

AN ODE TO STUDENTS OF HISTORY

– the Theory of Chang-Kuo-Man –

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Part 1

On August 3rd, 1991, a significant opinion was expressed concerning the history of ancient Japan. It was a proposition presented by Mr. Hisataka KISA^(*) on the third day of the Shirakaba Symposium, sponsored by Showa Pharmacological University.

Mr.Kisa pointed out a passage on “ Chinese military commander Chang Cheng’s extended stay in Wa-state” which appears in the Records of Wa-people, in the Wei history of San-kuo-chih (History of three countries)^(*) According to that passage, the capital city of Wa-state (or what I call “ Yamaichi-state”) was attacked by its neighbour and was faced with many crises. As a result, Queen Himiko of Wa-state begged for military aid from the Chinese government at Tai-fang-chun of the Korean Peninsula. Located near the present capital city of Seoul. This was the Wei China's military-administrative stronghold in the Korean Peninsula. The Chinese governor-general at that time in Tai-fang-chun was Wang Chin. Responding to Queen Himiko’s request, Wang dispatched Chang Cheng, who was Chai-tsao-yuan-shi (or constable for trouble shooting) to Wa-state. This was the 8th year of Cheng-shih or AD 247.

The Records of the Wa people concluded with the return of Chang Cheng to China. He was accompanied by a Wa diplomatic mission which went to the Chinese capital city of Lo-yang. The exact date of this return is not recorded. However, between his arrival to Wa and the final return to Lo-yang, many events are chronicled, such as the death of Queen Himiko, the political turmoil ensuing after her death, and the assumption of young queen, Ichiyo(or Toyo) as the ruler of Wa-state. For the enthronement of Ichiyo, Chang Cheng seems to have exercised his political influence. Consequently there is little doubt that Chang's stay in Wa-state lasted over a considerable period of time

In addition, according to the Record of Wa-state in Western Chin History^(*),

this particular Wa mission was received by the newly established Western Chin court during the early years of Tai-shih (AD265-274). According to Western Chin's chronicler's own additional writing of the record, this was the second year of Tai-shih (AD 266)^(*). Therefore, it can be calculated that Chang Cheng's stationing in Wa-state was 20 years-between the 8th year of Cheng-shih (AD 247) and the second year of Tai-Shih (AD 266).

After pointing out the above mentioned fact; It must be recognised that the description of the travel route to Wa-state from the Chinese out-post in the Korean Peninsula of Tai-fang-chun, was based on military reports by Chang Cheng, and that it must have been satisfactory and useful from China's strategic point of view. That is to say, if there were mistakes in direction such as " east" was recorded as " south" or mistakes in distance such that the actual distance was exaggerated by 5 or 6 fold, it would not be acceptable as a military report. However, up to the present time, many Japanese historians have accepted such an erroneous interpretation.

As a military report, it is essential that the report should include the total travel period between Tai-fang-chun and the capital of Wa. Without it,the Chinese government in the Korean Peninsula could not plan the logistics or reinforcements needed to sustain their military operations in Wa.

This is a very rational argument and no flaws can be found in the discussion. Kisa's proposition has eliminated all existing controversies concerning Yamatai-state. Historians in the past have twisted the direction from south to east to support the Kinki-Yamato theory, or have reduced the distance to one-fifth or one-sixth to support the Kinki or Kyushu theories so that the designated place of Yamato can be justified. Above all judged by the Kisa theory, all these route which these historians have failed to produce the total travel between Tai-fang-chun and the capital of Wa-state,which is the essential factor of the military report. All these theories are now proven to be impossible interpretations and total unrealistic solutions by Kisa's theory.

Judged by this new interpretation, only one existing theory has survived scrutiny, and that is my theory published in 1971. Firstly, my theory takes the position that the Record of Wa-people contains no misunderstanding in the directions. Secondly my theory postulates that the distances recorded must be correct. That is, San-kuo-shih or Three Country Record does not

use the distance unit of “ li” to be 435 meters as used during the Chin or Han dynasty Period, but rather it uses the unit adopted by the Wei and Western Chin dynasties, which is that one “ li”— is approximately 77 meters. Thirdly, the total duration of the journey is 40 days or ten days by water plus one month by land.

The above stated conclusions were deduced from one principle that I have upheld throughout my research and discussion: the sum total of the partial distances must be same as the total distance in San-kuo-shih. These conclusions lead us to another deduction: Queen Himoko's Yamaichi kingdom in Wa-state must be located in Hakata Bay or the adjacent areas. My position is that Chen Shou (author of Three Country Record) was in general correct and accurate. Inadvertently, a 20 year old theoretical position of mine has been vindicated and this is the only theory that Mr.Kisa's theory supports.

Part 2

Chiu-T'ang-shu or old T'ang History⁽⁵⁾ contains the Records on Japan and Wa-state, and one passage in it radically contradicts the existing dogmatic interpretations advanced by historians of ancient Japan.

According to this passage, Wa-state was granted a gold seal by Kuang-wu of Later Han dynasty, and its Queen Himiko was granted another gold seal by the Wei dynasty. Since Wa attempted to conduct its diplomatic relations with Yang-ti of Sui dynasty as an equal state, it had to fight a great war with the Sui dynasty at Hakusonko in the Korean Peninsula where it was completely defeated. All through these events over the centuries, only one Wa-state was involved, and it was located on the island of Kyushu.

Such earlier events are all attributed to Wa-state, but in the 8th century it was Japan or nihon-state which absorbed Wa-state after its defeat at Hakusonko and became the ruling power that represented the western half of Japan. This was definitely different from Wa-state. And as the passage clarifies, it was a separate state from Wa. This was the Yamato dynasty, which comes right down to the present time and is called the Imperial family in the Kinki area.

Most Japanese historians of ancient Japan have described Japanese

history since the 3rd century or 5th or 6th centuries as that which had been dominated by the Kinki Imperial family, and it is in total contradiction to the above stated conclusions. It has been next to impossible to find scholars in any Japanese university, who would postulate the existence of any dynasty other than the Kinki dynasty in Japan before the Kinki Imperial House came to dominate Japan. However, the Old T'ang History clearly states the existence of such a dynasty. I have personally always taken the position that this Old T'ang History was describing the real facts and that its references were historically valid. This time, I have found a few pieces of new evidence that can verify my theoretical position rather conclusively.

The first case is the testimony of Kuo Wu-yuan who was a military commander of the T'ang dynasty. He had been dispatched to Japan three times: the first time was the third year of Tenchi (AD664) or 9 months after the total victory at Hakusonko and he stayed in Japan for 7 month; the second time was the following year, 4th year of Tenchi and he stayed in Japan for 5months and returned to China in December of that year, and the third time was the 10th year of Tenchi (AD670). The first visit to Japan was as the victorious nation's representative to the totally defeated Wa-state, dispatched by Liu Jen-yuan, China's supreme military commander in charge of the occupation of the Korean state of Pakche. The second and the third visits were initiated by a direct order of the T'ang emperor, Kao-tsung.

Considering this background, there is little room to doubt that the Wa records of the Old T'ang History took into account at least partially the military and political reports produced by Kuo. Just as in the case of Chang Cheng's descriptions of Wa-state in the Three Country Records, the descriptions of Wa-state in the Old T'ang History are in general very difficult to dispute. Even though Kuo's stationing in Japan was only several months at time, he was after all visiting a former enemy state with which his country waged heated battles, and it is hard to imagine that Kuo could possibly mis-identify the state of Wa. There is no other conclusion possible but that the Wa-state records of Old T'ang History had to be a true representation of historical fact.

The second case is the testimony of ABE Nakamaro. He visited T'ang China as a member of a Japanese diplomatic mission, dispatched by the

Kinki Imperial family in the early part of the 8th century. Later he was naturalised in China and served the Chinese government as a high ranking official. He stayed on in the capital city of Ch'ang-an or present Hsi-an for 50 years and eventually died there. This was clearly recorded as such in the "Records of Nihon" in Old T'ang History. This being the case, it is hard to dispute the fact that the materials in the "Records of Nihon" were provided by Nakamaro himself (whose Chinese names were Chung Wan and Ch'ao Heng).

If the information in the Records of Nihon came mainly from Nakamaro, it is hard to believe that Nakamaro could totally misunderstand the basic political structure in his own country or the relations between his country and Wa-state. As long as we trust human reason, there can be no other interpretation than the above mentioned one. The Records of Nihon in Old T'ang History had to be correct and true.

In conclusion, the testimonies of three individuals; Chang Cheng, Kuo Wu-yuan, and Nakamaro or Chung Man, should be taken as the most significant evidence in determining the true picture of ancient Japanese history, and thus I would like to call this conclusion "the theory of Chang-Kuo-Man."

Kojiki and Nihonshoki take a moral position that the Kinki Imperial House was in control of Japan from the beginning to the present time. This is a highly ideological stand that would like to call "Tennologie" which places the Imperial house in the centre of Japan. Those historians who subscribe to such an ideological position should first try to disprove one of these three testimonies. At least that should be the duty of historians who trust reason and the conscience of human beings.

- *1. Chief Researcher, Institute for Broadcast and Culture, NHK.
- *2. Written by Chen Shou, a third century historian of Western Chin.
- *3. Written by Fung Hsuan-ling, in the first half of the seventh century.
- *4. A note written by Chao Chu, in the Section for Empress Jingo, in Nihonshoki.
- *5. Written by Liu Hsu in the first half of the tenth century.

(Translated by Tohru Takemoto)