

The *Silla Annals*' Anachronistic Reference to Queen Himiko, the Wa Ruler of Yamatai*

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It is becoming increasingly apparent to historians and archaeologists alike that the twelfth-century *Samguk sagi*'s datings for many of its early entries, especially those appearing in its *Silla Annals* (Silla pon'gi 新羅本紀) and *Paekche Annals* (Paekche pon'gi 百濟本紀), are problematic. Having devoted a number of years to the study of these two texts, I have come to the conclusion that the vast majority of the *early* entries in both chronicles are accounts of actual historical events that have been systematically antedated. It is evident that the records upon which the Silla and Paekche chronicles were based were, for the most part, originally dated according to the sexagenary cycle (K. *kanji* 干支 cycle). Thus when accounts of later events in Silla's or Paekche's histories were antedated to fill the chronological void created by the implausibly early foundation dates ascribed to the two kingdoms, in most instances the redating was done in multiples of sixty years.

In this paper I will first demonstrate through a comparison with evidence derived from two much earlier Chinese sources—the third-century *Sanguozhi* and the fifth-century *Hou Hanshu*—that the *Silla Annals*' date of 173 for the arrival at the Silla court of a diplomatic mission allegedly sent by the Japanese queen Himiko (K. Pimiho) is not only anachronistic, but impossible. I will then argue through a comparison primarily with evidence from the late eighth-century Japanese history, the *Shoku Nihongi*, that the

* I am presently preparing a series of four volumes that will comprehensively explore this issue. The first volume will focus on methodology and provide examples of its application through a group of case studies treating entries drawn from the *Samguk sagi*'s chronicles of both Silla and Paekche. The second and third volumes will present in English translation annotated redactions of the *Silla* and *Paekche Annals* with the entries appearing in the chronological order determined by my methodology. The fourth volume will present the numerous entries in the *Nihon shoki* concerned with peninsular-archipelago relations, many of which are manifestly anachronistic, also as they are ordered by my methodology. The early histories of southern Korea and Japan are intimately intertwined, and consequently the history of Northeast Asia cannot be properly understood unless the chronological problems present in its earliest surviving chronicles are acknowledged and addressed.

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embassy to Silla purportedly sent by Himiko in the late second century is actually an antedated account of an embassy recorded as having been sent by a female Japanese ruler of the early eighth century.

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