

2.

MIMAKI-IRI-BIKO FROM KAYA:

Another Non-Historic Yayoi Ruler

In both *Kojiki* (KC: 212) and *Nihongi* (NI: 150), Sujin is referred to by the name of Mimaki-iri-biko 御間城入彦 (美麻紀 伊理毘古). According to Egami (1964), the word Mimaki 美麻紀 represents the name of Sujin's palace; that is, he infers that Sujin 崇神 lived in a palace located at a place known as Mima because it was the custom to refer to the ancient Emperors by titles incorporating the name of the place at which the Emperor had his palace.¹ However, according to *Nihongi* (NI: 167), *Mimaki means Mimana* 任那 [the traditional Japanese pronunciation of *Imna*]. Accordingly, Egami (1964) concludes that “[i]t would thus seem possible for us to interpret the evidence as meaning that the place called Mima where Emperor Sujin had his palace was Mimana, the Mima of south Korea In other words, it would seem that Mimana is the place from which the Japanese state set out, that the gods of heaven 天神 (the alien race) who were based in this area and headed by the figure of Emperor Sujin attacked north Kyūshū and occupied it, thus accomplishing the first establishment of the Japanese state, the so-called Descent of the Children of Heaven, and that as a result Emperor Sujin was known . . . as . . . *the Emperor who first ruled the country* 初國之御眞木天皇也.”

Nihongi's mention of Imna [Mimana] appears for the first time in the record for Sujin (NI: 164): “The Land of Imna sent Sonaka-cheulchi and offered tribute. Imna is more than 2,000 *ri* to the north of Tsukushi 筑紫 [Kyūshū] from which it is separated by the sea. It lies to the south-west of Ke-rin 鷄林 [Silla].”^{<1>} According to the *Nihongi* system of chronology, this event supposedly happened in 33 B.C. Imna seems to have been a member

¹Egami (1964) also introduces the ideas suggested by Ayugai and Shiratori, i.e., that the name *Mimana* was derived from the Korean *nim* [lord or king or ancient ruler].

state of the Kaya Federation that existed at the southeastern tip of Korea during A.D. 42-562, but Nihongi often uses Imna to represent the whole Kaya Federation.

Nihongi (NI: 152) records the following statements made by Mimaki-iri biko: “[O]ur Imperial ancestors greatly extended the vast foundation But now that it has devolved upon Us, numerous calamities have unexpectedly befallen it. It is to be feared that from the absence of good Government in the Court, We have incurred the blame of the Gods of Heaven and Earth 神祇. Would it not be well to commit the matter to the Sacred Tortoise 神龜 and thereby ascertain the cause of the calamity?”² At this point, Aston (NI: 152n) notes that “ancient Japanese divination was [accomplished] by roasting a deer’s shoulder-blades and observing the cracks thus caused, not by the shell of a tortoise, which is the Chinese practice.” Aston apparently did not know that the tortoise was treated as a divine object in the Kaya 伽耶 states.²

It is said that Sujin obtained a divine message, but he wanted to be instructed further in a dream (NI: 152-153): “That night he had a dream. A man of noble appearance stood opposite to him . . . [and] said: ‘Let the Emperor grieve no more for the disorder of the country. This is my will. If thou wilt cause me to be worshipped 祭 by my child, Oho-tata-neko, then will there be peace at once. Moreover, the lands beyond the sea will of their own accord render submission 亦有海外之國 自當歸伏.’ ” Nihongi (NI: 155) then records that Sujin proclaimed to the company of Ministers that “. . . the distant savages . . . do not receive our calendar because they are yet unaccustomed to the civilizing influence of our rule. We will, therefore, select

²Samguk-yusa (Ha & Miniz edition 158-159) recites the origin of *Karak* 鰲洛國記 [also called Kaya by Koreans, and *Kara* or *Imna* by Japanese]: “Since the creation of Heaven and earth there had been no national name and no king of the people in the Kimhae region. The nine chiefs Ado-Kan 我刀干, Yeodo-Kan, Pido-Kan, Odo-Kan, Yusu-Kan 留水干, Yucheon-Kan, Sincheon-Kan, Ocheon-Kan, and Sinkwi-Kan 神鬼干 ruled over the 75,000 natives [I]n the year of the tiger (A.D. 42) . . . the [Kaya] villagers heard a strange voice calling from Kuji 龜背 (Turtle’s Back), the summit of North Mountain ‘A heavenly god has commanded me to descend to earth, establish a kingdom, and become a king, and therefore I am here. You people must dig in the earth on the peak, while you dance and sing, Kuha! (Turtle, Turtle)’ [A] golden bowl . . . was found to contain six golden eggs . . . [T]he eggs had hatched into six boys [A]fter ten days the height of the boy who had hatched first had reached nine feet . . . [H]e was crowned king with the title *Suro* 首露. He named his kingdom Karak-kuk 大鰲洛 (又稱伽耶國) and the other five men became the rulers of the five neighboring Kaya tribes 五伽耶主.’ ”²

some of our company of Ministers and dispatch them to the four quarters, so that they may cause our will to be known.” Nihongi subsequently records (NI: 160) that “[t]he generals of the four roads reported to the Emperor the circumstances of their pacification of the savages. This year strange tribes came in great numbers and there was tranquility throughout the land.”³ <4>

Kojiki (KP: 199-208) similarly records that “Mimaki-Iri-Biko-Iniwe-No-Mikoto 御眞木入日子印惠命 dwelt in the Palace of Midu-Kaki at Siki 坐師木水垣宮 and ruled the kingdom . . . during this reign, Opo-biko-no-Mikoto was dispatched to the twelve regions of the East, in order to pacify the disobedient people there. Also Piko-Imasu-no-Miko was dispatched to the land of Tanipa . . . Hereupon they pacified the governments of the lands to which they were dispatched and [returned to] report [on their missions]. Thus the kingdom was peaceful, and the people were wealthy and flourishing. At this time the men were made to present tribute from their bows [hunting] and the women from their fingertips [handicrafts]. In praise, this reign was called [that of] Emperor Mimaki who first ruled the land.”⁴

According to Nihongi (NI: 161), Mimaki-iri-biko one day asked his two princes to report the contents of the dream each had the previous night. Nihongi (NI: 161) notes that the elder brother reported that “I myself ascended Mount Mimoro, and turning to the East, eight times I flourished a spear, and eight times dealt blows with a sword,” while the younger brother reported that “I myself ascended to the summit of Mount Mimoro, and stretched a cord to the four quarters with which to drive away the sparrows which fed upon the grain.” Hereupon Mimaki-iri-biko said to his two sons, “The elder of you turned to the East only, and it is therefore meet that he should rule the Eastern Land 當治東國. But the younger brother looked down generally over the four quarters, and he ought therefore to succeed to Our Dignity.”⁵

Nihongi then proceeds to the story of Suinin who was the third child of Mimaki-iri-biko-iniwe. (The Empress, his mother, was called Mimaki-hime.) According to Nihongi (NI: 166-167): “In the reign of the Emperor Mimaki, there was a man with horns on his forehead [the ancient Chinese Emperors are so depicted, Aston notes] who came riding in a ship . . . He was asked what countryman he was. He replied, saying: ‘I am the son of the King of Great Kara 意富加羅國王之子 [Kaya]. My name is Tsunoga Arashito [Tonoka

³Nihongi (NI: 161) also records the following decree issued by Mimaki-iri-biko: “Ships are of cardinal importance to the Empire. At present the people of the coast, not having ships, suffer grievously by land-transport. Therefore, let every province be caused to have ships built.”⁵

Arasateung], and I am also called Ushiki arishichi kanki 干岐. It having come to my ears that there is in the land of Japan a sage Emperor, I wished to offer him my allegiance and came to Anato 穴門. Now in that land there was a man named Itsutsu-hiko, who spoke . . . ‘I am the King of this land, and there is no other king but me. Do not thou therefore proceed further.’ But when I observed him closely . . . I knew surely that he was not a king. So I departed again from that place, and not knowing the road, anchored at one island and bay after another, going round by way of the Northern Sea and passing the Land of Idzumo 出雲國 until I arrived here.’ It so happened that at this time the Emperor [Mimaki] died, so he . . . served the Emperor Ikume for three years. Then the Emperor [Ikume, i.e., Suinin] inquired of Arashito, saying: ‘Dost thou wish to return to thy country?’ He answered and said: ‘I earnestly desire to do so.’ The Emperor then addressed Arashito, saying: ‘If thou hadst not lost thy way, thou wouldst certainly have arrived here sooner - in time to serve the late Emperor [Mimaki]. Do thou, therefore change the name of thy country. In future take the august name of the Emperor Mimaki and make it the name of thy country 改汝本國名 追負御間城天皇御名 便爲汝國名.’ So he gave Arashito red silk stuffs and sent him back to his native land. This is the reason why the name of that country is called Mimana 故號其國謂彌摩那國 [Imna according to the Korean pronunciation of the characters] . . . The people of Silla hearing this, raised an army and proceeding thither robbed him of all the red silk. This was the beginning of the enmity between these two countries.”^{<8>}

Nihongi elaborates (NI: 166) that “[i]n this year [the 2nd year of Suinin] the man of Imna, Sonaka cheulchi, asked permission to return to his country. Therefore gifts were liberally bestowed on him, and there were entrusted to him as a present for the King of Imna 100 pieces of red silk. But the Silla people waylaid and robbed him, and at this time began the enmity between the two countries.”^{<8>} All these stories were recorded for the year of 28 B.C. Therefore Aston notes (NI: 166n): “There is probably some historical foundation for this. But the chronology must be wrong. According to the Tongkam 通鑑, Kara (Imna) was not formed into a kingdom until A.D. 42, and hostilities between Kara and Silla are first mentioned in that work in A.D. 94. They were also at war in 97, 115, 116, and 203.”

These admittedly very confusing records on Sujin in Kojiki and Nihongi might indeed represent the story of a member of the ruling families of the Kaya Federation (more specifically, a member of the Imna 任那 ruling family) who crossed over from Korea to Japan to become a king of a state in the Kyūshū 九州 area some time between A.D. 42 and A.D. 203. After all, the

Wei Chronicle recorded the existence of a hundred tribal states in the Kyūshū area at that time. Nihongi notes that a member state of the Kaya Federation was called Mimana [Imna] because the area was, upon Suinin's suggestion to Arasateung, itself named after Mimaki-Iri-Biko. It sounds much more natural, however, if one says that Sujin received the name of Mimaki because he came across from Mimana [Imna].

Egami (1964) also notices “the tradition preserved in the Nihon Shoki to the effect that the element mima in the name of the place Mimana 任那 (彌摩那) in south Korea is derived from the element mima in Mimaki-iri-biko 御間城入彦.” He agrees that “it is more probable, however, that the derivation is in the opposite direction, and that the element mima in the name of the Emperor Sujin 崇神 is derived from the word Mimana.” According to Egami, it was Mimaki-iri-biko [Sujin] who crossed over to Kyūshū from the Kaya area and occupied it, while it was his descendant Homuda-wake (*Ōjin*) who carried out the conquest eastward to the Kinki 近畿 region and established the Yamato state. Egami believes that the horserider invasion of Japan was led by Mimaki-iri-biko who might well have been the Korean “Chin-wang” 辰王 [or one of his descendants] who is described in the Wei-zhi 魏志 as the ruler of the Three Han people in the southern part of Korea during the third century.⁴ Apparently Egami gives much more weight to the stories told in Wei-zhi than to the post-*Ōjin* stories found in Kojiki and Nihongi.

A fatal flaw in Egami's argument is his contention that Sujin also belonged to the horseriding conquerors, while archeologically only *Ōjin* 應神 could be regarded as having done so. Egami calls the Sujin era “the primitive period of the Yamato court” and wants to locate this period in the early tomb period. To support this contention, however, he needs concrete archeological evidence reflecting an invasion of the Japanese archipelago by the horseriders during this early tomb period. He admits that “no evidence has yet been discovered which would provide positive proof of such a thing.” However,

⁴Wei-zhi records that there were kings of Chin 辰 in south Korea who ruled the state of Yueh-shi 月氏國 in Ma-han and brought under their sway twelve out of a total of twenty-four Han states. Egami believes that the kings of Yamato Wa were the descendants of the Kings of Chin. Egami quotes the passage in Jiu Tang-shu -- “Some say that Jih-pen 日本 was formerly a small state, and has annexed the territory of the state of Wo 倭” -- and interprets it as implying that Sujin, a descendant of the Kings of Chin, invaded Kyūshū from the Mimana [Kaya] area and established a confederation of Mimana and Tsukushi. Egami ascribes the origin of the expression “Government House of Imna 任那府” [Miyake] to this confederation.

Egami believes that “this is precisely the missing link, and such evidence will certainly be discovered in the future.”

Nihongi (NI: 177) also hints in the following statement that Mimaki-iri-biko does not belong to the horseriding conquerors: “although the worship for the Gods in Heaven and Earth 祭祀神祇 was maintained by the late Emperor Mimaki, he failed to search out the root of the matter in its details 微細未探其源根; he was wanting in thoroughness, and stopped short at the leaves and branches 以粗留於枝葉. Therefore that Emperor was short lived.”^{<9>} According to Kojiki, Mimaki-iri-biko died at the age of 168 and, according to Nihongi itself, he died at the age of 120, and yet Nihongi also states that Sujin “was short lived” (see Nihongi, NI: 177 n).