 1986: 142) suggest that the tomb of King Mich'u was enlarged from a smaller mound to its present size during the reign of King Nulchi (A.D. 417-458) when the Kim clan had acquired enough power and authority to glorify its ancestors. Samguk-sagi records that King Nulchi did in fact order the restoration of ancestral tombs in A.D. 435.

The Kaya 加耶 federation emerged from the territory of the twelve walled-town states of Pyeon-han 弁韓 (弁辰). Wei-zhi records that the twelve Pyeon-han states also had kings 弁辰十二國亦有王.^{<13>} Kaya in the modern "Kimhae" area had Suro 首露 as its first king and developed into the Pon Kaya 本加耶 (A.D. 42-532), while the state at Koryeong evolved into Tae 大 Kaya (A.D. 42-562). These two and other Pyeon-han states in the lower Naktong region formed the Kaya federation. Lee (1984: 41) notes that "[w]ith its Naktong River location Kaya (and in particular Pon Kaya at the mouth of the river) engaged in vigorous maritime activities, maintaining contacts far up the western coast of the peninsula with the Chinese commanderies of Le-lang and Tai-fang, northward along the coast with the Ye people, and southward with the Wa in Japan. . . . [w]hen Paekche brought in Wa troops to attack Silla by way of Kaya, Silla and Kaya came into sharp conflict and this eventually led to the dispatch of a force by Koguryeo's King Kwanggaet'o in support of Silla (400 A.D.)."

Wei-zhi records that Kaya states exported iron to other Three Han states, Le-lang, Tai-fang and Wa, and that they used iron bars in the markets for transactions, much as the Chinese used money 錢.^{<24>} Nan-Qi-shu records that, in A.D. 479, the King of Kara 加羅國王 sent tribute and received the title of "Fu-guo jiang-jun" 輔國將軍 and "King of Pon State 本國王."^{<25>} A large Kaya tumuli on the hill behind the town of Koryeong 高靈 was excavated in 1977 and revealed four main chambers and eleven small stone pits for the doomed slaves. According to Kim (1986: 142-143): "Immolation was also practiced in Silla, but the scale was not as large as that of the Kaya states. The wealth and power of Kaya kings may have to be reconsidered upon this discovery." Kim (1986: 193) continues: "The burial practice suggests that despite the comparatively small size of a Kaya state, the wealth and power of the royal family was considerable, probably due to the rich iron ore and the fertile land suitable for rice cultivation."¹⁴ In March 1991, Korean

¹⁴According to Beardsley (1955), "not one of the tombs yet examined in Japan has had more than two inhumations that seem simultaneous, and massed burials are unheard of." The ancient custom of the burial of slaves and retainers "was allegedly condemned by the Emperor Suinin, whose prohibition is often cited."

archeologists uncovered five pieces of writing brushes 毛筆 together with a lacquered arrow box, carbon-dated to the first century, B.C., from Kaya tombs located at Taho-ri 茶戶里 (in Yichang, Kyeognam, 慶南 義昌).

After the fall of the Wei dynasty (A.D. 220-265) in China, Western Jin 西晉 (A.D. 265-316) inherited the Wei territories, including Le-lang and Tai-fang. By the turn of the fourth century, however, the Mu-rong 慕容 tribe of the Xian-bei moved out of Mongolia to the area west of the Liao River 遼河, and it severed the land route between Western Jin and its commanderies in the east, establishing the state of Earlier Yan 前燕 (A.D. 337-370). Taking advantage of the situation, Koguryeo drove out the Chinese from the isolated Le-lang commandery in A.D. 313. Tai-fang was also destroyed by the expanding Paekche. Paekche gained complete control of the area around the Han River 漢江, where its capital, Hanseong 漢城 (in the modern Seoul area), was located.¹⁵

According to Reischauer (1937: 15), “Le-lang and Tai-fang drop out of history about A.D. 313. They had served their purpose, however, for Korea had been opened to Chinese civilization and the governments of these two districts had served as model bureaucracies for the rising kingdoms of southern Korea and Manchuria.” According to Kim (1986: 348), “[t]he fall of the Le-lang colony. . . stimulated the spread of the highly developed Le-lang art into the local native communities. Bronze and iron were well known to the Koreans by that time, but the introduction of gold and silver-mining seems to have coincided with the fall of the Chinese colony.”

¹⁵Samguk-sagi (Lee Edition: 48, 45, 16) records that King Changsu of Koguryeo surrounded the Royal Capital of Paekche Hanseong 王都漢城 in A. D. 475, that King Asin [Ahwa, A. D. 392-405] was born at a detached palace in Hanseong 漢城別宮, and that King Onjo, the founder of Paekche, moved the capital from Hanam Wirye-seong to the south of Han-su 漢水 at the foot of Han-san 漢山 and constructed a castle in the area northwest of the Han River 漢江, settling a portion of Hanseong people there 分漢城民. Samguk-sagi (Lee Edition: 233) also records that Onjo 溫祚, the third son of Koguryeo King Tong-myeong 東明王, established the capital at Wirye-seong 慰禮城 in B.C. 18, which was moved to Hanseong 389 years later [in A. D. 370], during the reign of the 13th King of Paekche, Keun Ch’ogo 歷三百八十九年, 至十三世近肖古王 . . . 都漢城.”