Basic Consideration of the Empress Zingu Period Diplomatic Article

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The “Report on the Conquest of Seven Gaya Kingdoms” in the third lunar month of the 49th year of the reign of Empress Jingû (249) in Nihon Shoki (Chronicle of Japan) has been long regarded as historical evidence of the conquest of Mimana (also known as “Imna” according to the Korean pronunciation) by the Yamato Court, backed by the objectivity of the three books of Baekje and the credibility of the Gwanggaeto Stele text. However, a review of research history and basic historical materials indicates that they are all ill-founded.

As often mentioned in Kudara Honki (Original Records of Baekje), the statement of the Baekje Dynasty in Kudara Ki (Records of Baekje) was intended to explain how the dynasty had gained influence over Gaya. With regard to the history of Baekje in the reign of King Chogo, Kudara Ki presents only two historical facts, (1) negotiations between Baekje and Taksun starting in the seventh lunar month of 364 and (2) following visits of delegations from Yamato and Taksun to Baekje, including an envoy named Shima no Sukune (now identified as Chikuma Nagahiko), but the following description of frequent interactions between Kute, an envoy of Baekje, and Chikuma Nagahiko, an envoy of Yamato, over three years is found to be fictitious. Aside from them, a description of the seven-branched sword given to Yamato from Baekje as a token of friendship between the two states is related to the report in the third lunar month of the 49th year of the reign of Empress Jingû. However, if the Stele text is given more credence, the first official diplomatic relations between Baekje and Yamato are considered to have started in 369. With regard to the history of Baekje in the reign of King Biyu, Kudara Ki contains three historical facts: (1) Mokurakonshi, General of Baekje, formed a joint army with Sachihiko from Yamato and defeated the joint army of Silla and Gaya in Taksun in 429; (2) Yamato dispatched troops led by Sachihiko and defeated Gaya in 442; and (3) Mok Nageunja fought against Yamato’s troops led by Sachihiko, in response to the request from Gaya, and defeated the opponents. It is presumed that the chronicle of Empress Jingû refers to the military action led by Baekje and participated in by Yamato to fight against Gaya and Silla as the first military mission of Yamato against Gaya by taking the trouble to assign it a date 180 years earlier than the actual time.

The above findings indicate that the “Report on the Conquest of Seven Gaya Kingdoms” was included in the chronicle of Empress Jingû by editors of Nihon Shoki by misrepresenting a historical
fact in the reign of King Biyu. In other words, these findings disprove that the King of Yamato
dispatched his troops to fight against Silla in 369 during the reign of King Chogo.

Key words: Chronicle of Empress Jingū, seven Gaya kingdoms, Japanese Mimana Government,
Kudara Ki (Records of Baekje), Chikuma Nagahiko, King Chogo