

# The *Shan-hai ching* and Wo: A Japanese Connection

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This paper examines the relationship of Wo 倭 to neighboring states through the tracing of the ancient Chinese maps of the *Shan-hai ching* 山海經 (The classic of mountains and seas) and explores its cultural significance. Wo covered an area on one (or more) of the islands which we now know as Japan.

## The *Shan-hai ching*

To comprehend the relationship of Wo to its neighbors in ancient times, it is necessary not only to investigate historical sources and archeological data, but to begin by examining one of the oldest references to Wo in the *Shan-hai ching*. Within the documents of the *Shan-hai ching* in the section entitled “Hai-nei pei ching” 海內北經 (Classic of regions within the seas: North) lies one of the oldest citations to Wo.

An ancient comprehensive survey of the world, the *Shan-hai ching* is sometimes said to be the parallel in Chinese literature to medieval Latin bestiaries and to books of marvels and monsters. Here is where can be found information on archaic cultures and practices of ancient times that is of interest to scholars. The *Shan-hai ching* is traditionally ascribed to Yü 禹, the founder of the Hsia Dynasty, and Yi 益, a minister of the preceding ruler Shun 舜 who had been a legendary ruler. In their initial efforts to control floods, Yü and Yi traveled across the empire and produced a log or record of what they saw and encountered in their travels. These logs were later said to have become the *Shan-hai ching*.

The title of the *Shan-hai ching* first appeared in Ssu-ma Chien’s 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca. 86 B.C.E.) *Shih chi* 史記 (Records of the Historian, 123: 3179). Generally, the dates of the *Shan-hai ching*, attributed to varying authorship, are placed between 300 B.C.E. and 250 C.E.<sup>1</sup> The *Hai-nei pei ching* reference to Wo ends with an editorial postscript bearing the names of three palace officials of the Former Han (dated 6 B.C.E.). The division of the *Shan-hai ching* into eighteen fascicles (*chüan* 卷) has remained generally unaltered since the Yüan period. The only commentary to be compiled before the Ming period was that of Kuo P’u 郭璞 (276-324) which is considered to be the standard one.

The eighteen chapters of the *Shan-hai ching* may be divided into five groups:

1. Chapters 1-5: “Wu-tsang shan ching” 五藏山經 (Five treasures: The classic of mountains)

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Text: A Bibliographical Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 359-60.

2. Chapters 6-9: “Hai-wai ching” 海外經 (Classic of regions beyond the seas)<sup>2</sup>
3. Chapters 10-13: “Hai-nei ching” 海内經 (Classic of regions within the seas; Chapter 12: “Hai-nei pei ching” refers to Wo)
4. Chapters 14-17: “Ta-huang ching” 大荒經 (Classic of great wilderness)
5. Chapter 18: “Hai-nei ching” 海内經 (Classic of regions within the seas)

### **Wo in the *Shan-hai ching***

The references to Wo, revealed in the “Hai-nei pei ching” (Chapter 12), are found among the chapters that survey the lands with foreign peoples and cover mountains, deities, and mythical creatures.<sup>3</sup>

While Chapters 1 through 5 of the *Shan-hai ching* tell of the sacred mountains of the central region and the surrounding regions in the four cardinal points (south, west, north, and east), it is Chapters 6 through 9 that describe foreign peoples and lands in the regions beyond the seas (to the south, west, north, and east). Furthermore, it is Chapters 10 through 13 that deal with foreign peoples and places to the cardinal points beyond the central lands; within this set of chapters, the specific reference to Wo may be found. Chapters 14 through 17 depict those at the edge of ancient Chinese civilization.

### **The *Hai-nei pei ching***

The compilers of the *Shan-hai ching* conceived of the world as being divided into three rectangles: (1) a central region (corresponding to Chapters 1 through 5); (2) four seas, encompassing the central territory (Chapters 10 through 13); and (3) the regions beyond the seas and wilderness (Chapters 6 through 9 and 14 through 17) (see Map I).<sup>4</sup> Within the second rectangle, Chapter 10 (*Hai-nei nan ching*) surveys the lands from the southeast corner toward the west, Chapter 11 (*Hai-nei hsü ching*) from the southwest corner toward the north, Chapter 12 (*Hai-nei pei ching*) from northwest corner to the east, and Chapter 13 (*Hai-nei tung ching*) from northeast toward the south (see Map II).

Chapter 12 (*Hai-nei pei ching*) maps out mountains, deities, mythical creatures, and foreign peoples and lands including Wo. In the *Hai-nei pei ching* are found the following references to foreign lands and peoples (see Map III; the following numbers correspond to those on Map III)<sup>5</sup>:

<sup>2</sup> The editorial postscript to Chapters 6 to 9 bears the names of three palace officials of the Former Han with the date of 6 B.C.E. The identical editorial note follows Chapter 13.

<sup>3</sup> Kanaseki Takeo 金崎丈夫 considers the term “wei jen” 倭人 (Chapter 18, *Hai-nei ching*) to be a mistake for “Wo-jen” 倭人. See his “Wajin no okori” 倭人のおこり (Origins of the people of Wo), in *Zemināru Nihon kodai shi* ゼミナール日本古代史 (Seminar, history of ancient Japan), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1979).

<sup>4</sup> Michael Loewe, ed., *Early Chinese Texts*, p. 537.

<sup>5</sup> Maps II and III were created based on information on the locations and the identifications of some place names and foreign peoples provided by Cheng Hsia, Hui-Chen Cheng, and Kenneth Lawrence Thern, transl., *Shan-hai ching: Legendary Geography and Wonders of Ancient China* (Taipei: Committee for Compilation and Examination of the Series of Chinese Classics, National Institute for Compilation and Translation, 1985); Kōma Miyoshi 高馬三良, transl., *Sengai kyō*:

1. *She-wu* 蛇巫 (snake shaman) Mountain, also called *Kuei* 龜 (Turtle) Mountain.
2. *Hsi-wang-mu* 西王母 (Queen Mother of the West), a major deity.<sup>6</sup> Her sacred creatures are three green birds.
3. *K'un-lun* 崑崙 Mountain, the cosmic four-sided plateau (world tree), where deities make their ascension from and descent to earth.
4. *Ta-hsing-po* 大行伯 (big walk chief), holding a dagger-axe. A warrior figure, the founder of the country bearing his name.<sup>7</sup>
5. *Ch'üan-feng* 犬封 (dog fief) Land, also called *Ch'üan-jung* 犬戎 (dog tribe).<sup>8</sup>
6. *Erh Fu chih shih* 貳負之尸 (Erh Fu's corpse). A country in the far north is named after him.<sup>9</sup>
7. A girl kneeling, offering a club and food.
8. *Chi-liang* 吉量 (fortunate measure) Horse, a striped horse.<sup>10</sup>
9. *Kuei* 鬼 (ghost) Land, the being there is said to have a human face with one eye, or a serpent body.<sup>11</sup>
10. *T'ao* 蝮 (anthoud), eats humans.
11. *Ch'üung-ch'i* 窮奇 (strange creature), looks like a tiger with wings, eats humans.
12. The Mound Towers of Emperors Yao 堯, K'u 嚳, Tan-chu 丹朱 and Shun.<sup>12</sup>
13. *Ta-feng* 大蠶 (big bee/wasp).
14. *Chu-o* 朱蛾 (red moth).
15. *Chiao* 蛟, the people with tiger stripes and calves on their shin bones.
16. *T'a-fei* 闖非 with a human face and an animal body in green.
17. *Chü-pi chih shih* 據比之尸 (Chü-pi's corpse).
18. *Huan-kou* 環狗 (ring dog), beings with the head of an animal and a human body.
19. *Mo* 抹, beings with a human body.
20. *Jung* 戎, the people with a human head and three horns.<sup>13</sup>
21. *Lin-shih* 林氏 (forest clan) Land.<sup>14</sup>

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*Chūgoku kodai no shinwa sekai* 山海經：中国古代の神話世界 (*Shan-hai ching*: The mythological world of ancient China) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1969); and E. G. Pulleyblank, "Chinese and Their Neighbors in Prehistoric and Early Historic Times," in David N. Keightley, ed., *The Origins of Chinese Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

<sup>6</sup> Queen Mother of the West appears as a hybrid with the ferocious features of a tigress in Chapter 2: *Shi-shan ching*.

<sup>7</sup> Anne Birrell, *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1999), p. 237.

<sup>8</sup> The foundation myth of this land relates to a dog-hero.

<sup>9</sup> Erh Fu is implicated in the murder of Ya Yü 竊窳. *Shih* 尸 (corpse deity) indicates the representative of the dead man in the funerary ritual of the Chou period. The concept of corpse deities may imply an archaic practice of human sacrifice.

<sup>10</sup> It was said that anyone who rides this horse shall live for a thousand years.

<sup>11</sup> The name of *Kuei* appears in the *Wei chih* (History of the kingdom of Wei), "Tung-i chuan" 東夷傳 (Records of the eastern tribes).

<sup>12</sup> Jacques Garnet claims that the cult of dead kings is associated with the Shang civilization: *History of Chinese Civilization* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Jung is the name of a Tibeto-Burman people.

22. *Tsou-wu* 騶吾 (precious animal), can be ridden a thousand *li* in a single day.
23. *Fan* 汜 (flood) Forest, 300 *li* square.
24. *Ts'ung-chi* 從極 (vertical limit) Pool.
25. *Ping-i* 冰夷 (ice tribe), with a human face, riding two dragons.<sup>15</sup>
26. *Yang-wu* 陽汙 (bright pool) Mountain, the source of the Yellow River.
27. *Ling-men* 凌門 (ice gate) Mountain, the source of the Yellow River.
28. *Wang Tzu-yeh chih shih* 王子夜之尸 (Wang Tzu-yeh's corpse), another corpse deity.
29. *Hsiao-ming* 宵明 (night bright) and *Chu-kuang* 燭光 (torch gleam), daughters of the wife of Shun 舜, Teng pi shih 登比氏, living on a big marsh by the Yellow River.<sup>16</sup>
30. *Kai* 蓋 (cover) Land.<sup>17</sup>
31. *Chü Yen* 鉅燕 (powerful King of Yen).
32. \**Wo* (dwarfs), Japan was first known by this name.
33. *Ch'ao-hsien* 朝鮮 (Korea), present-day Lo-lang County 樂浪縣.
34. *Lieh-yang* 列陽 (bright chains).
35. *Hai-pei* 海北 (north of the sea) Mountain.
36. *Lieh-ku-she* 列姑射 (*ku-she* chains), an island.<sup>18</sup>
37. *She-ku* 姑射 Land in the sea.
38. Giant Crab.
39. *Ling* 陵 Fish with a human face.
40. Giant *pien* 鰓 Fish (bream).
41. *Ming-tsu-i* 明組邑 (brilliant cord town).
42. *P'eng-lai* 蓬萊 Mountain in the sea.<sup>19</sup>
43. *Ta-jen* 大人 (big people) Marketplace.<sup>20</sup>

The items above all relate to mythical beings and creatures, religious rites, and myths. In this sacred landscape *Wo* is placed together with the cosmic *K'un lun* Mountains and the Queen Mother of the West.

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<sup>14</sup> *Chou shu* 周書 (Chou annals [dating from the Former Han]) states that King Chou of the Shang dynasty imprisoned King Wen of the Chou dynasty. Hung Yao travelled to the land of Lin-shih and found *Tsou-wu* (see no. 22) and presented it to King Chou, who then released King Wen.

<sup>15</sup> *Yi* 夷 stands for non-Chinese peoples.

<sup>16</sup> Matsuda Minoru 松田稔 states that the two daughters may be a moon goddess and a sun goddess or two female shamans serving the river god. See his *Sengaikyō no kisoteki kenkyū* 山海經の基礎的研究 (Basic study of the *Shan-hai ching*) (Tokyo: Kasama shoin, 1995), p. 250.

<sup>17</sup> There is a Kaemal 蓋馬 Mountain in Koguryō 高句麗 (Korea).

<sup>18</sup> In the text of the *Lieh tzu* 列子, "Huang-ti p'ien" 黃帝篇 (Chapter on the Yellow Emperor), it is referred to as a mountain on a river island near the sea. A similar name is found in the *Tung-shan ching* 東山經.

<sup>19</sup> According to the *Shih chi*, "Feng shan shu" 封禪書 (Feng-shan [sacrifice]), this is one of the three spirit mountains in Po-hai, east of Hopei. The immortals and elixirs of life are said to be found there.

<sup>20</sup> The name also appears in the *Ta huang tung ching* 大荒東經.

## Kingdom of Yen

The *Shan-hai ching* describes the relationship of Wo to other foreign lands. The following passage from the *Hai-nei pei ching* states the connection of Wo to the kingdom of Yen:

Kai [cover] Land is south of Chü Yen and north of Wo. Wo belongs to Yen.<sup>21</sup> Ch'ao-hsien [Chosŏn, Korea] is east of Lieh Yang, south of Hai Pei [sea north] Mountain. Lieh Yang belongs to Yen.<sup>22</sup>

At the beginning of Chapter 13 in the *Hai-nei tung ching*, the term Chü Yen cited above is used to mean the “powerful kingdom of Yen 燕.”<sup>23</sup> During the age of the Warring States (475 B.C.E. to the imperial unification of 221 B.C.E.), Yen was one of the seven main regional powers together with Han 韓, Wei 魏, Chao 趙, Ch'in 秦, Ch'u 楚, and Chai 齋. The kingdom of Yen lay in the region of present-day Peking and to its northeast. Yen is reported to have had close contact with its neighboring “barbarians.” Numerous knife-shaped coins dating from the Warring States period were found in Manchuria and Korea. As early as the fourth century B.C.E., and definitely by the third century B.C.E., Yen's trading relations stretched as far as to Korea.<sup>24</sup>

Even after the formation of the Former Han, Yen appear to have had strong ties with its neighboring barbarians. For instance, in 196-95 B.C.E. Lu Wan 盧綰, the King of Yen, rose in rebellion. The revolt was suppressed and Lu Guan sought shelter among northern Hsiung-nu. One of Lu Guan's generals, Wiman 衛滿, escaped with one thousand of his followers to northeastern Korea and became a ruler there in about 194 B.C.E. Wiman's Chosŏn was eventually overthrown by the Han empire in 108 B.C.E.

The reference to Wo in the *Hai-nei pei ching* may indicate a possible tributary relationship between Wo and the kingdom of Yen as far back as the Warring States era, predating references to Wo in any of the Chinese dynastic histories. While Wo did appear at the rim of the northern regions in the *Shan-hai ching*'s survey of the world, it does not emerge as an isolated country far into the sea, although its cultural and religious practices seem incompatible with those practiced on the continent.

In addition to Yen, Ch'u, another warring state is cited in Chapter 13 in the *Hai-nei tung ching*.<sup>25</sup> Largely because of the mythological contents of the text, the *Shan-hai ching* does not provide the same type of information as historical documents do. Nevertheless, its value lies in providing Chinese descriptions of the archaic societies of Wo, Yen, and Ch'u, making it possible to shed light on the peoples of the East in ancient times.

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<sup>21</sup> The text reads, “Wo shu Yen” 倭屬燕.

<sup>22</sup> Cheng, Pai, and Thern, trans., *Shan-hai Ching*, p. 197. The same section in Anne Birrell's *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* reads: “Canopy Country lies south of the land of Giantsswallow and north of the land of Dwarfs. The land of Dwarfs belongs to the kingdom of Swallow” (p. 147).

<sup>23</sup> Kōma Miyoshi translates this term as the powerful kingdom of Yen in his *Sengai kyō*, p. 496.

<sup>24</sup> Jacques Gernet, *History of Chinese Civilization*, p. 130.

<sup>25</sup> The text reads, “Kuei-chi Mountain is south of great Ch'u.”

## Wo in Chinese Historical Documents

### *Ch'ien Han shu* 前漢書

Not only the *Shan-hai ching* but official Chinese documents provide references to Wo. The earliest citation in historical documents is found in the *Ch'ien Han shu* (History of the Former Han) compiled by Pan Ku 班固 (32-92). The *Ch'ien Han shu* describes the history of the Former Han dynasty, beginning with the life of its founder, Liu Pang 劉邦, in about 210 B.C.E. and ending with the fall of Wang Mang 王莽 in 23 C.E. The *Chi-li chih* 地理志 (treatise on administrative geography) in the *Ch'ien Han shu*, states:

Beyond Lo-lang in the sea, there are the people of Wo. They comprise more than one hundred communities. It is reported that they have maintained intercourse with China through tributaries and envoys.<sup>26</sup>

In the *Ch'ien Han shu*, the term Wo appears at the end of the section on the regions belonging to Yen. In this section, first a brief history and cultural features of the kingdom of Yen are given, and the descriptions of Lo-lang and the people of Korea follow. Since the term Wo then appears in connection with Lo-lang in Korea, it can be seen that *Wo* was considered to be at the rim of the Yen region.<sup>27</sup>

### The *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 and the *Wei chih* 魏志

Commentaries on the people of Wo are found in the texts of the *Hou Han shu* (History of the Later Han, 25-220 C.E.) and in the *Wei chih* (History of the Kingdom of Wei, 221-65 C.E.). The beginning of the commentary on Wo in the *Hou Han shu* reads:

The Wo 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 Ch'ao-hsien [Chosŏn, northern Korea] by Emperor Wu (140-87 B.C.E.), nearly thirty of these communities have held intercourse with the Han [dynasty] court by envoys and scribes.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, when the people of Wo first appeared in Chinese dynastic history, thirty communities of Wo had already maintained diplomatic and tributary relations with the continent. Since this was at the time of the Former Han dynasty, the *Hou Han shu* thus far indicates that the people of Wo may have had tributary relations with the Kingdom of Yen even before the Former Han dynasty. The issue of a tributary relationship may also be examined from the Japanese historical viewpoint. In this way, we might determine if the people of Wo were prepared to establish diplomatic ties with the continent in the era before Japan's name appeared in the official dynastic documents.

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<sup>26</sup> Otake Takeo 小竹武夫, trans., *Kanjo* 漢書 (History of the Former Han dynasty) (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1998), vol 3, p. 451.

<sup>27</sup> See Otake Takeo, trans., *Kanjo*, pp. 449-51.

<sup>28</sup> L. Carrington Goodrich, ed., *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories: Later Han Through Ming Dynasties*, translated by Ryūsaku Tsunoda (South Pasadena: P. D. and I. Perkins, 1951), p. 6.

## Historical Records from Japan

The Yayoi 弥生 period (ca. 250 B.C.E.–ca. 300 C.E.) began a little earlier than the Former Han dynasty and ended about a century later than the Later Han dynasty, and near the beginning of the Yayoi period Japan entered the civilized orbit of East Asia. This occurred with the appearance of rice-growing villages and the use of iron. Virtually all the new cultural features of the period were introduced from China and Korea.<sup>29</sup>

According to the *Ch'ien Han shu* (noted above), the local chieftains were at that time sending diplomatic delegations to the Chinese outpost of Lo-lang in northern Korea. Evidence from burial artifacts suggest that prior to the Yayoi period, the Jōmon 縄文 (ca. 1000 B.C.E.–ca. 300 B.C.E.) people actually traveled from northern Kyushu to the Korean peninsula.<sup>30</sup> Certainly, at this time, there was immigration from the peninsula to Wo in even greater numbers.

Interestingly, in his *Lun heng* 論衡 (Discussion on authority, Later Han), Wang Ch'ung 王充 (27-90?) includes certain passages stating that during the reign of King Cheng 成王 of the Chou dynasty (ca. 1020 B.C.E.) the people of Wo sent to China certain aromatic herbs as tributary gifts, herbs said to be for ritual use.<sup>31</sup> Although Sino-Japanese tributary relations might not go as far back as the Chou dynasty, it is possible that for some time prior to the Former Han, a low level of trade existed on both sides of the Korean strait to bring the two regions into contact.

Archeological remains and records of religious practices are of enormous value in giving evidence of Japan's relationship to the continent. The remains of the ritual site from the late Jōmon period found in Akita Prefecture, indicating a primitive concept of the world tree and even the existence of human sacrifice, give the appearance that the people of Wo practiced religious rites.<sup>32</sup> In addition, clay figures from the middle Jōmon era, animal-like faces with upright bodies, suggest incipient snake-cult ceremonies by female shamans.<sup>33</sup> We know that the tradition of *miko* 巫女, or female shamans, is certainly old. The first written document from Japan, the *Kojiki* 古事記 (Record of ancient matters, 712) describes a trance dance by a female deity named Ame-no-uzume-no-miko 天宇受賣命 who danced in an effort to entice the Sun Goddess out of the cave where she secluded herself.

Both the *Hou Han shu* and the *Wei chih* tell of Himiko 卑弥呼 (ca. 183-ca. 248, also known as Pimiko), a female ruler of Wo. The Queen enjoyed a great following among her subjects, largely because of her mastery of magical powers (*kidō* 鬼道). Her lands were held together by common beliefs in magic and practices over which she exercised her absolute power as a head shaman.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Delmer M. Brown, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 80-81.

<sup>30</sup> Mori Kōichi 森浩一, ed., *Nihon no kodai I: Wajin no tōjō* 日本の古代 I : 倭人の登場 (Ancient Japan I: Emergence of the Wo people) (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1995), p. 42.

<sup>31</sup> Mori Kōichi, *Nihon no kodai*, p. 51.

<sup>32</sup> Yoshie Akio 美江彰夫, *Nihon tsūshi* 日本通史 (Comprehensive history of Japan) (Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha, 1986), p. 71.

<sup>33</sup> Delmer M. Brown, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1, p. 71.

<sup>34</sup> Yoshie Akio, *Nihon tsūshi*, p. 70.

Regarding Himiko's rule, the *Hou Han shu* states:

During the reigns of Huan-ti 桓帝 (147-68) and Ling-ti 靈帝 (168-89), 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. Thereupon they placed her on the throne. She kept one thousand female attendants, but few people saw her.<sup>35</sup>

In turn, the *Wei chih* cites Himiko's successor named Iyo 壹與. It is said that great disturbances followed after Himiko's death until Iyo, a girl of thirteen was made queen and then order was restored. Most likely, Iyo was also a female shaman who ruled the people through her mastery of magic practices.

The *Ch'ien Han shu* and the *Wei chih* record the practice of the "fortune keeper" in the land of Wo. When the people went on voyages, they appointed a man called the "fortune keeper" (*jisui* 持衰) who was not allowed to comb his hair, to wash, to eat meat, nor to approach women. If the voyage turned out propitious, they all lavished on him slaves and other valuables. In the event there was disease or mishap, they killed him, believing that all phenomena in this world were connected. One was able to influence what was going on around oneself. In the same way the success of Himiko may have attributed to her superior powers as the "fortune keeper" of the her lands and people.

The Chinese histories discuss the Wo practice of divination by baking bones in much the same way as that found in ancient China.

[*Wei chih*:] Whenever they undertake an enterprise and discussion arises, they bake bones and divine in order to tell whether fortune will be good or bad. First they pronounce the object of divination, using the same manner of speech as in tortoise shell divination; then they examine the cracks made by the fire and tell what is to come to pass.<sup>36</sup>

Actually, the Neolithic inhabitants of northern China were the first people to use animal bones for divination by a process of heating them and interpreting the cracks. During the time of the Shang in the middle of the second millennium B.C.E., this practice had reached its height with the addition of new features including use of tortoise shells. More than a millennium later, the same type of divination was recorded as being practiced in Wo. The Chinese histories indicate that the Chinese divinatory practice must have been imported to Japan while the memory of its activity could still be invoked. It is clear that the early Chinese immigrants or the people who were familiar with the religious practices must have carried them to Wo.

## Conclusion

The reference to Wo in the ancient maps of the *Shan-hai ching* may be one of the oldest of the written records relating to Japan. Chinese historical documents attest that the

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<sup>35</sup> L. Carrington Goodrich, ed., *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories*, p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> L. Carrington Goodrich, ed., *Japan in the Chinese Dynastic Histories*, p. 13.



chieftains of Wo, including Himiko, were eager to maintain diplomatic ties with the continent under the tributary system, these regional lords needing to do so in order to maintain their own positions in their own territories. It remains plausible that some of the chieftains may have established diplomatic relations with the state of Yen on the continent as early as the third century B.C.E. Such a possibility is supported by the reference to Wo in the *Hai-nei pei ching*.

In the sacred landscapes described in the *Hai-nei pei ching*, Wo significantly appears on its fringe. As depicted on the maps, these regions are filled with sacred mountains, dead kings' mounds, corpse deities, mysterious foreigners, fabulous creatures, and man-eating hybrid animals; and the entire world is sustained by such magic beliefs and practices as the world tree, all familiars of a shaman. The world view of the people in Himiko's land was not extraneous but congenial to the world of the *Shan-hai ching*, because Wo with its shamanism was part of the landscape of the *Shan-hai ching* not only geographically but culturally. The record of Wo in the *Shan-hai ching* suggests that centuries before the unification of Japan, the land of Wo was an integral part in the East Asian cultural sphere and belonged to its world order. The world order here is not a political order in a modern sense but the order sustained by belief in magical powers, the order belonging to a time when kings and queens were head shamans themselves and the lands were believed to be occupied by those mysterious forces.