3.

QUEEN HIMIKO AS RECORDED
IN THE WEI CHRONICLE:

A Protohistoric Yayoi Ruler

The Wajin-den (倭人傳) section of Wei-zhi 魏志 was written between A.D. 280 and 297 on the basis of reports made by Chinese envoys to the northern part of Kyushu during the nine-year period from A.D. 239 to 248. According to Wei-zhi (translated by Tsunoda, 1951): “The people of Wa dwell in the middle of the ocean on the mountainous islands southeast of Tai-fang. They formerly comprised more than one hundred communities. During the Han dynasty, [Wa envoys] appeared at the Court; today, thirty of their communities maintain intercourse [with us] through envoys and scribes. To reach Wa from the prefecture, one sails along the coast, passing the land of Han 範禺. Turning then abruptly to the south, and again abruptly to the east, one reaches its northern coast, called the country of Kou-Ya-han 龍馬國 . . . altogether over seven thousand 里. Then going across the sea for the first time, after over one thousand 里 one reaches the country of Tsushima 對馬國. . . . Setting sail again across the sea known as Han-hai 漢海, after a journey of one thousand 里 or more toward the south, one arrives at another large country . . . . Going again across the sea for over one thousand 里, one reaches the country of Matsuro . . . . Proceeding five hundred 里 by land to the southeast, one reaches the country of Izu 伊勢國 . . . with a hereditary king at the head. These people all owe their allegiance to the Queen’s country. When the commissioner of the prefecture visits that region, he usually stops there . . . . Then going toward the south, one arrives at the country of Yamaichi 馬難國 [Tsunoda makes it Yamadai], where the Queen holds her court. . . .

1 Chinese neighbors were traditionally recorded as footnotes to the official history of each Chinese dynasty in a section with a title such as “Eastern Barbarians 東夷.”
[and] the Queen’s dominion comes to an end. To the south is the country of Kunu where a King rules. . . . This country is not subject to the Queen. . . . There are no oxen, horses . . . ”

Wei-zhi continues: “To the north of the Queen’s land, there is a high official stationed especially to exercise surveillance over those provinces, so that they are kept in a state of awe and fear. This official keeps his official residence in the country of Izu. In that country there is [also] an official similar to a Chinese governor. When the ruler sends envoys to visit the Chinese capital, or when the Tai-fang prefecture or the various Han [Korean] countries or prefects send envoys to the Wa country, they are all made to stop at the port for inspection, so that messages and gifts to the Queen may reach her without mishap.”

Wei-zhi records that: “The country formerly had a man as a ruler. For some seventy or eighty years after that there were disturbances and warfare. Thereupon the people agreed upon a woman for their ruler. Her name was Pimiko. She occupied herself with magic and sorcery, bewitching the people. Though mature in age, she remained unmarried. She had a younger brother who assisted her in ruling the country.”

Wei-zhi also records that: “In the first year of Zheng-shi (240), the Governor, Gong Zun, sent Ti Zhun, a commandant of the Imperial Guard, with an Imperial rescript and the ribbon seal to visit the Wa country. He had an audience with the Queen . . . ” According to Wei-zhi, “In the sixth month of the second year of Jing-chu (A.D. 238), the Queen of Wa sent the grandee Nashonmi, and others to visit the prefecture [of Tai-fang], where they requested permission to proceed to the Emperor’s Court with tribute. The Governor, Liu Xia, dispatched an officer to accompany the party to the capital. In answer to the Queen of Wa, an edict of the Emperor, issued in the twelfth month of the same year, said as follows: Herein we address Pimiko, Queen of Wa, whom we now officially call a friend of Wei. The Governor of Tai-fang, Liu Xia, has sent a messenger to accompany your vassal, Nashonmi, and his lieutenant, Tsushi Gori. They have arrived here with your tribute, consisting of four male slaves and six female slaves, together with two pieces of cloth with designs, each twenty feet in length . . . . We confer upon you, therefore, the title Queen of Wa Friendly to Wei, together with the decoration of the gold seal with purple ribbon. The latter, properly encased, is to be sent to you through the Governor . . . ” Himiko might have been the
true leader of the federation of tribal chiefs or might really have been an
advisor who, to the Chinese envoys, appeared to have been a ruling queen.

According to Wei-zhi: "In the eighth year (247), the Governor, Wang Qi,
arived [at Tai-fang] to assume office. The Queen of Wa, Pimiko, had been at
odds with the King of Kunu, Pimikuku, and had sent Saishi Uwo of Wa to visit
the prefect and report in person regarding the conflict going on . . . . When
Pimiko passed away . . . a king was placed on the throne, but the people
would not obey him. Assassination and murder followed . . . A relative of
Pimiko named Iyo, a girl of thirteen, was [then] made queen and order was
restored. . . ."

We can also find mention of Wa in Hou Han-shu, but it was compiled
about A.D. 445, long after Wei-zhi was compiled, and incorporated much
from the earlier accounts of Wa recorded in Wei-zhi. Hou Han-shu records
that: "The Wa dwell on mountainous islands southeast of Han [Korea] in
the middle of the ocean, forming more than one hundred communities. From
the time of the overthrow of Zhao-xian [Cho-seon] by Emperor Wu (B.C.
140-87), nearly thirty of these communities have held intercourse with the
Han [China] court by envoys or scribes. Each community has its king,
whose office is hereditary. The King of Great Wa resides in the
country of Yamadai. The commandery of Le-lang is twelve thousand
li from that country. The country of Chu-ya-han on the northwest
boundary is over seven thousand li distant . . . . There are no oxen, horses,
tigers, leopards, sheep, or magpies . . . . The men all tattoo their faces
and adorn their bodies with designs . . . . In the second year of the Jien-wu
Zhong-yuan era (A.D. 57), the Wa country Nu sent an envoy
with tribute who called himself Da-fu. This country is located in the
southern extremity of the Wa country. Guang-wu bestowed on him a seal. In
the first year of the Yong-chu era (A.D. 107), during the reign of An-di (107-
125), the King of Wa presented one hundred sixty slaves, making at the same
time a request for an imperial audience. During the reigns of Huan-di (147-
168) and Ling-di (168-189), the country of Wa was in a state of great
confusion, war and conflict raging on all sides. For a number of years, there
was no ruler. Then a woman named Pimiko appeared. Remaining unmarried,
she occupied herself with magic and sorcery and bewitched the populace.

over the Le-lang commandery and also established the Tai-fang commandery south of
Le-lang. Liao-dong was then captured in A.D. 238 by the Wei dynasty, which took over
Le-lang and Tai-fang as well. In A.D. 313, Le-lang fell to Koguryeo, and, at about the
same time, Tai-fang disappeared as Paekche expanded its frontiers northward.
Thereupon they placed her on the throne. She kept one thousand female attendants, but few people saw her. There was only one man who was in charge of her wardrobe and meals and acted as the medium of communication . . . Leaving the queen’s land and crossing the sea to the east, after a voyage of one thousand li, the country of Kunu is reached, the people of which are of the same race as that of the Wa. They are not the queen’s subjects, however (translated by Tsunoda, 1951).” Expressed like “The King of Great Wa 大倭王” and “Yamadai 大倭大王” (instead of “Yamauchi 大倭大王”) seem to reflect the fact that the writer of Hou Han-shu had been influenced by the development of Japan during the fourth and fifth centuries.

Wei-zhi did not write anything about the origin of the queen, Himiko, or the origin of the queen’s country, Yamaichi. Nihongi, however, gives extensive records on Okinaga-Tarashi [Empress Jing] who is said to have ruled Japan during the first half of the third century. Many historians believe that the story of Jing [Okinaga-Tarashi] found in Nihongi was inspired by the story of Himiko in Wei-zhi. On the assumption that the story of Jing described in Nihongi and Kojiki has some elements of truth, this section investigates the origin of Himiko [or Jing].

Nihongi (NII: 81) records that, when Silla conquered Kaya in A.D. 562, an edict was issued by Kimmei which contained a mention of Jing [Okinaga-Tarashi]: “When our ancestor, Okinaga Tarashi hime no Mikoto . . . made a tour throughout the Empire . . . she pitied the condition of Silla, which was then reduced to an extremity, and spared the head of its king, which was about to fall. She granted to Silla strong positions, and bestowed on it honours it was not entitled to. In what respect did Our ancestor, Okinaga Tarashi hime no Mikoto, show a want of consideration for Silla, or Our people an unfriendly feeling towards that country? Yet Silla with long spears and strong bows has oppressed Imna [Kaya].”

This edict may create confusion about the relationship between Okinaga Tarashi, Kaya [Imna] and Silla. Furthermore, in Book Two of Kojiki (KP: 291-293) one finds a rather strange chapter on Ame-No-Pi-Poko 天之日子 crossing from Korea to Japan 天之日子 in pursuit of his runaway wife, who is recorded to have been born from a red jewel. This chapter begins with the statement that “[I]n ancient times, there was a son of the King of the land of Siragi [Silla] 新羅國主之子, whose name was Ame-No-Pi-Poko.” Eventually

1 According to Kojiki (KP: 293), this Ame-No-Pi-Poko, the son of the Silla king, brought to Japan with him “jewel-treasures, two strings of beads; as well as the wave-raising scarf, the wave-cutting scarf, the wind-raising scarf, the wind-cutting scarf; as
we are told that Ame-No-Pi-Poko’s great-great-grandson took to wife his niece, and there was born a child who was “the ancestor [mother] of Okina- Tarashi-Pime-No-Mikoto” (息長持日売命). The latter represents Kiiro and, according to Kojiki, is a descendant of a son of the King of the land of Silla.

Covell and Covell (1984: 12-15) speculate that King Tarashi-Nakatsu must have been the King of Kaya, and Okina-Tarashi was made his queen in A.D. 193. Nihongi (NI: 218) records that, before this, King Tarashi-Nakatsu had already taken as consort his uncle’s daughter, who bore him princes, and he furthermore took another consort who also gave him a prince. In due course Okina-Tarashi also got pregnant, but she knew that there was little hope for her child to succeed Tarashi-Nakatsu. King Tarashi-Nakatsu wanted to conquer a certain Kumaso in the south in order to make it a fiefdom for Okina-Tarashi and her child. But apparently Okina-Tarashi had a different idea.

The following is the story told by Covell and Covell (1984: 15-19):

"Ch’uai’s Prime Minister and leading male shaman was . . . Takenouchi no Sukune . . . . From the events which unfolded, this prime minister-shaman seems to have been swept along with ingleton’s ambitious plans for conquest [of Japan] and to have become her first lover . . . . After encompassing Ch’uai’s death, young ingleton and [Takenouchi no Sukune] . . . began to form an army of soldier-adventurers in the Tae Kaya area, with Koryeong [modern Taegu] as its capital. Apparently messengers were sent to Paekche, with a deal for the monarch there: Support the endeavors of ingleton and she would conquer The Land of Across as Paekche’s suzerain and also bring the Kaya League territory under its sway . . . . The Nihongi of 720 A.D. gives ingleton’s route of conquest, beginning with Koryeong and continuing southward . . . . However, in order to make ingleton a Japanese, the court histories needed to start ingleton from Kyushu and take her to Koryeong and then backtrack southward. (In other words she passed peacefully over south Korean territory, and then reversed her route, fighting all the way.) . . . . With [Takenouchi no Sukune] as military advisor, well as the mirror of the offing and the mirror of the shore.”

4 According to Kojiki (KP: 262-263), ingleton was able to conquer Silla and Paekche with astonishing ease: “Then, exactly in accordance with these [divine] instructions, they put their army in order and marshalled many ships . . . . Then a favorable wind began to blow strongly, and the ships moved along with the waves. These waves washed the ships ashore in the land of Siragi, [and they came to rest] halfway across the country. At this time the king of the country, struck with awe, said: ‘From
augmented by troops and good wishes from Paekche, and also help from Silla, jingu’s plans for conquest of The Land of Across went smoothly. According to both court histories of the eighth century, Silla sent eighty tribute ships filled with silver and gold. This would seem to be literary hyperbole. Ships were certainly needed to carry out the first amphibious landing in number attempted in this part of the world . . . . Both the court histories (Kojiki and Nihongi) report that jingu and her fleet arrived in Kyushu without damage."

One may now read Nihongi within the framework set by Covell and Covell (1984). According to Nihongi (NI: 221), in A.D. 199 King Tarashi-Nakatsu-hiko was consulting with his ministers about attacking a certain Kumaso 柯夢: "At this time a certain God inspired the Empress [Okinaga- Tarashi] and instructed her, saying 時有神 託皇后 聞而言道 . . . [Kumaso] is a land wanting in backbone. Is it worthwhile raising an army to attack it? There is a better land than this, a land of treasure, which may be compared to the aspect of a beautiful woman - the land of Mukatsu [Kyushu] [Opposite]. In that land there is gold and silver and bright colour in plenty."' One may now contend that Okinaga-Tarashi apparently had Japan [Kyushu] in mind.

But then Tarashi-Nakatsu heard the words of the God as transmitted by the queen (NI: 221-222): "If thou worshippest me aright, that land will assuredly yield submission freely, and the edge of thy sword shall not at all be stained with blood"; and "In worshipping me, let these things [the King’s ship and rice lands 田] be given as offerings [to the God]." His mind was filled with doubt. Hence the King answered the queen (i.e., the God whom Okinaga-Tarashi was supposed to represent): "We have looked all around, and there is sea, and no land. Can there be a country in that Great Void? Who is the God who cheats Us with vain illusions?" Hereby Okinaga-Tarashi 必 must have said to herself (NI: 222): "I see this country lies outstretched like a reflection from Heaven in the water. Why sayest thou [Tarashi-Nakatsu] that there is no country, and dost disparage my words? But as thou, O King! hast spoken thus, and hast utterly refused to believe me, thou shalt not possess this land. The child [with whom I have] just become pregnant, he shall obtain it [Kumaso]."

"In accordance with this, the land of Siragi [Silla] was designated as the royal stable-groom, and the land of Kudara [Paekche] was designated as the overseas miyake 宮城 . . . . Then she crossed back over [the sea]." According to Nihongi (NI: 231), the King of Silla, whom jingu allegedly made her "forage provider" in A.D. 200, was “Phasa 沙 Maekeum 麦根,” the fifth King of Silla, who reigned from A.D. 80 to A.D. 112."
Japan, was for the Emperor in the Womb, Homuda-wake, to obtain.
Thereupon Okinaga-Tarashi murdered the King, apparently with the help of
the Prime Minister Takenouchi no Sukune, and they (NI: 222) “suppressed
the mourning for the Emperor [Chinna] and did not allow it to be known to
the Empire.” Nihongi (NI: 224) records that the King did “not follow Divine
instruction, and had consequently died a premature death.”
Nihongi (NI: 223) further records that while the whole kingdom remained ignorant of the
King’s demise, Okinaga-Tarashi buried the body of the King secretly in the
Palace and then prepared her expedition [against Japan].

Okinaga-Tarashi 鳥羽 addressed the ministers (NI: 228) in this manner:
“[A]though I am a woman, and a feeble woman too . . . I will avail myself of
your assistance . . . Brandishing our weapons, we shall cross the towering
billows: preparing an array of ships, we shall take possession of the Land of
Treasure. If the enterprise succeeds, all of you, my ministers, will have the
credit, while if it is unsuccessful, I alone shall be to blame.”
Nihongi (NI: 228) describes the difficulty she faced in collecting ships: “The various
provinces were ordered to collect ships and to practise the use of weapons.
But an army could not be assembled. The Empress said: ‘This is surely the
will of a god!’ So she erected the Shrine of Oho-miwakagami, and offered
there a sword and a spear. Then the troops assembled freely.”
Nihongi (NI: 231) notes that the “King of Silla . . . loaded eighty vessels, which he
made to follow after the Imperial forces [Okinaga-Tarashi].”
Nihongi (NI: 230) records that: “Winter, 10th month, 3rd day, sail was set from the harbor
of Wani [in Tsushima] . . . . Presently a great wind blew from a
favourable quarter on the ships under sail, and following the waves, without
the labour of the oar or helm, they arrived at” the destination. Nihongi clearly
notes that it was “winter” when 亀趾 started on her voyage. We do know
that winter is exactly the right season to sail from Korea to Japan to take
advantage of the seasonal winds blowing from the north-west toward Japan in
the southeast.

Kojiki (KC: 289) also notes that: “. . . while this business was yet
unconcluded, [the child] with which she was pregnant was about to be born
[in Korea] . . . . [S]he took a stone and wound it round the waist of her august

-varley (1973: 16) writes on the voyage of the Japanese envoys to Sui and Tang by
ships: “. . . [T]heir sail and rudder systems were primitive and . . . they were obliged to
rely on the seasonal winds. They usually left in the spring, when the prevailing winds
were westward, and returned in the winter, when the winds blew to the east. The
shortest route . . . was across the 115-mile channel that separates 亀趾 from
southern Korea.”
When Okinaga Tarashi arrived at Kyōshū, Kojiki (KC: 292) records that she had “doubts concerning the disposition of the people [there]” and indeed “King Kagosaka and King Oshikuma, having heard [of the circumstance], thought to waylay her . . . . [They] raised an army and lay in wait [for Okinaga-Tarashi-hime] . . . . Then an army was landed from the mourning-vessel [which of course was in reality no mourning-vessel, but full of the soldiers from Korea], and joined in combat with the opposing forces.” Kojiki (KC: 293) further records that the troops of Okinaga-Tarashi-hime “had driven [King Oshikuma’s troops] as far as Yamashiro, [where the latter] turned and made a stand, and both [sides] fought together without retreating . . . [The enemy] fled away to Afu-saka, rallied, and fought again. Then [the troops of Okinaga-Tarashi-hime] pursued and defeated them, and cut to pieces that army at Sasanami. Thereupon King Oshikuma, together with the Noble Isahi, being pursued and pressed, got on board a vessel and floated on the sea . . . . [T]hey plunged into the sea, and died together.”

Eventually Jingū seems to have been able to conquer a large portion of Kyōshū, and establish the Queen Country recorded in Wei-zhi. According to Nihongi, however, the conquered land represents the Land of Opposite that the child with whom Jingu had become pregnant on Korean soil was told to obtain after his birth. Nihongi (NI: 241) records for the year A.D. 201 that: “[t]he ministers honoured the Empress [Okinaga-Tarashi-hime] with the title of Grand Empress . . . . It was reckoned the first year of her administration of the Government.” As far as Kojiki is concerned, the record on Okinaga-Tarashi-hime essentially terminates at this point. Nihongi (NI: 241), however, states that “the Imperial Prince Homuda-wake,” who was allegedly born in A.D. 200, was appointed Prince Imperial and accordingly the capital was made at Ihara in the third year of Jingu’s reign [A.D. 203], and then Nihongi adds other stories associated with Homuda-wake. Indeed, the records of Nihongi on the 46th year of Jingu and thereafter up to the 65th year seem to be exclusively the stories on Homuda-wake (the Emperor in the Womb) during the period A.D. 366-385.

Nihongi records that, with the successful conclusion of Jingu’s expedition to Kyōshū, Silla and Paekche sent friendly envoys and presents to her and congratulated her on her success. Nihongi (NI: 247) records that in the “47th year [A.D. 247] . . . [t]he King of Paekche sent [an envoy] with tribute. Now a tribute envoy from Silla came along with [the Paekche
envoys. Hereupon the Grand Empress Jindó ... was greatly delighted and said: ‘People from the countries wished for by our late Sovereign Chida have now come to the Court. Alas! that they cannot meet the Emperor!’ There was not one of all the ministers who did not shed tears.”

The above story of Jindó’s conquest of Kyūshū, Japan, seems to be consistent with an old Korean myth recorded in Samguk-yusa (Ha & Mintz edition: 57-58): “In the fourth year of the reign of King Atala 阿達羅王, the eighth Silla sovereign [A.D. 157] ... there lived on the eastern seacoast a married couple named Yeonorang 延鳥郎 and Seonyeo 細鳥女. One day Yeonorang was diving in the ocean to collect seaweed. Suddenly a monstrous rock (some say a big fish) rose beneath him and carried him off to Japan 日本. The people there thought him quite an uncommon person and made him their king 立爲王. Seonyeo, meanwhile, was wondering why her husband did not come back. As she was searching for him along the shore, she saw a pair of straw shoes lying on a big rock at the edge of the water. Recognizing them as her husband’s, she jumped onto the rock and looked about for him. The rock immediately shook gently to and fro for a moment and then drifted merrily off to Japan as before. The Japanese in great wonderment took her from the rock and presented her to their king. Thus the couple was reunited and Seonyeo became a queen 王后. The people respected the royal couple and worshiped them like sun and moon.”

Nihongi (NI: 224-229) describes extensively the ways in which Okinaga Tarashi 懐良川 practiced shamanism and deluded her people. She conducted the ceremony of purification, constructed a palace of worship, and discharged in person the office of priest while making Takenouchi no Sukune to play on the lute and designating Nakatomi as Saniha (the official who examines the utterances prompted by the Deity). She hooked the trout in the river with threads from her skirt, made sacrifices 祭, tilled a sacred rice-field, caused a channel to pierce through a great rock, and made her hair part of its own accord spontaneously simply by bathing in the sea, among other feats.

According to Matsumoto (1983), “the shamanism by which Himiko deluded people came from southern Korea and was a form of spirit worship.

*Nihongi (NI: 247) also records that in the previous year, envoys had been sent “to the Land of Paekche to make friendly inquiries of the King’s health. 伴於百濟國皇帝其王 [Thereby the] King ... of Paekche was profoundly pleased, and received them cordially. He presented to Nahaya [chief envoy] a roll each of five kinds of dyed silk, a horn-bow and arrows together with forty bars of iron.”

"
In northern Korea all members of a tribe took part in services for the souls of their ancestors, but in the south one person was chosen as a go-between. The shaman’s job was to convey messages from ancestral spirits to the people.”

Matsumoto considers Himiko a kind of an advisor to the federation of tribal chieftains, a shaman who made predictions on matters such as sowing, harvesting, and fighting (against Kuna) but who “must have looked like a ruling queen” to the Chinese envoys who visited Kyūshū in A.D. 239-248.

Matsumoto (1983) speculates on the cause of war between Wa (of Himiko 南朝 or Pimikuku 北朝) and Kuna (of Pimikuku 北朝): “To some degree it may have been a racial conflict. Probably people from the South Pacific islands continued to migrate to southern Kyūshū, where, mixing with the native people, they formed a new race that might be called the southern Kyūshū people. The inhabitants of northern Kyūshū, on the other hand, must have originally crossed from the Korean Peninsula.”

Matsumoto presents three prevailing opinions on the eventual fate of the queen’s country and Kuna: “Wa later subjugated Kuna, and its people then moved to Kinaiaccumulate . . . Kuna destroyed Wa, and moved eastward . . . or [B]oth Wa and Kuna were conquered by a horseriding people from the Korean Peninsula, who then moved to Kawachi accumulate and began the Yamato dynasty.”

One of the most interesting aspects of Japanese history as written by Japanese historians is the fact that while Chen Shou (A.D. 233-297), the author of Wei-zhi, calls Himiko’s state “Yamaichi,” almost all Japanese historians have decided to read it “Yamadai 烏飛” and understand it to imply “Yamato 神國.” Indeed Fan Yeh (A.D. 398-445), the author of Hou Han-shu, invigorated those Japanese historians who eagerly wanted to believe that Himiko’s state was located in the Kinai-Yamato area by referring to Himiko’s state as “Yamadai.” It seems that the development in Japan during the fourth and the first half of fifth century had apparently influenced the author of Hou Han-shu and led him to make this “innocent” error. Anyway, wild speculations over the location of the so-called “Yamatai Koku” seem to have been a form of public entertainment in Japan until Furuta

7Matsumoto (1983) continues: “Since the faith did not exist in China, or in the part of the Korean peninsula under strong Chinese influence, the Chinese considered it a pagan religion.”

8According to Egami (1964), “the manners and customs of the Wo-jen 倭人 or people of Wo described in Wo-jen-Chuan 倭人傳 are remarkably southern . . . [T]here is no doubt that the manners of the people of Wo - the people of the late Yayoi period in western Japan, particularly 鳥居 as known to the Chinese of the third century, included much that was common to the manners of the people of South East Asia . . .”
Takehiko 古田武雄 (1983) spoiled the affair by making public his unflattering theory.

Takemoto (1983) summarizes the study of Furuta Takehiko as follows. In Wei-zhi, which was written by Chen Shou between A.D. 280 and 297, Himiko’s state is named Yamaichi. In Hou Han-shu, written by Fan Yeh between A.D. 429 and 439, it is called Yamadai. Chen Shou was writing contemporary history and had personally observed much of what he wrote about. Fan Yeh was writing about events that preceded him by several hundred years, relying solely on written sources. In Chen Shou’s San-guo-zhi, of which Wei-zhi is a part, the character “ichi” いち appears 86 times and the character “dai” 太 56 times, but Chen Shou never confused the two characters. During the Wei period, “dai” was one of their most sacred words, implying a religious-political sanctuary or the emperor’s palace. The characters “ya” 驚 and “ma” 驚 mean “nasty” and “horse”, reflecting the contempt Chinese felt for a barbarian country, and it is most unlikely that Chen Shou would have used a sacred word after these two characters. It is equally unlikely that a copyist could have confused the characters, because in their old form they do not look nearly as similar as in their modern printed form. Yamadai was Fan Yeh’s creation. Furthermore, Furuta 古田 shows that at least 10 different characters were used to transliterate the sound “to” in Han-shu, Wei-zhi and Xin Tang-shu, but in no case was the character “dai” used to represent the sound. There could similarly have been no mistake about the location of Yamaichi. In Wei-zhi, there is a total of 2,237 references to direction, but not once does Chen Shou confuse “east” with “south.” Furuta found 159 examples in which Chen Shou gave distance between two known places in “li.” One “li” during the Wei period was between 75 and 90 meters, but closer to 75. Therefore, the Yamaichi state described by Chen Shou had to be located in the northern part of Kyūshū.

Miller (1980: 127) notes that: “The fascist-nationalist ideologists erected an elaborate and extremely mischievous myth, one that attempted to project the power, authority, and quasi-divine role of the late- and post-Meiji imperial figure back into the remote past, in a thoroughly unhistoric and indeed quite anachronistic manner. In defending this indefensible myth against the plain evidence of history, the location as well as the identification of Japan’s earliest center of culture [at the Kyōto-Nara area] became a matter of great ideological urgency for them. As a result, even the study of this aspect of early Japan was sharply regulated, and these questions could not be studied [before 1945] in anything resembling the spirit of free inquiry without the danger of repressive measures of the most severe sort.”