The Recent Trends and Problems in the Studies of Kaya History

—A Review of The History of Kaya Confederation by
Kim T’ae-Shik (Seoul: Iljogak, 1993)—

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1. Survey of Research in Kaya History

Scholars vary on the exact time span of the ancient history of Korea. The academia of North Korea has established Old Chosŏn, Puyŏ, Chin-guk as ancient, but it has included Guryŏ as the predecessor of Koguryŏ recently.¹ In the academia of South Korea, Unified Silla and Palhae are usually included in the period defined as ancient Korea. However, in recent times, Unified Silla and Palhae are seen as the period of establishment of the Middle Ages, and the period of Unification of the Three-Kingdoms as the turning point between the ancient period and the Middle Ages. On the other hand, some Japanese historians include even part of Koryŏ Dynasty, which succeeded Unified Silla and Palhae, in the ancient period. Although, there is much disparity among these views, the general notion is that the Three-Kingdoms period is the most typical ancient society.

The Three-Kingdoms are Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla. Among these, Paekche and

¹ Research Institute of History in Social Sciences, Chosŏn Chŏnsa, 2nd ed., 1991

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Silla are the outcome, respectively, of consolidation of 50 Mahan states around Paekche-guk and 12 Chinhan states around Saro-guk.

But Kaya, the descendant of Pyŏnhan which formed the so-called Three-Hans along with Mahan and Chinhan, was excluded from the Three-Kingdoms. Puyŏ, Okchŏ and Eastern Ye, all in the northern region were all contemporaries of the Three-Kingdoms, but they are strictly excluded from being a part of the Three-Kingdoms. Therefore, some scholars even suggest the name of the period that we call the Three-Kingdoms Period be changed into Four-Kingdoms (including Kaya), or Five-Kingdoms Period (including Kaya and Puyŏ), or the Age of the Many States.

*Samguk Sagi (History of the Three Kingdoms)*, which is depended on as the standard document in the study of ancient Korean history, is in part held accountable for the exclusion of Kaya from the Three-Kingdoms period. *Samguk Sagi*, as the title illustrates, narrates the history of Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla, and there is but a brief narration on Kaya history. Even the *Samguksa*—this book is not extant as of the present, which makes it impossible for us to know the exact content—compiled before *Samguk Sagi*, did not take Kaya into much consideration, as the title illustrates.

The people of the Three-Kingdoms in the latter half of the 7th century accepted the Three-Kingdoms as Three-Hans. That is, the term Three-Hans, which had originally signified Mahan, Chinhan and Pyŏnhan, underwent a transmutation and became a term signifying Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla, excluding Kaya. Therefore, the reason for Kaya's exclusion from the Three-Kingdoms should not be ascribed to the negligence of Kaya by the later historians but to Kaya history itself.

This problem is related to the level of political and social development of Kaya. How advanced was the society of Kaya? Was it in the stage of a state? The controversy over whether it stopped short at the stage of chieftain society discussed in anthropology, still continues. However, this discussion has not been productively carried on. The most essential reason lies in the difference in the concept of state among the scholars.

The unveiling of the Kaya society by recent excavation of archeological sources tells us that the polity of Kaya had reached the stage of an ancient state. But this ancient state did not reach the level of sophistication reached by Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla.

Therefore, the polity of the Three Kingdoms, Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla, and

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2 Noh T'ae-don, "Changes in the Perception of Three-Hans," *Studies in Korean History*, vol 38,
that of Kaya cannot be discussed on the same level. Moreover, the entity of Kaya is not really clear; the term Kaya has not been confined to a particular polity. The reason for this lies not so much in the ambiguous concept of the polity of Kaya, as in the ambiguity of contemporary reality.

It is believed that the term Kaya originally derived from Pyŏnhan-Kuya-guk situated in Kimhae. But this term emigrated and disseminated along with the fall and rise of many regional groups constituting the Pyŏnhan society; this term was also used as a common designation for many regional groups in Yöngnam region before they were conquered by Silla. The society of Chinhan and Pyŏnhan shared many similarities, and as all 12 Pyŏnhan polities did not join to form Kaya, so neither were all 12 Chinhan polities conjoined to form Silla.

The ancient kingdom of Silla emerged from the unification of the small-scale polities around Saro, one of the 12 polities of Chinhan. On the other hand, in the case of Kaya, a particular polity was not able to integrate the other polities from the stage of Three-Hans to the period of its fall (A.D. 562): what’s more, a comparatively predominant polity did not exist. There was a coexistence of equally predominant polities, with continuous political rise and fall, thus rendering a pluralistic, multi-centered situation.

There are some cases where it is difficult to clarify whether a particular polity belonged to Kaya or Silla. Yangsan, Ch’angryŏng and Sŏngju belong to this category. The polity which had been developing in the Ch’angryŏng region was called Pisabŏl Kaya but the relics excavated from the ancient tomb in the Ch’angryŏng region up till now are more characteristic of Silla civilization rather than Kaya civilization. There was a polity called Sŏngsan Kaya in the Sŏngju region, but its relics are also characteristic of the relics of Silla.

Furthermore, the term which we frequently come across in the Japanese sources, Imna (or Mimana), aggravated the confusion. There are many ambiguous cases where it is hard to tell if the term Imna signifies the entire Kaya or just one polity.

Because of this, there were many cases where adjectives "lost" or "mysterious" were attached, and inspite of the great surge of antiquarian interests, there was little progress in the research itself.

This paucity of research in Kaya history partly resulted from the modern history of Korea. In the latter part of the 19th century, Korea failed to achieve independent modernization and suffered an invasion by Japan. The exaggerated and distorted self-aggrandizing tendencies of Japan has a long history, but as the imperialistic invasion became undiscguised, history was distorted in extreme measures. These bents of research are called imperial historiography or colonial historiography,
being ultranationalistic, and government-controlled historical studies that stand as a vanguard of imperialistic aggression. Until the defeat of Japan in the war, there was a continuous distortion of Korean history under the aegis of the Japanese government. The scholars who were employed by or supported the colonial rule were the central members of such work.

The area that suffered the most in this process was Kaya history. The political slogan “Nai-Sen itta (Japan and Korea as one body)”, made for the purpose of mobilizing the material and human resources for imperialistic expansion, was fictionalized as “Il-Sŏn dongjo-ron” in the academia. It means that Japan and Chosŏn (Korea) are of the same origin. Accordingly, it meant that the Chosŏn Annexation carried on by Japan was in no way illegal, or unfair, and it only meant a restoration of the natural state of what had once been in the history. Moreover, something called “the theory of Japanese Viceregal at Imna” was fabricated to argue that the Korean peninsula had already experienced colonial rule long time ago.

The distorted historical image was abused to subdue the power of the anti-imperialistic struggle of the Koreans and to promote national inferiority complex.

Even after the defeat of the Japanese Empire, the historians of both Japan and Korea were affected by the theory of Japanese Viceregal at Imna. The Japanese scholars could not get rid of the remainder of colonial historiography, at least, in the area of ancient history. That Yamato regime of Japan in the 4th century invaded the Korean peninsula and that they ruled the southern region of the Korean peninsula through the so-called Japanese Viceregal at Imna became the accepted truth, and this became a basic premise for the research in Japanese ancient history. But to accept a large-scale military invasion across the sea as historical truth, it had to be proved that the military power of Yamato regime at that time dominated many other powers and that they had already unified all of the Japan Islands. But this does not correspond to the historical facts at all. Accordingly, the research in Japanese ancient history on the basis of the distorted history of Korea-Japan relationship could not avoid self-contradiction and, in consequence, it limited its own scope of research.

Korean scholars of ancient history had this difficult task of purging the ghost of colonial historiography at hand. Feeling the injustice as victims, they were compelled to reject the terms Japanese Viceregal at Imna The consequence was that Kaya history was ignored and that even in the not frequent publications on Kaya history, “the purpose of research of Kaya history is to overcome the theory of Japanese Viceregal at Imna”. Consequently, research on the foreign relationship between the nations of East-Asia centering on Kaya took on importance, rather than
research into the Kaya history itself.

A series of research taken up by the most representative historian of North Korea, Kim Sŏk-hyŏng, was a direct confrontation of the ghost of colonial historiography. According to Kim the accounts of the Three-Kingdoms and Kaya in Ilbon sŏgi, which had been used as the documentary basis for the theory of Japanese Viceregal at Imna in reality was not related to the kingdoms of Korean peninsula. Rather, they were related to the Yamato regime and the provincial powers founded in various areas of the Japan Islands by the Koreans who migrated there. Consequently, Japanese invasion from the Japan Islands was only a fabrication, and the overall situation was that there was a migration and an expansion from the Korean Peninsula to the Japan Islands. This theory created a great sensation in the Japanese academia, but it did not last long. There was a lack of consistency in the sources; although his suggestion was powerful, there were too many loopholes in his logic. In any case, the series of accomplishments by Kim Sŏk-hyŏng did not overcome the confines of research centered on foreign relationship.

In South Korea, Ch'ŏn kwan-woo was the pioneer to bring the Kaya history into focus and order. He brought a new light into the interpretations related to the Ilbon sŏgi. Ilbon sŏgi had been regarded as historically unreliable, and it had been a taboo among the Korean scholars to use it. Ch'ŏn suggested that King Kŭn Ch'o'o-go of Paekche, and not Empress Shin Kong (of the Yamato regime) as written in Ilbon sŏgi, was the one who conquered the so-called 7 states of Kaya in the 4th century. Consequently, it can be concluded that Japanese Viceregal at Imna was in reality not an apparatus established by the Japanese to rule Kaya but a military headquarters of Paekche. This theory had a great impact on the scholars of Kaya history or of Korea-Japan relations. But the problem of this research was that Paekche cast a shadow on Kaya, rendering the development of Kaya history itself ambiguous.

Although the research in Kaya was not able to gather any substantial results or find a new opening due to extreme lack of historical sources and the aftermath of colonial historiography, it was encouraging that there was an active archeological field research being conducted from the late 1970s.

The large-scale field research in the mausolea of a polity called Tae Kaya in Chisan-dong of Koryŏng and pokch'ŏn-dong site in Tongrae of Pusan, the mausolea

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4 Ch'ŏn Kwan-woo, “Kaya History Restored,” Literature and Intellect, Summer 1977, Fall 1977, Spring 1977, reprinted in Studies in Kaya History
of the polity regarded as the successor of Tokro, (one of the 12 polities of Pyŏnhan), demanded a reconsideration of the previous perception of Kaya.

A very distinct aspect of Kaya culture, setting itself off from Paekche and Silla, was beginning to be uncovered in the system of burial, pottery and personal ornaments. Armor, helmet and weapons excavated testify to the fact that the military power was not in any way underdeveloped compared with the other neighboring kingdoms; the technological level in the manufacture of ironware and the quantity of iron weapons was even greater than that of the neighboring kingdoms. It was also revealed that the culture in Kofun Period\(^5\) of Japan was greatly influenced by the material civilization of Kaya in its developing process and establishment.

From this time on, an active investigation and field research of relics in Yŏngnam region, the ancient territory of Kaya were conducted. It could even be called the heyday of Kaya archeology. Especially, the unearthing of artifacts of the ancient tombs became the central task.

In the late 1980s, there was a field research at Okch'ŏn site in Hapch'ŏn. Consequently, it was proved that the polity called Tara belonged to the confederation whose leader was Tae Kaya. Though Tae Kaya headed the confederation its power equalled that of Tae Kaya. The ruling classes of Ara Kaya, one of the three most powerful groups among the groups constituting Kaya, were buried at Haman Malsan-li site. One of the three most powerful groups among the groups constituting Kaya was Ara Kaya. The aristocrats of Kŭngwan Kaya, the eldest of the Kaya, were buried at the Taesŏng-dong site in Kimhae. The field research conducted at these sites in the early 1990s was a great success.

There were other field researches conducted in other areas. The gradual recovery of Kaya culture became possible through the archeological artifacts and remains. It might be premature to reveal the real aspect of the polities constituting Kaya because the field research are not evenly distributed in area and period, but the research in Kaya history will be able to enter a new stage when these problems are overcome.

As narrated above, many archeological sources have been accumulated, but they have not been directly applied to research in Kaya history. This is because it is not an easy task to combine archeological and historical studies. There was a demand on the researcher of Kaya history to obtain an expansive knowledge on historical

\(^{5}\) There are diverse opinions on the specific date, but the general notion is that the period is between late 3rd century to the 7th century
archeology and a systematic knowledge on documentary sources of Korea such as *Samguk Sagi* and also of foreign countries such as *Ilbon sógi*.

**II. The Content of the Recent Publication of The History of Kaya Confederation and Its Significance**

*The History of Kaya Confederation* (Kim, T'ae-shik, Seoul: Iljogak, 1992) is written by a scholar who possesses both of the requirements needed for research in Kaya history. The author's energies were mainly directed to the research in the Kaya history ever since his graduate years, and he is one of the very few historians majoring in Kaya history. The culmination of his efforts is *The History of Kaya Confederation*, his doctoral thesis at the Korean History Department of Seoul National University, and it has been published in the book form.

The author of this book is basically a historian, but he has done extensive readings in archeological sources and opened up a new horizon in the research in Kaya history. In this book, he makes original and critical uses of the historical sources of *Ilbon sógi* on the 6th century, and he makes excellent extensive use of accomplishments in the archeological investigation, centering on Yŏngnam region, the ancient territory of Kaya.

The organization of the book is as follows: Preface, the main body of the book in 5 chapters and Conclusion and a bibliographical survey of the problem of Japanese Viceregal at Imna.

**Preface**

I. A Bibliographical Survey  
II. The Method and the Scope of Research

**Chapter 1: Establishment and Dissolution of Earlier Kaya Confederation**

I. The Present Condition of the Remains of the Kaya Region from the 1st century to the 4th century  
II. The Origin of Karak-guk  
III. The Establishment of Earlier Kaya Confederation  
IV. The Dissolution of Earlier Kaya Confederation

**Chapter 2: The Emergence of Later Kaya Confederation**

I. The Present Condition of the Remains in the Kaya Region in the 5th century
II. The Growth of Tae Kaya
III. The Establishment of Tae Kaya Domain
IV. The Extent of Power of Later Kaya Confederation

Chapter 3: The Extinction of Southern Countries in later Kaya Confederation
I. The Present Condition of Remains in the Southern Kaya Region in the first half of the 6th century
II. Historical Inquiry into the Geographical Names T’aksun and T’akkit’an
III. Demise of Each polity

Chapter 4: The Management of Japanese Embassy by Anra
I. Criticism on the Existing Theory of Japanese Viceregal at Imna
II. The Establishment of Japanese Embassy by Paekche
III. The Seizure of Japanese Embassy by Anra

Chapter 5: The Collapse of Kaya Confederation
I. The Dual System of North and South in Kaya Confederation in the Middle of the 6th century
II. The Effort of Kaya Confederation for Survival and the Pressure of Paekche and Silla
III. The Annexation of Tae Kaya by Silla

Conclusion
Appendix: Examination of Research History on the Problem of Japanese Viceregal at Imna

As the title of each chapter indicates, the object of research is the entire period of Kaya, through which the author draws a general view of Kayan history in the framework of confederation. We cannot but admire the author’s effort, when we take into consideration of the fact that he traced the overall development of Kaya history inspite of such a big lacuna of sources.

Let’s take a brief look at the content of the book. In the preface, the author examines the contents of previous research in Kaya history and enumerates the problems. Next, there’s a brief summary of the author’s view of Ilbon sŏgi in view of the methods of his research. Finally, the author lucidly defines the object of research by restricting the temporal and spatial scope of Kaya history.
In Chapter 1, the author focuses on Kuya-guk of Kimhae. First of all, he examines the results of archeological research and then shows the socio-economical base through which the formation of Earlier Kaya Confederation became possible around the turn of the century up till the 4th century. He suggests that against this background, the political entity that can be called Kaya in Kimhae emerged at the first half of the 2nd century. In the first half of the 3rd century, he observes that many power groups that constituted Pyŏnhan were integrated centering on the Kuya-guk of Kimhae and he calls this Earlier Kaya Confederation. From late 4th century to early 5th century, he suggests that King Kwanggaet'o of koguryo made an expedition and subjugated the Kaya region, thereby rendering the dissolution of this group.

In Chapter 2, the focus is on Tae Kaya of Koryŏng rather than on Kuya-guk of Kimhae. In 5th century, the mountain region of the Yŏngnam inland, which can be called the northern part of Kaya, emerges as the new advanced area. The center of the region was Banp’a a confederacy of several tribes located in Koryŏng region, Banp’a named itself Tae Kaya and it expanded its power to the neighboring regions and took dominion of the western region of Yŏngnam and some of the eastern regions of Honam. This coincides with the distribution range of Koryŏng style pottery. The author calls this group, which is centered on Tae Kaya, Later Kaya Confederation.

In Chapter 3, the author goes on to explain that Later Kaya Confederation suffered a blow because southern polities constituting Later Kaya Confederation were invaded and annexed by Paekche and Silla.

In Chapter 4, there’s a new interpretation on the accounts of Japanese Viceregal at Imna. According to the author, the so-called Japanese Viceregal at Imna was in reality not an apparatus established by the Yamato regime to rule Kaya; he argues that Anra Japanese Embassy was established by dispatch of pro-Paekche Japanese officials in Ara Kaya (Anra) sent by Paekche to check the power of Silla in the late 530s.

In Chapter 5, the fall of Tae Kaya is narrated. After the middle of the 6th century, Later Kaya Confederation was divided into North/South dual system centering on Tae Kaya and Anra. They are conquered by Paekche; after a defeat of Paekche by Silla in 554, Paekche loses control over Kaya, which leads to the eventual fall of Tae Kaya in the 562 attack by the Silla military forces.

An assessment of this book has been made already by both the historians and

archeologists. And in this short article, I cannot, nor is there a need to, go into all the specific details of this expansive book. Therefore, I will point out a few central problems of this book.

First of all, there's the problem of the term 'confederation'. In fact, this problem has been already observed in other book reviews. The author believes that in the 3rd century at the very latest, Earlier Kaya Confederation was already formed centering on Kuya-guk. But the fact that Kuya-guk emerged as the most powerful force in Pyŏnhan society and the fact that there was a formation of confederation system with Kuya-guk as the central power are two different things. In the light of this fact, many scholars acknowledge the superonoty of Kuya-guk in this period, but they are skeptical about the formation of a confederation. If Earlier Kaya Confederation did exist, the qualitative difference between Later Kaya Confederation and Earlier Kaya Confederation must be proved. Without this proof, we cannot understand the true aspect of development in Kaya history.

Another problem is that the process of development of Kaya history was narrated with too much of a focus on the political history and that its narration is two-dimensional. The internal structure, the aspect of change of and changes in individual politics that constituted Kaya and the concrete reality of Kaya that joined different forces, are not very clearly elucidated.

Next, there's the problem of the use of archeological sources. The use of archeological sources can be the forte of this book and also its Achilles' tendon. The political power range and the distribution range seen in the light of archeological remains cannot be equated, but I agree with the author from the fact that these two are not unrelated. Still, when a historian makes use of archeological sources, a very careful discrimination is necessary. Because the historian can accept the archeologist's or the field researcher's opinion indiscriminately or can use them to suit his own theory. In fact, most of the researchers of ancient history face this kind of danger.

Finally, I'd like to mention the problem of the concept 'culture', a term used throughout this book. In the process of employing the archeological sources, the author uses 'culture' related terms such as cultural mode, cultural characteristic, cultural accumulation, cultural base, cultural element, cultural complex; there are cases where the concepts are not clear.

The problems pointed out thus far are, strictly speaking, the limitation of the entire academia of ancient history in its current stage rather than the limitation of the author. The author has dealt with the very important and urgent problems which
had been neglected by the academia and has put them into prospective. And we applaud his courageous effort. This book gives the general outlines of the political history of Kaya, and I have pointed out a few problems, with the hope that on the basis of such accomplishments, great progress will be made in the research of Kaya history.

III. The Course of Research in the Future

The publication of this book does not mean the completion of research in Kaya history. Rather, it means that we can really start from here on. Until now, the research tended to be immersed in the area of foreign relationship; now it can make a change of direction towards research of Kaya history itself. Also, the characteristic methodology of this book, active use of Ilbon sôgi and fruitful use of the archeological sources, will have an impact on the course of research in Kaya history.

However, there are still many problems awaiting to be solved through the cooperation of the academia. I’d like to mention a few of them briefly.

Kaya history has the tendency to be extremely dependent on the archeological sources, more so than the other fields, due to the big lacuna of basic documentary sources. Naturally, there are quantitatively more of archeological research rather than the work of historians when it comes to research in Kaya. But, archeological research in Korea still carries many problems in theory and methodology.

First of all, there’s the methodological fallacy of automatically displacing some of the material proofs with historical facts or situations, without taking the general historical context into consideration. For example, if an advanced technology in pottery making appears in one particular area, it is averred that the polity of that area is much more advanced in political and military resources compared to the polities of other areas.7

Sometimes, if a nation builds a tomb which shows signs of hujang (burial with abundant grave goods), then the researchers automatically assume that a kingdom or state is socio-economically more advanced than the ones that do not show signs of hujang without taking the burial system and afterlife view into consideration. The difference between hujang and pakchang (burial with scanty grave goods) can of course be due to the difference in the level of social productivity. But if the conversion from hujang to pakchang takes place earlier in a polity, it is surely an

indication that this polity is politically, socially and intellectually more advanced than the ones that do not undergo the conversion. Accordingly, the method of comparing the level of growth between the different polities which are at different levels of development, just by the size of the tombs, the quality and the quantity of burial objects is certainly fallacious.

Another serious problem is an obsession with the diffusionist view. Actually, not many disciplines put so much emphasis on, or makes frequent use of the concept 'diffusion' as the Korean archeology and the ancient history academia.

In the primitive and ancient Korean societies, a migration of the people and cultural diffusion from the North to the South did in fact take place. However, the problem is that the socio-political transformation and technological innovation are always explained from the 'diffusionist' point of view.

There is a big possibility that the ruling group of Kuya of Kimhae migrated from outside when we look at Samguk sagi. The story goes, according to a passage in Karakgukki which is quoted in Samguk yusa, that Huh Wang-ok, the wife of King Suro, the first King of Kumkwan Kaya (Kaya-guk) was a princess of Ayodhya of India. Queen Huh is revered as the originator of many Korean Huhs of Kimhae. Therefore, sometimes it is suggested that the Korean people are part Indians. The supporting evidences for the theory that Queen Huh is from India are as follows: The twin fish pattern shown around the tomb supposed as King Suro's in Kimhae is even up till now used for decorations in the Ayodhya region of India; the name 'Kaya' signifies fish in ancient Indian. On the other hand, there's another theory that suggests, on the basis of the tombstone which expresses Queen Huh as Empress Boju, that there has been two migrations in the past. The first being from Ayodhya region of India to the Boju (upper stream of the Yangtse River of China), and the second being from here to Kimhae.

However, we cannot directly convert the content of a legend into historical fact. It is more persuasive to suggest that the legend was made up to explain the origin of Buddhism during the process of its transmission.

Another explanation for this legend can be accorded to the problem regarding trade. In the legend, Queen Huh brings many precious things as wedding dowry, and we must not overlook this fact. In the southern coast and archipelago of Korean peninsula, many artifacts of Chinese-origin are discovered. Especially, Kimhae was the key point in sea trade route connecting China, the Japan Islands and Korean

9 Kim Pyong-moo, "Queen Huh's origin," Festschrift for Professor Kim Won-ryong's Retirement, Archeology Section 1987
peninsula. In the recent field research of Taho-ri Remains in Ch’angwon near Kimhae, some material characteristics connecting to the southern region of China have been confirmed. Therefore, there’s a possibility that there was an active exchange between the Kaya region and the south of China, and the story that an Indian princess was wedded into Kaya region and that she married the King of Kaya can be a reflection of cultural encounters.

On the other hand, another theory puts emphasis on the dissemination of culture or migration of people from the North. The scholars who follow this theory are directly or indirectly influenced by the theory of Conquering Horsemen Dynasty of Japanese archaeologist Ehgami Namio or American historian of Japanese history, Ledyard. There are variations among the scholars, but they all agree that after Puyŏ, situated in Manchuria, suffered a blow from Hsien-pi Tribe, some of its people moved South and built a kingdom in Kimhae.

This theory has been unpopular for a while, but there’s a resurgence of this theory after Taesŏng-dong remains of Kimhae, which is the mausolea of the royal family of Kumkwan Kaya, has been excavated and investigated recently. In the latter part of the 3rd century and the first half of the 4th century, the structure of the Taesŏng-dong tomb undergoes a drastic change unlike the ones of earlier period, and in the case of burial objects, the artifacts of Northern origin, armors, helmets, horse equipments and bronze pots were buried at funerals. Also there is an emergence of the customs of burying the alive with the dead where the the customs of bending the weapons or destroy utensils; this is a typical culture of northern origin. Specifically, Yusu Nohashim remains of northeast region of China is thought to be the origin.

Therefore, in the period between the 3rd and the 4th centuries, the people of Puyŏ suddenly moved South and conquered the indigenous people, and they built the new kingdom in Kimhae. This is, according to this theory, Kumgwan Kaya which is different from Kuya-guk of the previous stage.

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10 These are the examples—there are pocket on the floor of pit, and also log casket, bronze sculpting knife, bronze wares in the shape of cow horn, in the tomb.


11 The theory suggesting that the legend of Queen Huh reflected active sea trades have already been published.


12 Ehgami Namio, The State of Horsemen People, 1967


14 A consensus among the scholars of the three countries, Korea, China and Japan, as to whether the Yooosoo Nohashim remains belong to Puyŏ or Hsien-pi Tribe is yet to be reached. Among the Korean scholars, North and South both, the predominant view is that the Nohashim remains are of Puyŏ.
As the theory stated above, when there are external elements in the archeological materials, they were explained as evidences of migration of the newcomers and the conquest of the indigenous people. Not only in the history of Kaya, but also in the case of Paekche and Silla, these kinds of diffusionism or theory of conquest of kingdom are very popular.

No one would deny that external elements are important variables. However, internal changes such as ecological environment elements, rise of population, technological innovation, changes in group dynamics must be taken into consideration. In this light, the research in Kaya history up till now, which put much emphasis on external elements and foreign relationship must change its course of research.16

These are the few of the problems that the research in Kaya history faces, but it is certain that it will be more dependent on archeological research accomplishments. The research trends in archeology has been the concentration on excavating and collecting sources, detailed form classification of artifacts and remains, and establishment of chronicle system, but in the future, if research expands to socio-economic aspect, the course of research in the Kaya history will make a hopeful turn. In this light, the significance of The History of Kaya Confederation lies in that it has finalized the results of previous research accomplishments, and in that it will become the basis for the new research in the future

(translated by Ahn Ji-hyeon, S.N.U.)

16 There is effort on the part of some of the recent researches to overcome these limitations