

Prologue

Although the *Nihonshoki* is a history of Japan (Yamato-Wa), it contains more than a few passages indicating that ancient Korea (Paekche) once administered Japan. That is why the Japanese historian Tsuda Sokichi said that it was a thousand pities that the Paekche-focused passages in the *Nihonshoki* were left intact. Prof. Suematsu Yaskazu went so far as to say that a scientific approach to the *Nihonshoki* would mean that the cure was worse than the disease, while Prof. Suzuki Takeki remarked that what the compilers intended to hide remains starkly exposed, and he frankly admitted Paekche's administration of ancient Japan, though from an abstract viewpoint. Realizing, however, that scientific research into the *Nihonshoki* would be tantamount to a history of Paekche, not a history of Japan, Suematsu Yasukazu continued desperately distorting the history of ancient Korea-Japan relations.

In general, personifying Korea-Japan relations as those between two individuals, the *Nihonshoki* regards Korea as a liege subject and Japan as an emperor. Accordingly, the gifts sent from Korea to Japan are always described as tribute paid while those from Japan are always granted. The passages recounting ancient Korea-Japan relations can be largely classified into two categories: the passages saying that Japan subjugated ancient kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula into Japan's colonies and those indicating that a large number of Paekche immigrants—the ruling classes of Paekche—settled in Yamato and Naniwa districts.

Japan, however, was notoriously underdeveloped in shipbuilding and navigation technology until the 9th century, not to mention the 7th century, so much so that they were unable to freely sail to the Korean Peninsula, much less to China. Again, the regal power of Japan's tenno (emperor) was weaker than the influence of a potentate (a powerful family), and Japan's (Yamato-Wa's) territory did not extend beyond Yamato

(Nara) and Naniwa (Osaka). As recorded in the *Nihonshoki*, Japan at that time was too small a country to exist as an independent state; hence the utter impossibility of Yamato-Wa sending an expeditionary army in a great fleet of vessels to the Korean Peninsula to colonize the three kingdoms as early as the 7th century.

Notwithstanding the occasional wilful distortion of true history by the compilers of the *Nihonshoki*, in light of the fact that so many places all over Japan were named after ancient kingdoms of Korea (such as Shilla, Koguryö, Paekche, and Kaya), and that babies in the two nations share the Mongolian blue spot, we can testify to the truth of ancient Korea–Japan relations.

Let it clearly be borne in mind, however, that the Japan we speak of here points to Yamato-Wa, one of so many Wa's in all the Japanese islands, but representing them as Nihon in the long run.

Nearly all of the histories heretofore issued on ancient Korean–Japan relations, whether they were published in Japan, the United States, or Europe, have been brought out without presenting reliable evidence. The right approach to this subject will only be made when due consideration and right estimation are made of (1) the levels of shipbuilding and navigation skills of Yamato-Wa, (2) the location and territorial size of Yamato-Wa, (3) the extent of Yamato-Wa kings' (emperors') power, and (4) the place-names and their derivation of various sites all over Japan (of the living areas, mountains, rivers, harbours, beaches, stations, etc).