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## **When truth is everywhere: the formation of plural identities in medieval Korea, 918-1170**

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**WHEN TRUTH IS EVERYWHERE: THE FORMATION OF PLURAL IDENTITIES IN  
MEDIEVAL KOREA, 918-1170**

**REMCO E. BREUKER**



**WHEN TRUTH IS EVERYWHERE:  
THE FORMATION OF PLURAL IDENTITIES  
IN MEDIEVAL KOREA, 918-1170**

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van  
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,  
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus Dr.D.D.Breimer,  
hoogleraar in de faculteit der Wiskunde en  
Natuurwetenschappen en die der Geneeskunde,  
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties  
te verdedigen op dinsdag 19 december 2006  
klokke 15.00 uur

door

Remco Erik Breuker  
geboren te Zaandam  
in 1972

*Promotiecommissie:*

*Promotor:* Prof. Dr. B.C.A. Walraven

*Referent:* Prof. Dr. E.J. Shultz (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

*Overige leden:* Prof. Dr. W.J. Boot  
Prof. Dr. B. J. ter Haar  
Dr. K. De Ceuster

The whole question revolves in very truth about the word 'some.'

William James, *A pluralistic universe, The Hibbert Lectures at Manchester College on the present situation in philosophy* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), p. 79.



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## PREFACE

Korea in general and Koryŏ in particular are relatively neglected fields of historical study outside of Korea. Even in Korea, the study of Koryŏ is not very popular. This is unfortunate, because the Koryŏ period, which lasted for five centuries, has in various respects exercised an enormous influence on the history of the peninsula, not in the least since the Koryŏ dynasty was the first unified state on the peninsula. It has as such functioned as a charter state for subsequent states on the Korean peninsula, a state whose achievements, identity and historical memory played an important role in the creation of all subsequent communities on the peninsula. This study tries to bring this contribution of the Koryŏ dynasty to later states on the peninsula in focus by mapping and analyzing identity formation processes during the early to middle Koryŏ, roughly from 918 until 1170, the year the Koryŏ military took over the administration of the state.

Any student of Koryŏ history is severely dependent on the knowledge, expertise and insights of other scholars. I count myself lucky in having been assigned to Professor No Myŏngho 盧明鎬 during my stay at Seoul National University after graduating at Leiden University. Professor No is not only an unrivalled Koryŏ specialist, but he was also exceedingly kind and patient in his supervision of my progress, which, truth be told, must have vexed him regularly. Without the years I spent at SNU this study would have been impossible and without the supervision and support of Professor No and my fellow students of Koryŏ during that time, this study would have shown many more flaws than it does now. Outside the lecture rooms, I benefited greatly from discussions with the scholars and students in whose research room I was given a desk. These discussions, as well as the endless goodwill shown to me in the form of proofreading my Korean essays and papers, invitations to informal seminars and inclusion in all kinds of activities made my stay at SNU not only rewarding academically, but also personally. There are too many people to mention, but I want to include in particular Dr. Pae Sŏngjun 배성준 (and the nationalism seminar), Dr. Ch'oe Yŏnshik 최연식 and Ch'oe Kychwa 최계화. The seminars led by Professor Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn 최병헌 also contributed greatly towards my understanding of Koryŏ.

I learnt about Koryŏ at Seoul National University, but about Korea and its history outside SNU's gates. Korea's recent history is a painful one for many people and I have to thank the friends who first took the time to go through a Korean history of Korea with me to instill a sense in me of the human face of Korean history. Yi Yunsŏn 이윤선, Ch'a Songhŭi 차송희, Kim Kyut'ae 김규태, and Kim Taegil 김대길 have made Korea home for me. Bouts of homesickness were quickly expelled in the company of Kim Kyŏngp'il 김경필, Im Suhŭi 이수희 and Yang Chŏngyun 양정윤. Cho Hyejŏng 조혜정 was always there and never too busy to correct my written Korean and Kil Yŏngu 길영우, finally, showed me the importance of listening to the beats of different drums.

Colleagues in the field also showed their support over the years, none more than Dr. Roald Maliangkay of Australian National University, who fulfilled a double role as a colleague and a friend. Dr. Lewis Mayo of Melbourne University provided exceptional support, perceptive

criticism and invariably inspiration and friendship.

The foundations of my academic education were laid in heated discussions with Vincent Breugem, Pepijn Sauer and Emiel Teunissen, who remain the touchstones of my views (academic and other) today. If anything, this thesis is in its own way a small contribution to those discussions. It is indebted to them more than to anything or anyone else.

Finally, I must thank my parents, brother and sister for the support they have shown over the years, not only during the at times stressful times while writing the thesis, but also before when I decided to study Japanese and Korean and later on, when I decided I needed to spend a prolonged period in Korea. The title of doctor that this thesis brings me, is perhaps different from the doctor's title I was once imagined to earn one day, but I hope nonetheless satisfactory.

This dissertation was only possible because of my wife, Imke, who quite literally stood at its beginnings and now stands at its completion. Without her, it would not have been written and Korea would have remained unknown to me. I dedicate this thesis to Imke, who knows why.

## ABBREVIATIONS

CKS	<i>Chōsen kinseki sōran</i>	朝鮮金石總覽	[Exhaustive collection of Korean epigraphy]
CMP	<i>Chūngbo munhōn pigo</i>	增補文獻備考	[Expanded encyclopedia of Korea]
CWUG	<i>Chewang un'gi</i>	帝王韻紀	[Rhymed records of emperors of kings]
GT	<i>Gaoli Tuxing</i>	高麗圖經	[Illustrated guide of Koryō]
HKJ	<i>Haedong kosūngjōn</i>	海東高僧傳	[Biographies of eminent Korean monks]
HKCKY	<i>Han'guk kodaie chungse komunsō yōn'gu</i>	韓國古代中世古文書 研究	[A study of ancient and medieval Korean documents]
HKM	<i>Han'guk kŭmsōngmun</i>	韓國金石文	[Complete collection of Korean epigraphy]
IJNG	<i>Ikchae nan'go</i>	益齋亂藁	[Random jottings of Yi Chehyōn]
JS	<i>Jinsbi</i>	金史	[History of the Jin]
JT	<i>Jiu Tangshu</i>	舊唐書	[Old history of the Tang]
KMC	<i>Koryō myojimyōng chipsōng</i>	高麗墓地銘集成	[Collection of Koryō epitaphs]
KMHJ	<i>Koryō myōnghyōnjip</i>	高麗名賢集	[Collected works of famous Koryō worthies]
KS	<i>Koryōsa</i>	高麗史	[History of Koryō]
KSC	<i>Koryōsa chōryō</i>	高麗史節要	[Essentials of the history of Koryō]
LS	<i>Liaoshi</i>	遼史	[History of the Liao]
MUJ	<i>Mogūnjip</i>	牧隱集	[Collected works of Yi Saek]
PHJ	<i>P'abanjip</i>	破閑集	[Jottings to break up idleness]
POHJ	<i>Pobanjip</i>	補閑集	[Supplementary jottings in idleness]
SBJ	<i>Sambongjip</i>	三峰集	[Collected works of Chōng Tojōn]
SGSG	<i>Samguk sagi</i>	三國史記	[History of the Three Kingdoms]
SGYS	<i>Samguk yusa</i>	三國遺事	[Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms]
SHCJ	<i>Sōngbo chōnjip</i>	星湖全集	[Complete writings of Yi Ik]
SHSS	<i>Sōngbo sasōl</i>	星湖僊說	[Collected works of Yi Ik]
SJS	<i>Sejong shillok</i>	世宗實錄	[Veritable records of Sejong]
SS	<i>Songsbi</i>	宋史	[History of the Song]
SSC	<i>Samguksa chōryō</i>	三國史節要	[Essentials from the history of the Three Kingdoms]
STYS	<i>Shinjūng tongguk yōji sūngnam</i>	新增東國輿地勝覽	[Newly expanded geographical encyclopedia of Korea]
SYCC	<i>Songdae Yōsa charyo chimnok</i>	宋代麗史資料集錄	[Collection of Koryō historical materials in Song sources]
TGCJ	<i>Tōngguk chiriji</i>	東國地理誌	[Geographical gazetteer of Korea]
TGSRK	<i>Tōngguk saryak</i>	東國史略	[Comprehensive history of Korea]
TGTG	<i>Tōngguk t'onggam</i>	東國通鑑	[Comprehensive mirror of Korea]
TYSC	<i>Tōngguk Yi sangguk chip</i>	東國李相國集	[Collected works of Minister Yi of Korea]
TMS	<i>Tōng munson</i>	東文選	[Anthology of Korean literature]
TJS	<i>T'aejong shillok</i>	太宗實錄	[Veritable records of T'aejong]
TS	<i>T'aejo shillok</i>	太祖實錄	[Veritable records of T'aejo]

TYS	<i>Tongguk yöji süngnam</i>	東國輿地勝覽	[Geographic encyclopedia of Korea]
YCJ	<i>Yangch'onjip</i>	陽村集	[Collected works of Kwön Kün]
YCG	<i>Yösa chegang</i>	麗史提綱	[Important themes in Koryö history]
YKP	<i>Yöktae kosüng pimun</i>	歷代高僧碑文	[Inscriptions for eminent monks]

## CONVENTIONS

Throughout this study, I refer to entries in works in classical Chinese by first mentioning the chapter (*kwön* 卷) followed by the page of the woodblock printed page. The only exception is the edition of the *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 I have used, which is a modern edition. For the details see the bibliography.

Texts in the *Tong munsön* 東文選 I refer to as mentioned above, but if appropriate I also mention the title of the text and its author.

Inscriptions and epitaphs are referred to by the relevant number of the inscription or epitaph in its collection followed by the page numbers.

Titles, ranks and names of institutions and offices in Koryö I have translated according to the unsurpassed list of translations made by professors Edward J. Shultz and Hugh W. Kang at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. These translations reflect the nature of the function rather than the literal meaning of the title.

Chinese characters (and in rare cases only *han'gü'l*) are mentioned, when appropriate, the first time a name, place or noun appears in a chapter. Each chapter, the characters are given with the first mention in that chapter.

The first time a secondary study in Korean or Japanese is mentioned in the footnotes, the complete details in the original language are given for clarity's sake. The translation of titles in non-European languages of secondary sources and studies can be found in the bibliography.

For the transcription of Korean I rely on the adapted McCune-Reischauer system: 'ㄷ' is transcribed as 'shi'. Japanese is transcribed according to the Hepburn system and for Chinese I follow pinyin. In quotations from other studies or translations I replace the transcriptions used if these are different from the transcription systems I use. In bibliographical references, though, I retain the transcription method used in the original text.

Names of temples, palaces, and other proper nouns followed by modifying nouns such as *-sa* 寺 (although I translate *-sa* 寺 as temple, it should be noted that *-sa* 寺 rarely refers to just a temple, but almost always to a complex of temples and other buildings or to a monastery complex) and *-kung* 宮 are hard to translate without sounding artificial. I have decided to maintain the original proper noun, including the modifying noun and followed by a noun in English, denoting the category the proper noun belongs to. The reason for this is that I feel that modifying nouns are part of the proper noun. The Pongün-sa or Pongün temple (Pongünsa 奉恩寺) thus is referred to as Pongün-sa temple. Exceptions are made for names of mountains and rivers; these I translate according to convention. Thus Amnok-kang 鴨綠江 becomes Amnok and Paektu-san 白頭山 remains Paektu.

## INTRODUCTION

This study has grown out of a much larger attempt to look into the issue of the formation of a transregional or ‘national’ community on the Korean peninsula in the early to middle Koryŏ 高麗 dynasty (918-1170). Anyone who studies the Koryŏ dynasty in depth encounters a rich storehouse of ideas and thoughts that, different though they may be, all centre upon Koryŏ’s place in the world, its pasts, presents and futures, its descents and its destinies. These ideas and thoughts have different forms of expression and often contradictory contents. At times they even present incommensurable, different views of life and death and the world and conflicting political, social and religious ideologies. Despite this diversity, they give the student of Koryŏ history a strong impression of the existence of a sense of identity: they suggest that Koryŏ people perceived themselves belonging to a community, the entity we now know as Koryŏ. Writings from the Koryŏ period – with the exception of some administrative documents made up by clerks in middle Korean written in Chinese characters, all Koryŏ texts are written in classical Chinese – were framed within a distinct sense of being meaningfully outside the sourceland of classical Chinese. The strong impression the sources give of a sense of membership in a historical community, suggests that an inquiry into ideas of Koryŏ identity is both legitimate and viable. The presence of all these ideas in themselves – and even the awareness of them – is not enough to reach the conclusion that in the case of Koryŏ we may indeed speak of a pre-modern nation with a distinct form of consciousness that transcended regional affiliations and the boundaries of the immediately accessible physical world. The awareness of being different needs to be supported by other, mainly socio-political, factors: what was the extent to which these ideas were known by the non-élite. What was their place in the repository of shared mythology and history of Koryŏ? Did social differentiation support the formation of a national consciousness? Was Koryŏ a bureaucratic or an aristocratic society? What role did Buddhism, the state religion, play? How strong was the tie between state, land(-scape) and people? Most importantly, is it at all possible to speak of a nation, if obviously we are dealing with a medieval epoch?<sup>1</sup> Why would it be necessary to use this kind of terminology for a period like Koryŏ? There is an abundance of theoretical questions about the nation in general to be answered before we can even begin to contemplate the question of Koryŏ’s ‘nationhood’. During my research I realized that the most important question had not even been raised by me, much less answered. The more I read in Koryŏ sources and the more I

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘middle ages’ is used in Korean historiography and in the periodization of Korean history. It does not completely correspond to the Western European Middle Ages; nor regarding the time-period, or regarding the so-called medieval mentality or concepts such as kinship organization. Nevertheless, the correspondence between Korean and Western European middle ages is, essentially, so close that valid comparisons can be made. The original concept of ‘middle ages’ was imported along with Western historiography in Korea, but research and reflection have long since redefined and adapted the concept. It can no longer be seen as a Western concept in the Korean context, since it has been thoroughly internalised. See No Myŏngho 盧明鎬, “Namal-Yŏch’o-ŭi sahoe pyŏndong-gwa ch’injok chedo 羅末麗初의 社會變動과 親族制度,” *Han’guk kodaesa yŏn’gu* 8 (1995): pp. 65-85.

tried to gain an understanding of the society as a whole, with its complicated historical descent, the tangle of its international relations, the surprising variety of ideologies present, the more I became aware of the mass of contradictions, inconsistencies and ambiguities the early to middle Koryŏ period presents. Understanding this period requires an understanding of the human ability to live and function in an environment that is ever-changing and that does not present permanent solutions, but merely temporary or make-shift ‘ways-out’. It seemed to me that the richness of Koryŏ’s history and its society – despite the relative paucity of contemporary sources – could only be appreciated by refraining from reducing it to established analytical categories, such as the ‘nation’. Instead we should ask how people lived in Koryŏ and how they did so in a manner that imbued meaning to their practices. For throughout the almost five centuries of its existence, the Koryŏ state was considered to be meaningful and to be worthy of dedication and loyalty. How did Koryŏ society, how did Koryŏans meaningfully deal with their world? The present study is an attempt to raise and answer this question. I ask what Koryŏ perceptions of reality looked like, whether there was one Koryŏ reality or whether it was more than one. I also ask the crucial question of to what extent Koryŏ perceptions of reality shaped its society and the behaviour of its members, both as individuals and as a group. This study, then, is an inquiry into Koryŏ’s realities.

Reality, like love, is a many-splendoured thing. Thinkers have filled books with ruminations on their discoveries about what reality is or ought to be. Indeed, one of the very few crucial questions of philosophy is the inquiry into reality: that which underlies and is the truth of appearances or phenomena. For a long time, historians took their cues from philosophers with regard to reality and limited themselves to the factual investigation of what reality, defined as the aggregate of real things or existences that make up our daily and thus also our historical reality. More recently less easily definable presences, such as the perceptions of reality or the dreams of kings have become part of the historiographical landscape.

Reality is also hotly disputed. Individual or communal realities differ and thus clash. This is especially so when mutually exclusive realities clash in a space that can only accommodate one. The fact that many different realities exist, or are at least said to exist, points to disagreement about the concept or the perception of reality.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the perception of reality is as Paul Feyerabend has described it: “[a]rguments about reality have an existential component: we regard those things as real which play an important role in the kind of life we prefer.”<sup>3</sup> This comment certainly seems to fit the case of the Koryŏ dynasty.

The intellectual climate of the Koryŏ dynasty presents an important factor in the establishment, development and maintenance of discourses about Koryŏ identities. The early part of this long-lived dynasty was characterized by a vigorous intellectual life in which different strands of ideologies and religions clashed, co-existed and influenced one another,

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<sup>2</sup> There is an enormous amount of literature on the social construction of reality. I shall not restart this discussion, but take the constructed nature of social reality as a given. In this study I shall make reference to a number of authors whose insights are particularly valuable when discussing pluralism. See Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966) for a classic treatment of this subject.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance: A tale of abstraction versus the richness of being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

often within the same mind. Early Koryŏ's intellectual environment stands out for its unusual tolerance of inconsistency, contradiction and incongruities in competing worldviews, imperfectly and only temporarily brought together in individual worldviews. Early Koryŏ's perception of socio-political reality – or perhaps realities – was by our standards an odd mishmash, significantly more filled with contradictions and lacking a unifying principle than many modern philosophers and historians are prepared to admit reality capable of accommodating.

Koryŏ's ideological landscape was littered with philosophical, religious, mythical, and historical constructs and edifices, some remnants from other times, others more recently erected. The purpose of this thesis is to survey these ideologies to see how they influenced discourses on Koryŏ identity and how those discourses were incorporated into and helped to shape those ideologies. Koryŏ literati were for a large part conditioned and educated to take recourse to certain well-developed ideologies, which was most notable in their Confucian education and Buddhist religious practices. Apart from these major ideologies, both philosophical and religious Daoism, a variety of divinatory arts, localized beliefs in gods and spirits and a historical, spiritual and philosophical worship of Koryŏ's geographical features occupied unmistakably influential positions in Koryŏ's mental world. Those who had access to this world by virtue of their learning and social position took full advantage of the possibilities offered.<sup>4</sup> They roamed it more or less at will, although, as anywhere, the beaten tracks were most travelled. The borders between, say, Confucianism and Buddhism or between a belief in the sacredness of a mountain and a Buddhist saint were fluid and not very well demarcated. This is not to say that these borders did not exist. They did and much of the time people were aware of them. It was just that they could be crossed, moved and bumped into.

Modern historiography on Koryŏ for the most part has erected firm borders between the various belief and thought systems current in Koryŏ. Inconsistencies are explained by appealing to a logic that demands consistency from thought systems.<sup>5</sup> Anomalies are banished

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<sup>4</sup> Perhaps similar observations can be made of Song literati during roughly the same period. There are however two crucial differences. The first one is that Koryŏ by virtue of its position and its relative small size possessed literati who looked at the world qualitatively different from Song literati. This was particularly true since the major ideologies of Koryŏ had been imported from Chinese states, a fact which was ever on the conscious of Koryŏ literati. The second is that the degree to which this happened and the articulation by way of official codification that this happened sets Koryŏ apart from the Song.

<sup>5</sup> A concrete example comes from a historian who dichotomised Koryŏ literati in competing factions and drew straight correspondences between the beliefs he attributed to them and the actions they advocated or executed. The dichotomy employed in this instance is a popular one; it is the dichotomy between “cultural internationalization and rationalization” and “traditional conservative beliefs”. In other words, between the proponents of Sinitic Confucianized rule and the proponents of independent Koryŏ traditions, so-called nativism. In this case, as in others, the categorization of Koryŏ statesmen according to their ideological convictions and political actions does not bear fruit and in fact obscures understanding. In the example here, statesman Yun Kwan 尹瓘 (1040-1111) is considered a nativist, while he was in fact in favour of the introduction of Sinitic policies such as the use of coins. The fact that Yun Kwan was considered a great Confucian scholar by his contemporaries is also passed unnoticed. Opposing Yun's monetary policies was Kwak Sang 郭尙, a noted Confucian scholar. Another statesman, So T'aebo 邵台輔 was against sending Koryŏ students to the Song to study at the Song Confucian Academy at state expense, but he was certainly no independence-minded nativist. When the ruler at that time, Yejong 睿宗 proposed building a new palace at the site of Yongŏn-gung palace 龍堰宮 in Sŏgyŏng 西京, a site strongly associated with nativist ideology, the Confucian ministers were in favour and only O Yŏnch'ong 吳延寵,



by postulating a common order that does not allow for meaningful deviations. More importantly perhaps, dichotomous divisions are introduced that reflect more of the present preoccupations of the historical enterprise than of the contemporary ideological setting they claim to represent.

Pluralism only looks strange from our contemporary point of view, because the present we live in is probably in many ways more unified than the past has ever been. The present is easily retroprojected onto the past and perhaps in Korea, which has in both North and South achieved unprecedented internal unity but nonetheless has also been a divided nation since 1945, the retroprojection of unity is stronger than in other places. This, however, is not a purely contemporary phenomenon. Similar retroprojections of unity took place after the unification of the peninsula by Koryŏ, where the idea that contemporary unification was a direct result of the existence of a past peninsular community (the Three Han) was developed, disseminated and codified. It is also the purpose of this thesis to unravel these different narratives of unification and belonging and show how the most contemporary narratives about Koryŏ identity in particular have in effect steered the discourse towards competing dichotomizing interpretations of the past.

The consequences of this approach to Koryŏ history (which for that matter is an approach commonly found in other fields as well) are twofold. Firstly, a picture is painted of Koryŏ history that is not always in keeping with what the sources contain. This must be rectified to the extent the sources allow this to happen. Secondly, this regrettable tendency toward dichotomization has obscured the daily reality of life and thought for early Koryŏ literati, a reality that was not 'in proper trim' the way an orderly mind would wish it to see, but was rather geared to providing the best possible way to deal with socio-political surroundings and the events that took place in them. Koryŏ's worldviews were scattered, inconsistent, plural and full of treasured anomalies. They were not necessarily Buddhist, Confucian, nativist or Daoist. They could be any of these, in every blend conceivable and with every degree of interaction possible.

An investigation into how socio-political reality was perceived and dealt with during the early Koryŏ will reveal the durability and usability of views that are internally contradictory, non-consistent and changeable. It will also disclose the relationship between the Koryŏ literati's view on their world and the ideas they had concerning Koryŏ. The pluralist worldviews of Koryŏ literati are emphatically related to both the contents of their identity as Koryŏ literati and to the way these identities were maintained. The way these literati looked at the world also shaped the way in which the state was structured, the way in which rituals for the people were performed and on the whole the way farmers, slaves, women and other underprivileged segments of society led their lives.

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usually considered a traditional nativist, was against. It is in short impossible to divide Koryŏ statesmen according to their ideological convictions and expect them to behave in accordance with them. The first mistake is the attribution of an exclusivist ideology to all Koryŏ statesmen and the second mistake is trying to link their actions with these attributed beliefs. See for this example Chŏng Kubok 鄭求福, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa* 韓國中世史學史 (Seoul 서울: Chimmundang 集文堂, 2000), pp. 60-62.

## A PLURALIST ARGUMENT

The study of the Koryŏ dynasty (918-1392) has been undertaken with considerable energy during the last two decades. There are many reasons for this surge in interest in this period. There is a genuine sense that this remarkably long-lived dynasty has not been properly studied: studies of the Koryŏ dynasty were indeed relatively few in number until the 1980's. Among some scholars (and the Korean public), there is also a belief that the Koryŏ dynasty somehow captured the essence of Koreanness: it is portrayed as a strong and independent dynasty, free from the stifling Chinese influences that corrupted the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910).<sup>6</sup> Historiography is never completely free from concerns with present affairs, nor should it be.<sup>7</sup> The historiography of the Koryŏ dynasty has, however, suffered from a particularly serious form of presentism. The study of the Koryŏ dynasty is certainly not the only field of study that is partially conditioned by the demands of the present, but it does stand out as a severe case. The bulk of the historiography on this period effectively obscures Koryŏ's unusual ideological constellation from the tenth to the early thirteenth centuries. The ideological landscape was abundant, rich and rife with contradictions. A considerable part of the modern historiography on the Koryŏ period is characterized by strong dichotomizations concerning the fundamental character of the Koryŏ dynasty. The debate is intense, but in fact only about which side of the dichotomization should be considered correct.<sup>8</sup> Dichotomizations with regard to Koryŏ *per se* are not questioned. Koryŏ ideology thus has usually been described in monist and mutually exclusive terms. Delicate issues such as the general ideological orientation of the Koryŏ dynasty have been analysed with the demonstrably crude dichotomies of Buddhism and Confucianism "and found to be lacking in crudeness".<sup>9</sup> This approach has caused aspects of Koryŏ society and culture to be alternately characterized as Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist or nativist, depending on the point of view of the observer and the dichotomies invoked. I argue that a conception of ideology in Koryŏ as pluralist is both more in accordance with the sources and internally more plausible.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, at the same time this old and clichéd image of the Chosŏn dynasty is also disappearing in favour of a more positive appraisal.

<sup>7</sup> For an eloquent exposition of this issue, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The landscape of history: How historians map the past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> A distinguished exception is No Myŏnggho who has pleaded for an understanding of Koryŏ that acknowledges its fundamentally pluralist worldview. See No Myŏnggho, "Tongmyŏngwang p'yŏn-gwa Yi Kyubo-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha'gwan 東明王篇과 李奎報의 多元의 天下觀," *Chindan hakpo* 震檀學報 83 (1997): pp. 292-315; No Myŏnggho, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha'gwan-gwa haedong ch'ŏnja 高麗時代의 多元의 天下觀과 海東天子," *Han'guk sa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 105 (1999): pp. 3-40.

<sup>9</sup> Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, p. 33.

<sup>10</sup> Some studies by prominent Korean scholars that describe Koryŏ history this way are: Kim Sanggi 金庠基, "Koryŏ-shidae ch'ongsŏl 高麗時代總說," *Kuksasang-ŭi chemunje* 國史上的 諸問題 1 (1960): pp. 49-68; Shin Hyŏngshik 申澄植, *Samguk sagi yŏn'gu* 三國史記研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak 一潮閣, 1981); Shin Hyŏngshik, "Kim Pushik 金富軾" in *Han'guk yŏksaga-wa yŏksabak* 韓國역사가와 역사학 (Seoul: Ch'angjak-kwa p'ipyŏng 창작과 비평, 1994), edited by Cho Tonggŏl 趙東杰, Han Yŏngu 韓永愚 and Pak Ch'ansŭng 朴贊勝, pp. 57-76; Yi Kangnae 李康來, *Samguk sagi*

It is of the utmost importance here to make a clear conceptual distinction between two related but otherwise different forms of pluralism I will discuss. On the one hand, there is the supposition that reality in itself is pluralist; that is, that it contains elements which cannot be reduced to each other. According to this understanding of human reality, it is impossible to locate with certainty a unifying principle which ultimately constitutes our shared world. At best, it may be hoped for that several principles which *seem* to constitute different aspects of reality may be determined. This is in short the argument that reality is pluralist; it is existential or ontological pluralism. This argument must be clearly distinguished from pluralism as an ideology; that is, the extent to which a given community is aware of their world as being pluralist and the extent to which such a community incorporates awareness of socio-political reality being pluralist into its actions, structures, institutions and patterns of behaviour. This is ideological pluralism. At the risk of being superfluous, I want to point out that it is very well possible for a community to be aware of the world being fundamentally fragmented, without expressing this in any communal way. It is also possible to have the presence of strongly fragmented and pluralist elements in a community, without the community in question being aware of it. Awareness of socio-political reality as pluralist and fragmented and acting upon this awareness is qualitatively different from not being aware of this or being aware of socio-political reality as fundamentally unified and yet exhibits clearly fragmented and pluralist patterns of behaviour, streams of thought and so forth.

Historians have a tendency – one which they share with the majority of other people – to wish for harmony and order as the underlying principles of the objects of their research. Instead of the often disorganized and chaotic picture the sources seem to paint, historians look for a way of making this disarray of hard to distinguish facts and patterns somewhat more orderly.<sup>11</sup> This inevitably entails reducing the volume of pertinent facts to a manageable quantity by removing the majority of non-pertinent facts. The processes and methods which underlie the historical pursuit have been convincingly described and analysed elsewhere and there is no need to go into detail here.<sup>12</sup> But this inevitable “conquest of abundance”, as Paul Feyerabend puts it, which sacrifices abundance in favour of clarity and surveyability, can in some cases turn into a serious fallacy. The act is in itself absolutely necessary to make any sense

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*chôn'goron* 三國史記典據論 (Seoul: Minjoksa 民族社, 1996). Chông Kubok, “Koryô shidae-üi yöksa üshik 高麗時代の 歷史意識”, *Chôn'ong-gwa sasang* 傳統과 思想 4 (1990): pp. 179-218; Chông Kubok, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*; Michael C. Rogers, “The Chinese world order in its transmural extension: The case of Chin and Koryô,” *Korean Studies Forum* 4 (1979): pp. 1-22; Michael C. Rogers, “P'yönnnyön t'ongnok: The foundation legend of the Koryô state,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 4 (1982): pp. 3-72; Michael C. Rogers, “National consciousness in medieval Korea: The impact of Liao and Chin on Koryô,” in *China among equals: The Middle Kingdom and its neighbors, 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), edited by Morris Rossabi, pp. 151-172; Michael C. Rogers, “Notes on Koryô's relations with 'Sung' and 'Liao,’” *Chindan hakpo* 71-72 (1991): pp. 310-335.

<sup>11</sup> Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, and Gaddis, *The landscape of history*; see William James, *A pluralistic universe, The Hibbert Lectures at Manchester College on the present situation in philosophy* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912) for an eloquent (and classic) exploration of the human yearning for the absolute.

<sup>12</sup> Gaddis, *The landscape of history*, pp. 91-109; Isaiah Berlin, “The sense of reality,” in *The sense of reality: Studies in ideas and their history* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997), edited by Henry Hardy, pp. 1-39; Isaiah Berlin, “Historical inevitability,” in *The proper study of mankind: An anthology of essays* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997), edited by Henry Hardy and Roger Hauscheer, pp. 91-118; Michael Oakeshott, *On history and other essays* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1982).

at all of our sensory input, whether historiographical or otherwise, but where to draw the line is at bottom a matter of personal judgment. And this judgment is informed by preconceived ideas, acquired experiences and wishes regarding the kind of reality each of us prefers. There is, in other words, ample room for disagreement and ambiguity. Before I will go into the particulars of Koryō's ideological landscape or Koryō historiography, a short consideration of pluralism is in order.

Perhaps befittingly, the term 'pluralism' is used in various ways and against various backgrounds. It is used as an ethical term, a political idea, an existential mode, a methodological approach, a social or societal situation, a legal principle, and so forth.<sup>13</sup> In this article, I shall leave aside the way the notion of pluralism is used in contemporary politics, law and society and focus on the existential, ethical and methodological usages of pluralism and the concepts associated with these usages especially with regard to the practice of historical inquiry.

Isaiah Berlin championed the idea of ethical pluralism, which in his view boiled down to the realization that there is no one ultimate ethical principle, but that there are a number of contradictory ethical principles that co-exist and in this sense are not mutually exclusive, although their respective human advocates will probably not admit this. Value systems are, in Berlin's thought, bound to clash from time to time, with little to be done about it. In the absence of one supreme principle and in the presence of a – limited, according to Berlin – number of equally valid principles, this is unavoidable. The ethical argument is of course an inescapable extension of the acknowledgment that there might be more than one ultimate principle, in other words, the existential dimensions of pluralism. It is important here to mention that Berlin's argument does not start from a philosophical premise; it originates from his historical studies of thinkers and their ideas. His study on the thought of Machiavelli, for instance, demonstrated Machiavelli's acknowledgment of the coterminous and simultaneous existence of conflicting value systems.<sup>14</sup> Machiavelli was active in a decidedly monist – Christian – environment and probably thought of himself as such, but still found the (necessary) room to manoeuvre and espouse a range of ideas that has generally been considered to be coherent, but, as Berlin persuasively argued, that also admitted the presence of conflicting value systems. To be more specific, Machiavelli's body of thought not only admitted the existence of fundamentally different and conflicting ethics between rulers and ruled (none of which corresponded exactly to the publicly espoused values of Christianity), but he even thought this divergence to be absolutely necessary in order to effectively rule (and be ruled). The parallel, as we shall see, with Koryō literati is striking.

Berlin was mainly interested in the ethical consequences of accepting the notion of pluralism. He did not touch upon and merely implied the more fundamental issue of existential pluralism of which ethics are a consequence, rather than a cause. As mentioned above, Berlin did not come to espouse the notion of pluralism through a philosophical

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<sup>13</sup> See for instance the diverse essays in Richard Madsen and Tracy B. Strong (eds.), *The many and the one: Religious and secular perspectives on ethical pluralism in the modern world* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

<sup>14</sup> Isaiah Berlin, "The originality of Machiavelli," in *Against the current: Essays in the history of ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), edited by Henry Hardy, pp. 25-79.

argument. He did so on historiographical grounds; it was not logic which made Berlin's pluralism plausible and possible, but the historical inquiry into specific instances of the human experience. As such, his argument potentially may have far-reaching philosophical consequences, but it remains a historical argument. Even a philosopher like William James, whose plea for pluralism is entirely philosophical and not in the least historical, recognizes the importance of history in dealing with reality: "For pluralists, on the other hand, time remains as real as anything, and nothing in the universe is great or static or eternal enough not to have some history."<sup>15</sup> Philosophy, as a human endeavour, is historical, that is, it takes place within time.

The central place he awarded to historical inquiry is a characteristic which he shares with an altogether very different philosopher, Paul Feyerabend. Feyerabend's historical analyses of the development of science have supported the possibilities of pluralist interpretations of human experiences from quite another angle. He argued that the potentiality for change necessarily comes from an inherent ambiguity, a state in which various latent potentialities co-exist. If anything, a pluralist worldview (if the term itself is not a *contradictio in terminis*), that is a worldview that allows the existence of contradictions and inconsistencies between its constituent parts, harbours more ambiguity than any other kind of worldview and is thus better equipped for coping with changes. Changes are often dealt with without having to resort to corresponding radical changes in worldview. Drastic changes in one's direct surroundings, then, can often be accommodated without having to discard one's worldview entirely. It hardly needs emphasis that this is a clear advantage; adjusting to a new world can be a traumatic experience and living opportunistically without any kind of ethical framework whatsoever is simply not possible. Pluralism, then, offers the advantageous possibility of employing alternative interpretations to deal with new situations, while it does not necessarily demand that old ideas are discarded. The 'conquest of abundance' diminishes ambiguity by way of abstraction and as such prepares and positions newly established crude dichotomies to take its place; a pluralist worldview does this to a slightly lesser extent, preserving more ambiguity and thus room for change.

Ambiguity implies the potential for change, but it is important here to note that this change is often peripheral. That is to say, the capacity for adjustment of any worldview manifests itself at its boundaries. A pluralist (an incongruent, self-contradictory, yet for all practical purposes functioning) worldview negotiates and maintains its hodgepodge of constituent elements by constantly defining and redefining those elements that can be maintained and those elements that must be discarded. This is, in a slightly adapted form, the boundary mechanism as propounded by Fredrik Barth.<sup>16</sup> The centre of an identity, of that which makes something itself and not something else, is paradoxically located not in the centre, but in the boundaries. The 'hardness' of the boundaries at any given time decides how change

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<sup>15</sup>James, *A pluralist universe*, p. 49.

<sup>16</sup>The boundary mechanism was developed by the anthropologist Fredrik Barth, who used it to explain the often amazing flexibility within seemingly set patterns of group or cultural behaviour. Barth concluded that the "heart" of culture or identity resides in the boundaries, rather than in the core, as is usually assumed. See Fredrik Barth (ed.), *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of cultural difference* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1969), Introduction.

is accommodated. ‘Soft’ boundaries ensure adjustment through acceptance of foreign elements; ‘hard’ boundaries reject when change is perhaps too much, too radical or too sudden. The boundary mechanism enables change, without severing ties with previously established worldviews, beliefs, concepts and other ways to deal with the abundance of reality.

Dichotomizing the abundance of reality not only leaves out most of reality, it also condemns everything that is left out to the realm of the un-real. An approach like this carries certain disadvantages; it makes it impossible, for instance, to deal with anything that is not considered to be part of reality. As Feyerabend noticed, arguments about reality tend to reflect that which we hold dear or fear. This is also true for the practice of historiography; crude dichotomies partly express present concerns and partly exclude everything outside the dichotomy. Avoiding these crude dichotomies would yield the immediate advantage of being able to recognize that “all events are equally real, but not equally important”.<sup>17</sup> Or to borrow the words of Michael Oakeshott:

My Venice is not your Venice, and this grove of trees, which to me now is a shelter from the rains or a place to play hide-and-peek, to another (or to me in different circumstances) may be a defence against soil erosion, But there is nothing subjective or exoteric about these various understandings. They may exclude one another but they do not deny one another, and they may be recognized by those who do not share them. Every such object is the perception of a subject, but none is “subjective” in the sense of being outside discourse or impervious to error. “Subjectivity” is not an ontological category.<sup>18</sup>

This is a fair description of how a pluralist approach works. It still consists of choices, preferences, eliminations, but the leeway that prevents a wholesale denial of possibilities (although not their opposition to each other) is maximized. This is perhaps the most important reason for the durability and the flexibility of pluralist worldviews.<sup>19</sup> If one turns to dichotomies to characterize and explain subtle realities, the crucial function of the boundary mechanism is hidden from view. Crude dichotomies (real/unreal, Buddhist/Confucian, China/Koryō and so forth) tend to hide and even obliterate the subtle patterning of history. A pluralist worldview contains a range of potentially conflicting and contradictory elements; ambiguity, in other words. A temporary suspension of the ever-present urge to abstract permits this ambiguity a continued existence. The potentially conflicting elements are as it were an aggregate of competing ideas, instead of a synthesis or clash of radically abstracted principles.<sup>20</sup> Not having to resort to crude dichotomizations of phenomena and concepts retains the ambiguity, not yet made explicit in contradictions, the oppositions and the conflicts. Although often denied, all thought and belief systems possess a minimum of shared elements that ensure mutual commensurability – borderland ambiguity in other words.<sup>21</sup> A pluralist worldview utilizes this fundamental trait by incorporating difference, contradiction and

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<sup>17</sup> Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, p. 71.

<sup>18</sup> Oakeshott, *On history*, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> The longevity of the Koryō dynasty is partly explained by its capacity for creative adaptation.

<sup>20</sup> Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, pp. 24-25, 27, 30.

<sup>21</sup> Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, pp. 39n. 39, 59.

inconsistency without actualising them. Only when the boundaries that guard group identity need to change, when pressure is brought to bear upon them, do these boundaries harden. In other words, one potentiality within the structural ambiguity that characterizes pluralist ideologies is then realized *at the expense of* other potentialities.

Both the notion of pluralism and that of the boundary mechanism draw our attention to these borderlands of identity formation, where “nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned”.<sup>22</sup> An innovative and perceptive study of this worldview has been presented by anthropologist Renato Rosaldo, who eloquently describes how individuals tend to switch between different identities in different environments and “learn to juggle cultures”.<sup>23</sup> The ease with which this juggling act is performed, strongly suggests that it would not suffice to dispose of it by concentrating on its inherent duplicity, inconsistency or self-contradictoriness. Another example which is mentioned by Rosaldo expresses both this widespread wish for order and homogeneity, the usually deviant nature of practice and the dangers inherent in the imposing of the wish for purity upon something that from itself is not pure, nor homogeneous, nor ordered. Rosaldo tells the story of a German philologist who had come to the rather startling conclusion that most Galician speakers of the Galician dialect were actually no speakers of the Galician dialect at all, since the dialect they spoke had been “corrupted” by influences from the neighbouring dialect of Castilia.<sup>24</sup> It was not pure and hence not authentic. This conclusion, in the face of the fact that most of these speakers of Galician thought of themselves precisely as such, namely speakers of Galician, imposed an imagined pure Galician dialect (whatever that may be; linguists of all people should know how fictitious the idea of ‘purity’ is, especially where language is concerned) and, moreover, censured the practical reality for not living up to that imagined standard. Reality, in other words, is not what the linguist found when he interviewed (and subsequently rejected) his informants; reality in his view was more complete, consistent and whole than the fragmented bits of reality shown in the corrupted dialect of the Galician speakers. “Real” reality is supposed to exist behind the present of practical engagement.<sup>25</sup> This reality corresponds to its definition and not to the flawed expression which is also known as practical reality.<sup>26</sup> Definitions are of course indispensable if scholars are come to terms with their objects of study; as mentioned before, the removal of non-pertinent facts is absolute necessary to achieve some degree of understanding. If, however, the definition comes to define reality instead of being governed by it, as in this case where the linguist’s Galician was more real than the Galician’s Galician, something goes badly wrong. It would be sufficient if the linguist of

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<sup>22</sup> Renato Rosaldo, *Culture & truth: The remaking of social analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), p. 216.

<sup>23</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture & truth*, p. 216.

<sup>24</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture & truth*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>25</sup> I borrow this term from Michael Oakeshott. It denotes the presence of ideas, traces and artefacts of the past in the present and their meanings for those who live in the present. See Oakeshott, *On history*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>26</sup> This is how William James aptly characterized such an attitude: “*The treating of a name as excluding from the fact named what the name’s definition fails positively to include, is what I call ‘vicious intellectualism’* (italics in original) and “Intellectualism in the vicious sense began when Socrates and Plato taught that what a thing really is, is told by its *definition*. Ever since Socrates we have been taught that reality consists of essences, not of appearances, and that the essences of things are known whenever we know their definitions.” See James, *A pluralistic universe*, pp. 61, 218.

this anecdote would distinguish between an ideal form of Galician which helps him understanding the historical changes the dialect went through; but if he ascribes his ideal – and imagined – form of Galician somehow more reality the tail wags the dog. This anecdote also illustrates in a nutshell the often-encountered tendency implicitly to demand purity and consistency from the object of research, as well as the unarticulated notion that clear and unambiguous differentiation between neighbouring entities (in this case, Galician and Castilian dialects) is somehow a prerequisite for the maintenance of identity. Rosaldo convincingly shows that the opposite is the case. Clear differentiation is often a *fata morgana*, while identity can be maintained across borders and in very ambiguous situations.<sup>27</sup>

It will be clear how a pluralist worldview differs from a monist view on the world. In a monist worldview, the presence of contradictions and inconsistencies suggest that something is wrong or missing; contradictions need to be solved, inconsistencies explained, lacunae filled. Paradoxically perhaps, stark dichotomies in dealing with reality are a product of monist reasoning.<sup>28</sup>

Some words should be said with regard to the differences between a pluralist worldview and relativist worldview, lest these be confused: a pluralist worldview acknowledges the possibility of fundamental differences and allows them to co-exist, but differences are not rendered relative and thus meaningless; instead they are used. Such a worldview is *per se* a mixed bag of elements, but it is by no means a free-for-all or a case of anything goes. It does not. There are boundaries to what goes and what goes not, set by necessity, politics, habituality and sheer contingency.<sup>29</sup> A relativist worldview does effectively not recognize difference; since everything is relative, so is difference. The difference of a pluralist worldview, furthermore, with a syncretic approach should also not pass unnoticed. A pluralist *Weltanschauung* accepts the alternative or simultaneous use of contradictory and incommensurable approaches, but more or less and only temporarily ‘unifies’ these in one – aggregative instead of synthesized – worldview. Again, differences and contradictions are not explained away, rendered relative or solved. It should perhaps be mentioned, though, that although not often, traces of a syncretic view of the world are encountered in Koryŏ.

The sense in which I shall use the notion of a pluralist worldview in this study, then, is in the sense of a worldview that allows the continued existence of contradictions and inconsistencies in its constituent elements. It uses the ambiguity in its constituent elements to deal with the surrounding world as well as possible. Black and white do exist, but so does an infinite range of shades of grey; and any other colour for that matter. Subtle patterning instead

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<sup>27</sup> Rosaldo, *Culture & truth*; Barth, *Ethnic groups and boundaries*. This is a very similar argument to the one Pierre Bourdieu makes in his essay “Structures, *habitus*, practices”. Codification only takes place after practical unity has broken down, creating an illusion in hindsight of a unity that was never there. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The logic of practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 52-65.

<sup>28</sup> Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, pp. 3-18.

<sup>29</sup> For an abstract elaboration of pluralism in this sense, see Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance*, pp. 3-18. For an anthropological treatment of pluralism, see Rosaldo, *Culture & truth*. And for a treatment of pluralist literati in Koryŏ, see No Myŏnggho, “Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch’ŏnha’gwan-gwa haedong ch’ŏnja,” pp. 3-40. This last study does not elaborate on theoretical issues regarding pluralism, but does note the proclivity of Koryŏ literati to embrace mutually exclusive systems of belief and thought.



of crude dichotomies that demand all or nothing at all, or in the words of William James: “[t]he whole question revolves in very truth about the word ‘some.’”<sup>30</sup>

## KORYŌ

The exceptional nature of Koryō’s view on the world does not lie so much in the fact that it can be considered to be pluralist; most if not all worldviews incorporate contradictory elements to greater or lesser extents. Examples from medieval China and Japan readily spring to mind.<sup>31</sup> What makes Koryō different from most other societies, either contemporary with it or not, adjacent to it or not, is the fact that Koryō’s fundamentally pluralist view of reality was sanctioned and encouraged by the state, fed and supported by society. This is by no means a usual phenomenon. As such, the pluralist worldview in Koryō occupied an important place in the construction of transregional or ‘national’ identities in Koryō. The construction of such identities in pre-modern states are contingent upon different factors, such as the presence of a notion of an abstract population, of a historic territory, of a repository of shared memories, a relatively unified economic, administrative and social structure, a shared public culture and a common focus of obedience or worship. In the case of smaller communities, though, whose reliance on imported cultural resources is necessarily significant, the internalization of these resources may not be enough to foster a distinct communal identity and may even lead to submersion in the dominant culture. A way to circumvent this is then needed to deal with the internalization of the dominant foreign culture, to divorce the universal claims of this culture from its particular characteristics that solidly moor it to the neighbouring dominant state. Given the fact that Koryō literati wrote in classical Chinese, the awareness that they wrote in a language and engaged in discourses that had originated somewhere else was never absent. A major theme in this study accordingly is the ways in which the medieval state of Koryō dealt with issues of foreign dominance, whether cultural, political, military or ideological in nature, and how these related to the many attempts made in Koryō to sustain a viable identity as a realm (*ch’ōnba*), independent from its incomparably larger neighbouring states in China and Manchuria.<sup>32</sup> These states had resources which dwarfed those of Koryō, but the independence sought after by Koryō was both political, ideological and cultural. Since Koryō was a completely independent state until its surrender to the Mongol invaders in the late thirteenth century, I shall focus here on its attempts to sustain a culturally, intellectually and ontologically independent identity during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries.

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<sup>30</sup> James, *A pluralistic universe*, p. 79.

<sup>31</sup> For instances contemporary with Koryō, see Carl Steenstrup, “The Gokurakuji Letter. Hojo Shigetoki's compendium of political and religious ideas of thirteenth-century Japan,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, 32.1 (1977): pp. 1-34. A Chinese example from this period is described in Peter K. Bol, “Seeking common ground: Han literati under Jurchen rule,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47.2 (1987): pp. 461-538.

<sup>32</sup> These neighbours included the Tang (618-907) and later Song (960-1127; Southern Song 1127-1279) in China proper, the Liao state found by the Khitan (916-1125) and later the Jin state founded by the Jurchen (1122-1234) in present-day northern China and Manchuria.

In a series of interrelated processes that took off in the tenth century and continued well into the twelfth century, the state of Koryō developed and sustained an identity that satisfies most if not all criteria that could be demanded from a pre-modern nation. The questions whether nationhood may be found to be compatible with pre-modernity and, if so, how such pre-modern nations looked, inevitably touch upon the subject of this study. Given the urgency of the nation in our present-day world, it is hard to avoid the ‘nation’ debate and since there are few alternatives to the nation as a conceptual category, questions of whether pre-modern historical communities with highly developed cultural and administrative resources are in some way related to the nation are also impossible to avoid.

In recognition of the ubiquity of the debate on the nation I shall not avoid it, but rely on some of the literature it has produced, particularly those studies that have dealt with identity formation processes in pre-modern historical communities. In order to escape the terminological and conceptual confusion and disagreement associated with the ‘nation’, I have chosen to use another concept to refer to historical communities possessing sophisticated cultural and administrative resources. Often such communities exercise influence long after they have disappeared. I shall follow Victor Lieberman in labelling such a polity a ‘charter state’ or ‘charter polity’ in cases where polity is more appropriate than state.<sup>33</sup> A charter state is a state that “in varying degrees, provided a religious, political, and administrative charter for subsequent empires.”<sup>34</sup> The Three Han fulfilled a role as charter polity in Koryō, while the later states of Paekche, Shilla and Koguryō in varying degrees, at certain times and for varying purposes also partially functioned as charter states. The use of this concept introduces a way to speak of historical communities and their identities in a meaningful manner, while bypassing much of the troublesome ‘nation’ debate but simultaneously engaging with many of the pertinent questions the debate on the nation has produced. Moreover, the inherent tension between pluralism and modern conceptions of the nation (even of pre-modern nations) is circumvented in this way. In academic searches for the pre-modern antecedents of the nation, wholeness and unity are habitually emphasized; nations are by definition wholes or unities. The case of Koryō, though, is different. Instead of a more or less linear development from plurality to unity, Koryō remained a thoroughly pluralist society after the unification of the peninsula. The charter state notion allows a way between the idea that nations are modern constructs very different from their political antecedents and the idea that modern nations are structures which are historical descendants of states and peoples developing mostly in the medieval era across Africa, Eurasia and in the Americas.

Rather than determining whether nations are recent phenomena or on the contrary ancient entities, perennial forms of human societal organization, I shall focus on Koryō as a contingent form of collective organization that can be found in different ages and places, neither necessarily modern, nor perennially present. In East Asia in particular there have been long-term territorial and political communities during pre-modern times with sophisticated administrative mechanisms and highly developed cultures. The possibility is very real that such

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<sup>33</sup> Victor Lieberman, *Strange parallels: Southeast Asia in Global context, c. 800-1800: volume 1: Integration on the mainland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2003).

<sup>34</sup> Lieberman, *Strange parallels*, p. 23.

highly sophisticated states, existing for hundreds of years and inhabiting a stable core territory, developed transregional identities (commonly referred to as a 'national consciousness' in the debates on the nation). Orthodox Western theories on nation-formation which deny this possibility, have been exported to East Asia, but have ironically never dealt with the East Asian situation.<sup>35</sup>

Observing Koryŏ history over the *longue durée* reveals that the interplay between subjective (mythical, historical, religious) beliefs and institutions, politics and history gave rise to a structure of relations and processes that became independent of those subjective beliefs.<sup>36</sup> This structure provided the community with a framework for its members across generations. In essence, this structure formed the historical community.<sup>37</sup> The identity of such a community is located in the boundaries that define the criteria for membership. Boundaries soften or harden, so that the "cultural stuff [they] enclose" varies from time to time.<sup>38</sup> The persistence of the group, its fundamental identity, then, is located in the structure that governs its boundaries. In early Koryŏ, such a structure developed around the historical notion of the Three Han (Samhan).

Such a structure is dependent on several factors; on the presence of a named human population, the possession of a named and relatively extensive historic territory, a strong sense of a common past/descent, present and future/fate, a relatively unified economic, administrative and social structure, a shared public culture based upon religion, traditions and language and a common focus of worship in the ruler.<sup>39</sup> Communities more or less in possession of these characteristics may be described as "communities bound together by ties of due and lawful order"<sup>40</sup>, in which the modern requirement for nationhood of equality before the law was fulfilled by "the common worship of the god of the land and subjection to the king of the land who, in turn, received the authority to rule that land and the people of the God from that God".<sup>41</sup> Region-transcending identities, or the idea of belonging to a community that is too large to allow general interpersonal relationships, is possible under such a structure, which is not governed by industrial modernity or indeed necessarily modern. The focus on pluralism in this study precludes the understanding of a community with a region-transcending identity as a unitary subject. The kind of community I shall discuss in this study is

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<sup>35</sup> For the occasional exception see Prasenjit Duara, "Historicizing national identity," in *Becoming national* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), edited by Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, pp. 151-77; John B. Duncan, "Proto-nationalism in pre-modern Korea," in *Perspectives on Korea* (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1998), edited by Lee Sang-oak and Duk-soo Park, pp. 198-221.

<sup>36</sup> Remco E. Breuker, "The one in three, the three in one: The Koryŏ Three Han as a pre-modern nation," *Journal of Inner and East Asian History* 2.2 (2006): pp. 143-168.

<sup>37</sup> John Armstrong, *Nations before nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 1982).

<sup>38</sup> Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic groups and boundaries*, esp. introduction.

<sup>39</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The nation in history: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000), pp. 65-76; Steven Grosby, "Borders, territory and nationality in the Ancient Near East and Armenia," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40.1 (1997): pp. 1-29, esp. pp. 2, 26; Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and communities in Western Europe 900-1300*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984, 1997), p. 335.

<sup>40</sup> Susan Reynolds "Medieval *origines gentium* and the community of the realm," *History* 68 (1983): pp. 375-390, esp. p. 381.

<sup>41</sup> Grosby, "Borders, territory and nationality", p. 2.

something which is never a stable single whole. Indeed, significant elements of Koryŏ identity were characterized by fragmentation and changeability.

As discussed above, the question of pluralism will be central to this study. The difficulty is how to look into it; in order to obtain an appreciation of Koryŏ's realities, I have chosen for a rather broad approach, divided in four different parts. Part one deals with four different themes that together constituted the backbone of Koryŏ as a historical society: *Establishment of a pluralist society*. The first theme is treated in the chapter *Collective names and designations*, in which I attempt to determine what names and designations were used to refer to 'Koryŏ'. Naming and political and ideological identification, status elevation and foreign politics; these seemingly disconnected issues are united by their convergence in the processes of identity formation, of making a community in Koryŏ. The next chapter, *A historic home territory in Koryŏ*, deals with Koryŏ's historical frontiers and the creation of an idea of a historic home territory. Chapter three, *Shared ideas of descent*, has as its shared notions of descent. Koryŏ was perceived as a community of common descent. Narratives that explained and promoted this common descent acted as powerful tools in the forging of a sense of solidarity and unity. The regular association of common descent with religion, law and territory further helped to create a sense of territorial boundedness. Chapter four, *The tracing of legitimation*, deals with the plural notions of historical succession and descent, the plurality of Koryŏ's pasts and the idea that the state was a cosmologically ordained community.

The second part is entitled *Perpetuation of a pluralist past in shared memories and histories*. It consists of three chapters (*Writing history in Koryŏ*, *Early Koryŏ historical works* and *The oldest extant history*) successively dealing with Koryŏ's ideas of its past, present and future. The repository of myths, narratives, stories, legends and histories a people has access to is arguably the most important tool in the forging of transregional identities. Their formation and consolidation for a large part depend on the availability of common myths of origin and descent, common memories and common history. This part presents an analysis of Koryŏ historiography with regard to identity formation. It investigates how history was written and how the process of writing history shaped the way Koryŏ was perceived.

The second part, *Understanding Koryŏ pluralist ideology*, is divided in four chapters which deal with the concrete workings of pluralist ideology in Koryŏ and in particular with the question how the historical background explored in the first part was expressed in policy and action by Koryŏ's scholar-officials. Its first chapter is *The Koryŏ ruler: A common focus of obedience and worship*. This chapter looks into the most important focal point of Koryŏ society, its ruler. The first chapter has established the duality of the Koryŏ royal system that allowed for the simultaneous existence of royal and imperial elements. The essential notion behind this system was the idea that the state is the earthly reflection of heavenly principles. It is shown that the notions and ideas surrounding the status of the Koryŏ ruler supported the notion of Koryŏ as a realm that was ontologically equal to the Chinese realm as well as the idea that the Koryŏ ruler was ontologically equal to the Chinese Son of Heaven, creating an insurmountable ideological contradiction. The Koryŏ Son of Heaven was one of several possible Sons of Heaven. This chapter charts the institutional, ideological, ritual and political status of the Koryŏ ruler with reference to his position as the focal point of Koryŏ society. The next chapter, *Koryŏ diplomacy*,

deals with Koryŏ's construction of the Other – and of the Self – as expressed in its diplomatic actions. Koryŏ diplomacy is one of the prisms through which the ways Koryŏ perceived the world in which it found itself became clear. Its diverse and often hard to define relations with its neighbours reveal important concepts and ideas that structured these relations. Koryŏ's independent stance towards its often more powerful neighbouring states is conspicuous; now a source of national pride for the Korean nation, contemporary sources often accused Koryŏ of disloyalty, opportunism and capriciousness. Although diplomatic ties could be severed instantly, Koryŏ was tied to its neighbours (and vice versa) in more than one way and cultural, economic, historical or religious ties could not be severed with the issuing of an edict or by the decision of the Security Council. This chapter analyzes Koryŏ diplomacy and lays special emphasis on its pluralist nature as well as the coping mechanisms Koryŏ developed to deal with its powerful neighbours. It also refutes the long held belief that Koryŏ was fundamentally sympathetic towards Han Chinese dynasties and hostile to the northern Manchurian dynasties.

The third chapter in this part, *Pluralist literati*, deals with perhaps the clearest example of the prevalence of pluralist ideology in Koryŏ, its literati. The intellectual climate of the period during the reigns of Sukchong, Yejong and Injong has often been characterized in dichotomous terms mixed with a usually not very clearly articulated evolutionary approach. Inconsistencies or unclarities within a thought system are explained by referring to as of yet immature ingestion of foreign cultural elements. Dichotomies are introduced that tell more about present-day preoccupations of historians than of the contemporary Koryŏ situation. Similar to Koryŏ's diplomatic relations which were often muddled, ambiguous, and inconsistent, but served clear goals (reactions to and anticipation of the international situation, identity formation, state building and consolidation), the daily reality of Koryŏ literati also was muddled, ambiguous and inconsistent. But like Koryŏ diplomacy it was geared to provide the best possible ways to deal with the Koryŏ literati's surroundings. In this chapter I argue that Koryŏ's realities were scattered, inconsistent, plural and full of treasured anomalies; treasured, because although the word 'pluralism' is a modern word, the concept was known and articulated in Koryŏ.

The last chapter *The origins of Koryŏ pluralism* briefly discusses the possible origins of pluralist thought in Koryŏ on the basis of the presence of examples from earlier times and the conclusions from the previous two chapters. The central question is how Koryŏ society managed to function effectively when all evidence suggests that the boundaries between the fields of action of the respective ideologies were not as sharp as has been suggested in the past. To compound this complicated situation, the bearers of the respective ideologies did not necessarily limit themselves to the embrace of one ideology. This meant that an in principle Confucian state official could also be a pious Buddhist who celebrated Daoist rituals, worshipped indigenous spirits and attached much significance to geomancy and other forms of divination. To deal with the existence of such persons in a meaningful manner, it will be necessary to introduce the concept of ideological pluralism and see to what extent Koryŏ was characterized by a plurality of belief systems and ideologies.

Part four deals with concrete instances of pluralist ideology as a tool to govern the state and its function as a way of circumvention to deal with the internalization of dominant

foreign cultures and to divorce the universal claims of these cultures from their particular characteristics that solidly moor them to the neighbouring dominant states. The first chapter of this part called *Ideology in a pluralist perspective: Ritual music in Koryŏ* has as its subject the introduction of Song ritual Confucian music in Koryŏ in the early twelfth century. The introduction of this new music is an excellent example of how Sinitic cultural achievements interacted with indigenous cultural resources in Koryŏ.

The chapter *The Ten injunctions: Directions to the future* deals with the *Ten injunctions*, nominally the eclectic political and ideological testament of Koryŏ's founder in which Buddhist, Confucian, nativist, pragmatist and other elements appear together. The *Ten injunctions* are in fact an eleventh-century forgery. This forgery reveals much about eleventh-century Koryŏ ideology and identity: the pattern and texture of the eleventh century have been imprinted on the injunctions, making them an extension and exaggeration of expressions that were deeply cherished and held to be genuine. The injunctions must be understood precisely as the ideological mishmash that they are. That is to say, the injunctions are a prime example of Koryŏ's pluralist Weltanschauung. Far from being either Buddhist, Confucian, geomantic or an example of Realpolitik, the injunctions codified a way of looking at the world that was on the one hand characteristically 'Koryŏ-an' and that on the other hand allowed contradiction and inconsistency to co-exist. This chapter explores the pluralist vision enshrined in the *Ten injunctions* as well as the injunctions' importance for later generations.

The last chapter *Myoch'ŏng's challenge: The bid for the 'impossible good'* serves as the conclusion of this study. It deals with the epochal rebellion of Myoch'ŏng in 1135. This confrontation is often viewed as a watershed in Koryŏ (and Korean) history, the outcome of which has allegedly decided the destiny of the peninsula. This analysis will attempt to leave the dichotomous framework that has characterized all previous studies of the rebellion. Instead of focusing on the ideological confrontation between the Confucian scholar and official Kim Pushik and the geomancing monk Myoch'ŏng, it is more instructive to observe and analyze the effects this clash had on Koryŏ and how it influenced perceptions of Koryŏ identity and destiny. Both chronologically and thematically, this chapter concludes the preceding chapters. Myoch'ŏng's rebellion was a defining moment in Koryŏ history as well as in Koryŏ historiography. An in-depth analysis of the rebellion using the findings of earlier chapters will shed light on Koryŏ's pluralist Weltanschauung. It will also provide a touchstone for analysis of the formative processes that lead to Koryŏ's distinctive identity. Finally, the aftermath of the rebellion in which the dynasty attempted to restore the peace and revitalize its policies and which also saw the consolidation of Kim Pushik's position as Koryŏ's most influential scholar and statesman, reveals much about the workings of identity formation. After the shock had worn off, Koryŏ had to reconstruct its self-image that had been shattered by two years of domestic warfare. The way in which this was undertaken, reflects the way Koryŏ was perceived.

My approach will necessarily be historical and episodic. I aim to overcome the streamlined readings of Koryŏ history discussed above and the best way to do that is to offer as much diverse information as is feasible in a study such as this. This approach obviously carries the risk of being weighed down by superfluous facts and irrelevant details, but I believe this risk is clearly outweighed by the potential benefits of sketching a picture of the Koryŏ period

that preserves more of its historical richness and that reduces less of its abundance.

**PART ONE**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A PLURALIST COMMUNITY**



## PART ONE

### INTRODUCTION

What do we talk about when we talk about Koryŏ? Do we refer to the Korean peninsula during the period from 935 to 1392 or to the Koryŏ state itself? What was known under the name Koryŏ and who were known under the name *Koryŏ paeksŏng* 高麗百姓? Where do the borders of the Koryŏ state run? Is Koryŏ simply Koryŏ or is it also known under other names? These questions are essential to the inquiry on identity formation in Koryŏ. In this part I will endeavour to provide an answer to these questions. Furthermore, I will touch upon related issues, sparking more questions. Such related issues are for instance the myths of descent of the people of Koryŏ: where did they come from? Another important issue is how the people of Koryŏ looked at themselves. Is it sufficient to refer to them as people from Koryŏ or are there perhaps different, perhaps even Koryŏ-transcending identities that we should pay attention to?

It is not only Koryŏ with reference to the peninsular reality that must be looked into. As important is Koryŏ as a community among other communities. In other words, Koryŏ's legitimate place in the world order. But before it is possible to examine how Koryŏ functioned in the international world, how it viewed itself and how it was viewed, it is necessary to ask a question to which the answer seems to be so self-evident that the question is seldom asked. Was Koryŏ a kingdom or was it something else, for instance, an empire? The rulers of Koryŏ have been recorded for posterity as kings and the land they ruled over as a kingdom. Traditional accounts firmly situated Koryŏ in the conventional tributary system, where it fulfilled its duties as a subservient country towards suzerain Chinese dynasties with exemplary conscientiousness and towards suzerain non-Chinese dynasties with noticeable reluctance. But significant amounts of source material tell another story and one that radically changes previously held convictions about Koryŏ's status, both internally and externally. This question, which is at the heart of Koryŏ identity, needs resolving.

The issues listed above preoccupied those among the Koryŏ population that possessed the talents, the leisure and the means to occupy themselves with these kinds of problems. If we are to arrive at any kind of answer, we should take stock of the particular ways of thinking and expression that both articulated and shaped the ideas of descent and belonging in Koryŏ. In particular, we should look at the geomantic tradition that traced Koryŏ's descent through its mountain ranges. One way of looking at what was Koryŏ is through the then current ideologies. Another way is to appreciate the geographical boundedness of Koryŏ, as has been done by generations of geomancers. According to this view, Koryŏ could only be Koryŏ by virtue of the qualities of the land, of the curves of the mountain ranges and the coils and twists of its rivers. This in itself is an ideology, to be sure, but one that drew its arguments and strength from the very land that had created the state of Koryŏ itself; it constituted a very powerful ideology, in other words.

I will deal with the above issues in this part; identity in its broadest definition and in various relational perspectives. Identity in both of its meanings; unicity and sameness, for Koryŏ not only distinguished itself from other states, countries and cultures, it also tried to identify itself with states or places that held special meaning for political, literary or religious reasons. The pursuit of Chinese poetic composition by Koryŏ literati is characterised by the frequent identification of Chinese places with Koryŏ places. Another widespread phenomenon was the association of Indian Buddhist place names with places on the peninsula. Such identification and association of foreign cultural and religious places with peninsular places was embedded in a complex structure of cultural and religious borrowing and recreation, which had far-reaching implications for the processes of identity formation during Koryŏ. The issues I touch upon may appear to be isolated, but in essence they are united by their convergence in the processes of identity formation, of making a community in Koryŏ that I will – partly – analyse in this part.

## CHAPTER ONE

### COLLECTIVE NAMES AND DESIGNATIONS

An obvious starting point for an inquiry into communal identity is a study of the collective name a community bears. Naming is an essential part of identity; it not only determines who belongs, but perhaps more urgently it also establishes who does not. Previous research has convincingly shown that names for communities – in whichever concrete form – can be shown to derive from a desire to name and exclude those who are different from one's own community. Ironically, in origin a name first and foremost conveyed what it was not.<sup>1</sup> The act of naming thus works both ways; it establishes both who belongs and who does not. Names signify belonging or exclusion, but are not 'impermeable'. They can be adopted, rejected, adapted, redefined. Particularly when names are applied by groups to other groups, confusion, erroneous use and conflation of names may arise and affect even how these names are perceived by the named community itself.

The examination of collective names and designations is an obvious starting point for identity analyses. It should be kept in mind, however, that names and designations can – and often do – change considerably over sufficiently long periods of time. Those who were once excluded from a certain group may be included a century later. Conversely, a once collectively shared name may come to be used for only one part of the original name-bearing community. A case in point is the designation 'Samhan' 三韓 (Three Han), a collective designation for the Korean peninsula and its inhabitants. Its steady occurrence in for instance titles recorded in epitaphs throughout the Shilla 新羅 and Koryŏ period perhaps creates the impression that its connotations remained the same, but this was not the case. Let us then start an investigation of the collective names and designations with regard to Koryŏ with the above example 'Samhan' and then move on to other alternative, competing or complementary designations.

#### SAMHAN

The Koryŏ period offers many examples of the different uses of 'Samhan', but the concept itself clearly antedates this period. Its earliest occurrences can be traced to Chinese histories that incorporated information about the peninsula and its inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> The designation 'Samhan' is, then, a good example of a name that was supposed to convey what

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<sup>1</sup> John Armstrong, *Nations before nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 1982), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest occurrence of Samhan is in the *Hanshu* 韓書. It says: "The Maek 貊 live in the north-east. All tribes belonging to the Three Han are of Maek ancestry." *Hanshu* 1 (*shang*): 30a. The next mention of the Samhan in Chinese sources is in the *Hou Hanshu*: "Among the Eastern Barbarians 東夷, there is Chinhan 辰韓, Pyŏnhan 卞韓 and Mahan 馬韓, which [together] are called the country of the Three Han." *Hou Hanshu* 後韓書 1 (*xia*):21a.

the name-giver was not, that is, of ‘Samhan’ ancestry. Its later popularity as a general appellation for the Korean peninsula, its states and its inhabitants comes from a consistent use of the term in titles, edicts, inscriptions, epitaphs and popular folk songs during the Koryŏ period, as well as from a sense of historical unity that I will discuss below. Roughly speaking, ‘Samhan’ appeared in three different meanings or senses; it occurs in the sense of the historical Three Han, in the sense of the historical Three Kingdoms along with its derivative use referring to the Later Three Kingdoms, and in the sense of the Korean peninsula and its inhabitants. What, then, is the provenance of the name ‘Samhan’ and are the uses associated with it connected to the communities it described?

I already mentioned that the designation ‘Samhan’ is in origin a Chinese name for the states and peoples of the Korean peninsula. Despite the deceptively simple meaning of ‘Samhan’, namely the Three Han, Chinese sources attest to a persistent confusion about the precise denotation of the word. In some sources there is a clear conflation of ‘Samhan’ with ‘Chosŏn’ 朝鮮, for example, and at times ‘Samhan’ is used as an equivalent for ‘Koguryŏ’ 高句麗.<sup>3</sup> The original meaning of ‘Samhan’ is difficult to get at, since extant sources remain silent on the genesis of the Three Han; it cannot be clearly established when the Han – as some peoples on the peninsula were known – became the Three Han.<sup>4</sup> The sources do, however, state that the territory of the Three Han was located in the southern and central parts of the Korean peninsula.<sup>5</sup> They also distinguish – for the most part, that is – between the ‘Samhan’ and other entities on or near to the peninsula, most notably the Ye 濊, the Maek 貊 and the Okchŏ 沃沮. It remains problematic, though, to exactly determine the identity and location of the Three Han. The identity of the constituent parts of the Three Han caused historiographical debates well into the Chosŏn dynasty. Traditionally, they have been identified with Mahan 馬韓, Chinhan 辰韓 and Pyŏnhan 卞韓. The widespread association among pre-modern historians of the Three Han with Shilla, Paekche and Koguryŏ sprang forth from Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s 崔致遠 (857-?) idea that Shilla developed from Chinhan, Mahan from Koguryŏ, and Paekche 百濟 from Pyŏnhan.<sup>6</sup> For our purposes here, the exact historical identification of the Three Han is less interesting than the way the Three Han have been used in relation to the peninsula. The precise origins of the name ‘Samhan’ may be obscure, but it is beyond dispute that it is of Chinese coinage. The fact that this designation has been used rather indiscriminately to name every state and people on or strongly associated with the Korean

<sup>3</sup> No T’aedon 盧泰敦, “Samhan-e taehan inshig-ŭi pyŏnch’ŏn 三韓에 대한 認識의 變遷,” *Han’guksa yŏn’gu* 韓國史研究 38 (1982): pp. 129-56.

<sup>4</sup> For an investigation into this truly complicated problem, see Shin Hyŏnung 申현웅. “Samhan-ŭi kiwŏn-gwa ‘Samhan’-ŭi sŏngnip 삼한 기원과 ‘삼한’의 성립,” *Han’guksa yŏn’gu* 122 (2003): pp. 1-29.

<sup>5</sup> “The Han have three tribes. One is called Mahan, another one is called Chinhan and the last one is called Pyŏnhan. Mahan is in the west and it has 54 *kuk* 國. In the north it borders on Lelang 樂浪, in the south on the Wae 倭. Chinhan is in the east, it consists of 12 *kuk*. In the south is also borders on the Wae. Pyŏnhan is to the south of Chinhan. All together, it consists of 78 *kuk*. Paekche 百濟 is among these. The larger *kuk* have more than 10,000 households, the smaller ones have several thousands. Each is located between the mountains and the sea. Their lands take up more than 4,000 *li*. In the east and the west, the border is formed by the sea. [...]” *Hou Hanshu* 85: 14a-b.

<sup>6</sup> “According to Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn of Shilla, Mahan became Koguryŏ, Pyŏnhan became Paekche and Chinhan became Shilla.”. See *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 [hereafter *SGSG*] 34: 337.

peninsula (including Kogurō's most northern parts) in the course of several centuries caused the gradual acceptance of the name of 'Samhan', not necessarily as pertaining to the three historical Han-states, but as pertaining to the peninsula and its peoples as a whole.<sup>7</sup> Textual evidence from this period points at the formation on the Korean peninsula of an identity that assumed the common provenance and destiny of the different peoples that made up the 'Samhan'.<sup>8</sup> The actual disintegration of Unified Shilla into three competing states, the Later Three Kingdoms, each of which had fallen back on its pre-unification predecessor for legitimative purposes, was another historical contingency that advanced the sense of identification with the historical 'Samhan'. References during the early Koryŏ period all point to the Three Han in the sense of the Later Three Kingdoms; most representative of this use is perhaps the ritualized expression "T'aejo 太祖 unified [pacified] the Three Han" that is found in scores of royal edicts and all sorts of inscriptions. Clearly, the references are to the historical unification of the peninsula under the rule of the founder of the Koryŏ state, T'aejo Wang Kŏn 太祖王建 (877-943).<sup>9</sup> This usage continues until the end of the dynasty.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, other usages of 'Samhan' can also be found during this period, although with less frequency. In a letter that T'aejo sent to his great rival Kyŏn Hwŏn 甄萱 in 928, 'Samhan' can be interpreted in two complementary ways, as pertaining to the contemporary political situation on the peninsula and as a comprehensive designation of the peninsula. T'aejo's use of 'Samhan' prefigured its use during the Koryŏ dynasty. In his letter to Kyŏn Hwŏn, Wang Kŏn utilized the historically produced semantic range of 'Samhan' to the fullest extent; the same notion at once described the current situation on the peninsula and appealed to the past when it had been unified. These two usages, in short, are most frequent during the early years of the Koryŏ dynasty. One usage we have seen above; the other, as a comprehensive and necessarily vague name for the peninsula and its people, is less common at the beginning of the dynasty, but increases in popularity until it became the common way of use at the middle of the dynasty. Koryŏ rulers possessed the right "to rule over [the territory of] the Samhan".<sup>11</sup> This idea is enforced by the occasional letter of investment from Chinese dynasties, in which Koryŏ is identified with 'Samhan'.<sup>12</sup> The transition from the former usage to the latter is in itself a perfectly understandable phenomenon. The availability of the term 'Samhan', already enriched by centuries of rather loose use by Chinese chroniclers, combined with the political circumstances on the peninsula during the late ninth and early tenth centuries, made it possible for this term to gradually become a comprehensive designation of the peninsula and

<sup>7</sup> No T'aedon, "Samhan-e taehan inshig-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn", pp. 129-56.

<sup>8</sup> No T'aedon, "Samhan-e taehan inshig-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn", pp. 129-56.

<sup>9</sup> See for example *Koryŏsa* 高麗史 [hereafter *KS*] 1:7a; *KS* 2: 2a-b; *KS* 2: 12a; *KS* 2:15b.

<sup>10</sup> See for instance the epitaph for Wŏn Sŏnji 元善之, erected in 1330; *Koryŏ myojimyŏng chipsŏng* 高麗墓誌銘集成 [hereafter *KMC*] 469:6; *KS* 1:7a; *KS* 2: 2a-b; *KS* 2: 12a; *KS* 2:15b.

<sup>11</sup> *KS* 2: 34a; also see *KS* 5:29a. In Buddhist inscriptions and epitaphs from the same period, 'Samhan' is used in the same manner. See for example *Yŏktae kosŭng pimun* 歷代高僧碑文 [hereafter *YKP*] 1: 21, 2, 130, 3: 121, 4: 406, 410. Some extant epitaphs for famous literati from distinguished clans also use 'Samhan' as an alternative designation for the peninsula; see *Ch'oe Sach'u myojimyŏng* 崔思謙墓誌銘 in *KMC* 39:14, 40:21; *Ch'oe Kyebang myojimyŏng* 崔繼芳墓誌銘 in *KMC* 41: 8, 11-2.

<sup>12</sup> *KS* 2: 3b; *KS* 3:3a; *KS* 7: 33a.

its peoples. This transition is complete when in 1136 Koryŏ sends a diplomatic letter to the Song 宋, mentioning among other things that “our Samhan have served the Chinese court generation after generation since the Han 漢 and the Tang 唐”. The Three Han had significantly ‘aged’ since the beginning of the dynasty when ‘Samhan’ was predominantly a synonym for the Later Three Kingdoms 後三國. Incidentally, Injong’s 仁宗 (1109-1122-1146) diplomatic letter came some thirty years after Sukchong 肅宗 (1054-1095-1105) had issued bronze coins of two different denominations, bearing the inscriptions “Samhan t’ongbo 三韓通寶” and “Samhan chungbo 三韓重寶”.<sup>13</sup>

The designation ‘Samhan’ that contained the partly converging and partly diverging senses of the Three Later Kingdoms and of the peninsula and inhabitants in the early Koryŏ dynasty changed into another ambiguity-laden concept of ‘Samhan’ during the middle Koryŏ. Its meaning as a general designation of the peninsula became more significant, while as a result of this process the identification of ‘Samhan’ with the Three Later Kingdoms decreased. Instead, a tendency to identify ‘Samhan’ with the three historical Han states of Mahan, Chinhan and Pyŏnhan became prominent.<sup>14</sup> These different usages of ‘Samhan’ were sometimes used simultaneously; in a thirteenth century memorial to the throne, for instance, ‘Samhan’ is, at different places, both used as an equivalent for the Three Later Kingdoms and as a general designation for the peninsula.<sup>15</sup> Despite the obvious ambiguity of the name ‘Samhan’, a tendency can be distinguished toward the separation of the term ‘Samhan’ from the historical actuality of the peninsula. That is to say, while the sometimes indiscriminate use of the different meanings of ‘Samhan’ continues, from the middle of the Koryŏ dynasty, there is a clear shift in emphasis toward the term coming to signify a supradynastical entity that does not entirely correspond with Koryŏ. In a memorial from 1220 it was hoped that the ‘Samhan’ will know one million years of peace and tranquillity.<sup>16</sup> An edict of 1385 mentioned that the Koryŏ kings have protected the ‘Samhan’ for generations, a notion that had been recurring from the middle Koryŏ on.<sup>17</sup> Extant documents of the Koryŏ testify to the enormous importance of the notion of ‘Samhan’ as the community of people on the peninsula; there is not one extant document that contains the name Koryŏ. Instead, we find the designation ‘Samhan’ used for both the people and the peninsula.<sup>18</sup> The idea of a supradynastical entity called the ‘Samhan’ crystallizes during the late Koryŏ, but it was present in some form or other much earlier, as is testified by the epitaph for Ch’oe Sajŏn 崔思全 (1067-1139), of 1140. According to this epitaph, Ch’oe remonstrated Injong for giving free reign to his family-in-law,

<sup>13</sup> Around the same time, four other bronze coins were issued, “Haedong t’ongbo 海東通寶”, “Haedong chungbo 海東重寶”, “Tongguk t’ongbo 東國通寶”, and “Tongguk chungbo 東國重寶”. Not all of these coins appear in extant Koryŏ sources, but they have been found at archaeological sites and have also been recorded in contemporary Chinese sources. See *KS* 79: 11b; *KS* 79:15a; *Songsbi* 宋史 [hereafter *SS*] 487: 20a.

<sup>14</sup> *KS* 57: 1a; *KS* 72:1a.

<sup>15</sup> *KS* 74:29b; *KS* 120: 12b.

<sup>16</sup> *KS* 120: 12b.

<sup>17</sup> *KS* 135: 42a-b.

<sup>18</sup> For evidence from the thirteenth century see *Han’guk kodaek chungse komunsŏ yŏn’gu* 韓國古代中世古文書研究 (hereafter *HKCKY*) 4:11; *HKCKY* 6: 32; *HKCKY* 7: 42. In these same documents, references to the ‘Samhan’ in the sense of the Later Three Kingdoms can also be found: see *HKCKY* 5: 18; *HKCKY* 341: 12.

something a ruler was not supposed to do, especially since “the Three Han are the Three Han of the Three Han. They do not stop at being Your Majesty’s Three Han. Our former lord T’aejo has worked hard to achieve this and I beg Your Majesty not to be negligent [in taking care of it].”<sup>19</sup> According to the same epitaph, Injong agreed and declared that he would “put the Three Han in order again.”<sup>20</sup> Curiously, at the same time that the designation ‘Samhan’ obtained a supradynastical connotation, it was also grounded in history more firmly than before. A Koryŏ folk song recorded in the *Koryŏsa* describes an ideal era of peace and prosperity on the peninsula enjoyed by the “venerable old men” of the Three Han.<sup>21</sup> A another source, however, confirms, the historicity of the ‘Samhan’, when it appears in the context of the “dynastic undertaking of the Samhan”.<sup>22</sup> The geography section 地理志 of the *Koryŏsa* treats ‘Samhan’ as a historical entity that existed before the Three Kingdoms, as does the costume section 衣服志.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps the most convincing testimony to this growing historical perception of the Three Han is the poem on the epitaph for Cho Yŏnsu 趙延壽 of 1325 that alludes to Tan’gun 檀君: “Our ancestor from P’yŏngyang 平壤/is the holy hermit Wang Kŏm 王儉/His people are still with us/What a wonderful commander he is!/He lived for thousands of years/before the ‘Samhan’ came into being/[...]”.<sup>24</sup> A conflation of these two senses is distinguishable in statements that claim that Koryŏ succeeded to and “possessed” the Three Han, while simultaneously it is apparent that ‘Samhan’ was more than the historical reality that Koryŏ offered. ‘Samhan’ is described as incorporated in Koryŏ territory, but the two entities are not conflated, but on the contrary kept separate.<sup>25</sup> ‘Samhan’ represented the past of Koryŏ in its obviously historical quality; its present through an identification of ‘Samhan’ with the people of Koryŏ<sup>26</sup> and its future through dissociation with Koryŏ when Koryŏ was declining.<sup>27</sup> Note incidentally that the separation of the notions of ‘Samhan’ and ‘Koryŏ’ enables the identification of ‘Samhan’ with Koryŏ’s past, present and future.

The designation ‘Samhan’ was of Chinese origin, but established itself as the common designation used by the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula for themselves and for the peninsula. It was adopted by literati on the peninsula during the period of the Three Kingdoms. Entering the Koryŏ dynasty, ‘Samhan’ was used in a number of distinctive ways; it surfaced as a synonym for the Later Three Kingdoms (which was a logical extension of its use as a synonym for ‘Samguk’, the Three Kingdoms); it was used as an alternative designation for Koryŏ; it retrieved its original meaning as a name for the historical Three Han states on the

<sup>19</sup> *Ch’oe Sajŏn myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 70: 12-3.

<sup>20</sup> *Ch’oe Sajŏn myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 70: 6.

<sup>21</sup> *KS* 71: 14b-15a. It is not clear whether the lyrics refer to the Three Han as “venerable old men” or to “venerable old men” who belong to the Three Han.

<sup>22</sup> *KMC* 336: 39, 49.

<sup>23</sup> *KS* 56:1a; *KS* 57: 1a; *KS* 72:1a.

<sup>24</sup> Tan’gun is not mentioned, but P’yŏngyang and Wang Kŏm are; even if this statement does not explicitly refer to Tan’gun, it refers to places and persons strongly associated with him.

<sup>25</sup> *KS* 135: 42a-b; *KS* 74:29b. Also see Kim Ku 金垢, *Sangjwa chu Kim Sangguk sa ūibal kye Yanggyŏng* 上座主金相國謝衣鉢啓良鏡 in *Tong munsŏn* 東文選 [hereafter *TMS*] 46: 18b; *Pogwangsa Chungch’angbi* 普光寺重勸碑 in *Chŏsen kinseki sŏran* 朝鮮金石總覽 [hereafter *CKS*] 177: pp. 497-501.

<sup>26</sup> *KS* 107: 20a; *KS* 126: 47a; *KMC* 388: 19.

<sup>27</sup> *KMC* 434: 5.

peninsula; and finally, and for our purposes most significantly, it acquired a supradynastical connotation that separated it from the historical actuality on the peninsula. In this sense, ‘Samhan’ came to be used as distinct from Koryŏ in a sense that represented both the country and its people. The Three Han became a charter polity for the Koryŏ state, in particular with reference to the location and composition of state and society.

## HAEDONG, TONGBANG, TONGGUK, CH’ŎNGGU

Originally a Chinese term for the states on the Korean peninsula, the designation ‘Samhan’ developed into an appellation for the peninsula and its people that was predominantly used internally.<sup>28</sup> The ‘Samhan’ coinage of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, too, was essentially produced for domestic circulation. Around the same time two other coins, each in two denominations, were produced. As an alternative to ‘Samhan’, one coinage had the designation of the peninsula ‘Haedong’ 海東 (‘east of the sea’) inscribed on one side of the coins. The other coinage bore a similar alternative name, ‘Tongguk’ 東國 (‘eastern country’).<sup>29</sup> Inscribed into the bronze coins of eleventh-twelfth-century Koryŏ, ‘Samhan’, ‘Haedong’ and ‘Tongguk’ are synonymous: they all refer to Koryŏ or the Korean peninsula. In different contexts, however, these three alternatives can acquire quite different connotations. As we have seen above, ‘Samhan’ came to be used as a general appellation for the Korean peninsula and its inhabitants with reference to the domestic situation. ‘Haedong’ and ‘Tongguk’, as well as “Tongbang” 東方/東邦 (‘eastern country’) and ‘Ch’ŏnggu’ 靑丘 (‘azure hills’), though, are mainly found in explicit references to or comparisons with China. ‘Haedong’, a name that is still in use, occurs in roughly two senses: in one guise it appears as an alternative for ‘Samhan’ in the sense of the historical community on the peninsula, but without the connotations that associate ‘Samhan’ with the people of the peninsula. Contrary to ‘Samhan’, the sources do not reveal instances where ‘Haedong’ is positively identified with the people; ‘Haedong’ does not “wail”, it is not “pleased”, it does not “gather from afar”, as the people represented by ‘Samhan’ do.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, the epithet ‘Haedong’ is mainly used in association with the elite or with elite undertakings.<sup>31</sup> The other sense in which ‘Haedong’ is found in the sources, is, as mentioned above, in contrast with China. An epitaph from 1119 mentioned that Yu Chae 劉載, originally from Chinese territory, moved to ‘Haedong’.<sup>32</sup> Another epitaph contrasts ‘Haedong’ with the present (domestic) place of banishment of the subject of the epitaph.<sup>33</sup> A further representative example can be found on the stele of Yi

<sup>28</sup> Though not exclusively; there are some instances where ‘Samhan’ is juxtaposed with China. See for instance *TMS* 71: 1b; *TMS* 84: 9b.

<sup>29</sup> *KS* 79: 11b; *KS* 79:15a; also see *SS* 487: 20a.

<sup>30</sup> *KS* 126: 47a: *Ch’oe Hang myojimyŏng* 崔沆墓誌銘 in *KMC* 388: 19; *Kim Shim myojimyŏng* 金深墓誌銘 in *KMC* 504: 41.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Haedong’ appears referring to high state officials, famous scholars or great lineages and the like. See for instance *TMS* 127:10a; *TS* 102: 1a-b; *KMC* 115: 97; *KMC* 327: 4.

<sup>32</sup> *Yu Chae myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 48: 4

<sup>33</sup> *O Cham myojimyŏng* 吳潛墓誌銘 in *KMC* 491: 35



Chehyön 李齊賢, who is praised with the words that “his fame was known throughout the world, but his body resided in Haedong”.<sup>34</sup> Inscriptions frequently mention that so-and-so has returned from China to ‘Haedong’, in most cases from a study-related stay.<sup>35</sup> The high frequency of ‘Haedong’ in this context – in inscriptions, poems, historical and religious works – reveals that in these instances ‘Haedong’ was preferred to ‘Koryō’, ‘Samhan’ or other geonyms. Other occurrences of ‘Haedong’ appear in connection with the three Koryō scholars that lay claim to the title of “Confucius of Korea”; Ch’oe Ch’ung 崔沖, Yun Ŏni 尹彦頤 and Yi Kyubo 李奎報.<sup>36</sup> The epithet ‘Haedong’ was also used in book titles, such as in the no longer extant *Haedong mungam* 海東文鑑 (*Literary mirror of Haedong*)<sup>37</sup> and the *Haedong pirok* 海東秘錄 (*Secret records of Haedong*).<sup>38</sup> These examples also illustrate the elite usage of the term and its juxtaposed use with regard to China or Sinitic culture.

The appellation ‘Samhan’ was derived from the observation of a certain historical situation; ‘Samhan’ makes direct reference to the historical Three Han. The designations ‘Haedong’, ‘Tongbang’, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Ch’önggu’ fundamentally differ from ‘Samhan’ in this respect. All four terms are explicitly (‘Haedong’, ‘Tongbang’, ‘Tongguk’) or implicitly (‘Ch’önggu’) connected to the east. ‘Haedong’ means “[the country] east of the sea” and both ‘Tongbang’ and ‘Tongguk’ can be translated as ‘eastern country’.<sup>39</sup> ‘Ch’önggu’ is the name of one of the traditional Chinese constellations; its name literally means “azure hills”, but since the constellation can be observed in the eastern parts of the heaven above East Asia it came to be associated with the Korean peninsula. The obvious geographical or directional qualities of these four terms facilitated their association with the Korean peninsula and its neighbouring regions in a historically more vague and geographically more accurate manner. The manner in which these four terms have been used bear out this connection with their respective etymologies: early occurrences of ‘Haedong’, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Tongbang’ and ‘Ch’önggu’ refer to the geographical unity of the Korean peninsula. The initial indiscriminate use of these terms regarding the state they refer to – which is highly context-dependent for the same term can refer to quite different states – confirms the strong geographical subtext of these terms.<sup>40</sup> The consolidation of states on the peninsula and the concomitant increase in regular communication with Chinese dynasties drastically decreased the fluidity of these in origin geographical designations.

The earliest Chinese sources use ‘Haedong’ in its geographical sense. States that are now commonly identified as belonging to the historic Korean peninsula, are said to be located

<sup>34</sup> *Yi Chehyön myojimyöng* in *KMC* 592: 77

<sup>35</sup> *Namal Yöch’o kümsöngmun* 羅末麗初金石文 [hereafter *NYKSM*] 1: 61.

<sup>36</sup> For Ch’oe Ch’ung, see *KS* 95:6a; for Yun Ŏni, see *Yun Ŏni myojimyöng* in *KMC* 115: 97; for Yi Kyubo, see *Yi Kyubo myojimyöng* in *KMC* 375: 40.

<sup>37</sup> *Kim Kwangjae myojimyöng* 金光載墓誌銘 in *KMC* 563: 13; the same book appears in the *Koryösa* as the *Tongguk mungam*; see *KS* 110:6a. Yi Saek referred to the same book as the *Haedong mungam*; see Yi Saek 李穡, *Songdang sönsaeng Kim kong myojimyöng pyöngsö* 松堂先生金公墓誌銘 in *TMS* 127:10a.

<sup>38</sup> *KS* 12: 21a

<sup>39</sup> One reason for ‘imprecise’ use of the term ‘Haedong’ in Chinese sources, is that it can also be used to indicate any country east of Parhae with geographical good sense. The consistent association of ‘Haedong’ with the peninsula created the synonymous use of the epithet for the historic Korean peninsula and not the other way round.

<sup>40</sup> *Shiji* 117: 11b; *Hou Hanshu* 1 (*xia*): 24b; *Hou Hanshu* 85: 1a-20a.

in 'Haedong'.<sup>41</sup> In most of the references 'Haedong' approximately corresponds to the historic Korean peninsula, but it should be noted that there is also a not insignificant amount of references that include the Liaodong 遼東 area as belonging to 'Haedong'.<sup>42</sup> The frequent use of the expression 'the several/all states of Haedong' (Haedong cheguk 海東諸國) underlines this early meaning of the term. 'Haedong' was used as a geographical designation; in 'Haedong' several states existed and when envoys from 'Haedong' came to pay tribute to the Chinese court, we are told they consisted of envoys from Koguryŏ and Paekche.<sup>43</sup> The geographical connotations of 'Haedong' are strong, then, but even in this early stage of its usage, geopolitical associations are not absent, because 'Haedong' is identified as the place where the Eastern Barbarians live. In addition to being 'east of the sea', 'Haedong' also referred to the states of the Eastern Barbarians.<sup>44</sup> Acting as an umbrella term for states on the historic Korean peninsula as well as the Liaodong area, a definitive sense of unity is associated with 'Haedong'.

The rise of the Three Kingdoms on the peninsula ushered in a new usage of 'Haedong'. Describing the contemporary and the near-contemporary situation on the Korean peninsula, sources, such as the *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書, came to use 'Haedong' in conjunction with 'Samguk' 三國 (the Three Kingdoms), reflecting the newly stabilizing circumstances.<sup>45</sup> Simultaneously, sections dealing with each of these kingdoms were from then on included in the Section of Eastern Barbarians 東夷傳, where information on the states and peoples of the Korean peninsula was usually given a place in Chinese histories. In 623, the sixth year of his reign, Tang emperor Gaozong 高宗 asked an envoy from Shilla why the Three Kingdoms on the peninsula were engaged in such vengeful warfare, while mentioning, as a circumstance that he saw as contradictory to this strife, that the Three Kingdoms of Haedong had a long history.<sup>46</sup> The Tang emperor's question implied the presence of the notion of some kind of historical unity on the peninsula, first by referring to the Three Kingdoms of Haedong and second by considering the incessant warfare between the three states as somehow wrong. The long-standing association of the Eastern Barbarians with 'Haedong' and of 'Haedong' with the Three Kingdoms had by this time given rise to a consciousness that connected the states on the

<sup>41</sup> The *Hou Hanshu* mentions that "the land of Puyŏ is located in Haedong" and according to the *Shiji* "the land of Ch'ŏnggu is located in Haedong". See *Hou Hanshu* 1 (*xia*):24b; *Shiji* 117: 16.

<sup>42</sup> See for example the *Sanguozhi*, *Weishu* 30: 10a-13a according to which Gongsun Du 公孫度 seized power in Haedong. The old Han commandery of Xuantu 玄菟 (Hyŏnt'ŏ in Korean) that is specified as the place Gongsun Du took control of belongs to the Liaodong area.

<sup>43</sup> *Liangshu* 54: 25a-30a.

<sup>44</sup> The precise set of tribes and peoples that were thought to belong to the Eastern Barbarians 東夷 is still under debate. In some instances, this epithet clearly refers to peoples from the historic peninsula. In other cases, it was used as a general designation for barbarians. Generally though, it referred to the states and peoples on the Korean peninsula and those strongly associated with it. See Kim Sanggi, "Tong-I-wa, Hŭi-I, Sŏ-jŏg-e taehayŏ I & II 東夷와 淮夷 徐戎 對하여(續·完)," *Tongbang hakchi* 東方學誌 1-2 (1954-1955): pp. 1-31 & 1-35; Kim Shihwang 김시황, "Ku-I-wa Tong-I 구이(九夷)와 동이(東夷)," *Tongbang hanmunhak* 東方漢文學 17.1 (1999): pp. 71-90.

<sup>45</sup> *Jiu Tangshu* 199 (*hsang*): 8a.

<sup>46</sup> *Jiu Tangshu* 199: (*hsang*): 8b. Another example of the 'peninsular' use of 'Haedong' is the nickname "Ceng zi of Haedong 海東曾子" for King Ŭija 義慈 of Paekche, who was renowned for his filial piety. Ceng zi was a disciple of Confucius who was particularly known for his devotion to his parents. See *Jiu Tangshu* 199: (*hsang*): 11b; *Xin Tangshu* 220: 7b.

peninsula together in one historical “set”. ‘Haedong’ came to represent the Three Kingdoms; after the unification of the peninsula by Shilla, Parhae was swiftly excluded from it, although the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 shows some ambiguity by including Parhae 渤海 in the section for Northern Barbarians 北狄 on account of its majority Malgal 靺鞨 population, but simultaneously referring to Parhae in the very same entry as a “prospering state in Haedong”, probably on account of the ancestry of its ruling class, as well as on account of the ambiguity of the term ‘Haedong’. ‘Haedong’ was coming to be exclusively associated with the historic Korean peninsula, but in its geographical sense, it could still include the region that Parhae occupied.<sup>47</sup> The ambiguity surrounding Parhae’s status incidentally also surfaces in a text by Ch’oe Hae 崔滢 (1287-1340) in which he discusses the achievements of Korean students (*Tongin* 東人) who entered the Chinese state examinations. In this text, he mentioned students from Parhae, but only to immediately exclude them.<sup>48</sup> Detaching Parhae from ‘Haedong’, as was effectively done, despite the ambiguity of the *Xin Tangshu*, meant that the expression ‘Haedong samguk’ 海東三國 came to be representative for the Korean peninsula and its states.

‘Haedong’ frequently occurs in both Chinese and Korean sources. Both ‘Tongguk’ and ‘Tongbang’, though, are significantly less frequently found in Chinese sources. ‘Tongguk’ became the most frequently used designation of the peninsula and its people only during the Chosŏn dynasty.<sup>49</sup> The relative low frequency of these terms may be due to the fact that both occur in other senses in Chinese sources, ‘Tongguk’ as (any) “eastern country” and ‘tongbang’ as “eastern direction” or “eastern country”, depending on the character used for ‘pang’. When these terms appear in a context that refers to the Korean peninsula, though, they are used as synonymous with ‘Haedong’ in its geographical sense. The designation ‘Ch’ŏnggu’, derived from the name of an astronomical constellation in the eastern part of the sky, appears more frequently than both ‘Tongguk’ and ‘Tongbang’, but not to the same extent as ‘Haedong’.<sup>50</sup> ‘Ch’ŏnggu’ appears for example in the Tang title *Ch’ŏnggu-to haenggun taech’onggwwan* 靑丘道行軍大總管 (*Great marshal of the army for the province of Korea*), which was given to the general responsible for the subjugation of Koguryŏ.<sup>51</sup>

In Korean sources, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Tongbang’ and ‘Ch’ŏnggu’ appear alongside ‘Haedong’ as general designations for the Korean peninsula and its people. These three terms appear both in official and in private sources and in most cases in a usage that contrasts them with China.<sup>52</sup> As we have seen above, ‘Haedong’ was also used in a supradynastical sense in which it referred to the peninsula and its people, but not to a historically specific time or place.

<sup>47</sup> *Xin Tangshu* 219: 8a-11a.

<sup>48</sup> *TMS* 84: 9b.

<sup>49</sup> And then with overwhelming “power”. The epithet ‘Tongguk’ turned up everywhere, from maps (*Tongguk yŏjido* 東國輿地圖) and encyclopaedias (*Tongguk munbŏn pigo* 東國文獻備考) to histories (*Tongguk t’onggam* 東國通鑑, *Tongguk saryak* 東國史略) and geographical treatises (*Tongguk chiriji* 東國地理志).

<sup>50</sup> The colour “azure” (*ch’ŏng* 靑) is also associated with the east. ‘Ch’ŏnggu’ is normally written as “azure hills”, but because the character ‘ku’ 丘 meaning hill was included in the name of Confucius, it was often avoided and ‘ku’ 邱 was written with a homophone character that was often used in transliteration.

<sup>51</sup> *SGSG* 22: 1b.

<sup>52</sup> For examples of the contrasting use of ‘Ch’ŏnggu’, see for instance *NYKSM* I: 61; *NYKSM* I: 208; for ‘Tongguk’, see *KMC* 221:4; *KMC* 352: 14; for ‘Tongbang’, see *Min Chongyu myojimyŏng* 閔宗儒墓誌銘 in *KMC* 448: 2; *Wŏn Sŏnji myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 469: 4; *KMC* 470: 2; *SGSG* 9:9.

Again, as can also be surmised from the eleventh-twelfth century coins, the usages of ‘Tongbang’, ‘Tongguk’ and ‘Ch’onggu’ mirror that of Haedong.<sup>53</sup> In his biography, Ch’oe Ch’ung was praised as the “Confucius of Korea”; the sentence before said that he had represented “the flowering of education in Korea.” In the first case, ‘Haedong’ was used, in the second instance ‘Tongbang’. Examples such as this one, where ‘Tongbang’, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Ch’onggu’ and ‘Haedong’ all refer to the supradynastical qualities of the Korean peninsula and its people, and are in fact interchangeable, abound.<sup>54</sup>

Concurrent with the development of the term ‘Samhan’, four terms that took China as their point of reference developed into virtually coterminous designations for the Korean peninsula and its people. These four terms were distinguished by the two senses in which they are found. In Chinese sources, the geographical connotation of these names is strong, even when during the period of the Three Kingdoms and afterwards, some sense of historical unity on the Korean peninsula is apparent in these sources. Korean sources obviously had less use for the purely geographical meaning of the above terms, but two distinct usages can be distinguished. One usage reflects the etymology of the terms: after all, they were all coined in China and with China as point of reference, since Korea is only located in the east if one is looking from China. This usage, then, positions the peninsula in contrast with China, both geographically and culturally.<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, this process of cultural and geographical defining was not a one-way street. As I mentioned above, ‘Tongbang’, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Ch’onggu’ and ‘Haedong’ often appear in contrast with China or Sinitic civilization. The simultaneous appearance of the epithet ‘western’ in many of these inscriptions and texts draws our attention to the reciprocity of this process. Just as China had defined the geographical, cultural and historical status of the peninsula with reverence to Sinitic civilization, peninsular literati did likewise and redefined China and its culture with reference to their own culture. Hence the otherwise inexplicable “journeys to the west” or “western learning” with regard to Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s study and stay in China, Wŏn’gwang’s 圓光 journey to China and Yi Kok’s 李穀 juxtaposition of Koryŏ and western learning.<sup>56</sup> The epithet ‘west/western’ was made to apply to China, because if the Korean peninsula is “east of the sea”, seen from the peninsula, China is west of it. The ambiguity involved – the Korean peninsula is only located in the east seen from China, which makes it rather paradoxical to redefine China from a point of view that itself had been defined by China – serves to underline the fact that despite this attempt at redefinition and re-orientation, Sinitic civilization was thought to hold the upper hand. In this way, the peninsula and its people came to be defined in reference to China and its culture and China and Sinitic culture came to be defined with reference to the peninsula. The sources reveal that

<sup>53</sup> For instances of ‘Tongbang’ referring to the Korean peninsula and its people as a supradynastical entity, see *KS* 56: 1a; *KS* 73:1b; *KS* 95: 6a. For ‘Tongguk’, see *KS* 72: 1a; *KS* 85:40b; *KMC* 474: 48; *KMC* 478: 49.

<sup>54</sup> See for example *Sŏngjusa Nanghye hwasangbi* 聖住寺郎慧和尚碑 in *CKS* 34: pp. 72-82; *Ssanggyesa Chin’gam sŏnso taegong’ap pi* 雙谿寺真鑿禪師大空塔碑 in *CKS* 33: pp. 66-81.

<sup>55</sup> This is confirmed by frequent use of ‘Haedong’ when referring to cultural matters in contrast with China.

<sup>56</sup> *SGYS* 4: 23-29, *Wŏn’gwang sŏhak* 圓光西學 [Wŏn’gwang’s study in China (the West)]; Yi Kok, *Hŭngwangsa Chungsubhŭnggyowŏn naksŏng boegi* 興王寺重脩興教院落成會記 in *TMS* 70: 7b-9a; Yi Kok, *Taedo Ch’ŏnt’ae Pŏpwangsa ki* 大都天台法王寺記 in *TMS* 71: 1a-3b; Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn, *Kyŏn sugwui baksaeung suryŏngdŭng ipjo chang* 遣宿衛學生首領等入朝狀 in *TMS* 47: 19a-21b .

this usage has its roots in the period of the Three Kingdoms and continues into the Koryŏ dynasty. On the other hand, 'Tongbang', 'Tongguk', 'Ch'ŏnggu' and 'Haedong' acquired a meaning that is similar to the semantic development of 'Samhan'. They came to be used during the Koryŏ dynasty as general designations referring to a supradynastical entity as comprised by the Korean peninsula and its inhabitants. In this sense the contrasting semantics of the terms virtually disappear in favour of the appearance of a sense of implied historical unity. It is noteworthy that a similar though less clear tendency can be discerned in the usage of these terms in Chinese histories.

In both cases originally foreign – Chinese – terms were adapted and developed in distinct ways, but via parallel processes. 'Samhan' initially described the contemporary political situation on the Korean peninsula as seen through Chinese eyes, presumably when the three Han states flourished in its central and southern parts. Adapted by literati during the period of the Three Kingdoms, it came to signify the successive states and their peoples on the peninsula. Simultaneous use of the different senses in which 'Samhan' could appear eventually led to the coming into existence of 'Samhan' as a designation for a perceived supradynastical entity. The four originally geographical designations examined above show a similar pattern in development; the semantic values differ, but the processes of adaptation are analogous. In this instance, the original meaning of the terms, the departing point for the semantic route, derived its meaning from its point of reference, China. The development of these four terms as reflected in Korean source materials revealed a strong and consistent association with China, which constituted one sense in which these terms consistently appeared. Analogous to the semantic development of 'Samhan', these four designations also acquired a meaning that was the result of the centuries of association with the historic peninsula; they came to signify the whole peninsula and its inhabitants. They did so in a supradynastical manner, their semantic range covered more than the history of the peninsula.

An important characteristic of these four initially geographical terms compared to 'Samhan' is the coming into being of a juxtaposed notion of China, or rather of Sinitic culture. The application of the epithet 'west/western' in this context both underscores a peninsular desire to deal on equal footing and a realization and acceptance of the important presence of Sinitic culture on the peninsula. To be sure, there are some instances where 'Samhan' is contrasted with China and where cultural equality is implied.<sup>57</sup> Mostly, though, 'Samhan' was used with domestic reference, while 'Tongbang', 'Tongguk', 'Ch'ŏnggu' and 'Haedong' were positioned in contrast with China. The occurrence of this kind of juxtaposition reinforced the function of naming for the designated population. Naming created a clear dividing line between different groups; juxtaposition with China, both geographically and culturally, strengthened the own claims to unicity and equality with China.

## KORYŎ

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<sup>57</sup> See for instance *TMS* 71: 1b; *TMS* 84: 9b.

Above I have reviewed the different designations with regard to the Korean peninsula as a whole. An exhaustive review would have included all general designations that were used until the end of Koryŏ, but the frequency of those terms that have been omitted is low enough to justify their exclusion.<sup>58</sup> Besides, my aim is not to review exhaustively all names for the peninsula until the end of the Koryŏ period, but to inquire whether there were any general designations in use that covered the peninsula and its people through various historical periods. The outcome of this analysis is that several designations existed that named the peninsula and its population; these designations have ancient roots, although an analysis of the way in which they have been used suggest that it was only around the twelfth century that the terms discussed above were accepted as encompassing the peninsula and its people as a (supra)historical whole. The fact that these terms existed and were widely used is of great significance for the conception of the notion of Koryŏ. Against a cultural and historical background that includes one or more supradynastical notions of the peninsula and people, the notion of Koryŏ is bound to differ significantly from a situation in which there is no such background.

Let us start at the beginning of Koryŏ, not with Wang Kŏn, but with Kungye 弓裔, who at different places in the *Koryŏsa* is referred to by Wang Kŏn as ‘the previous king’. The continuity between Kungye’s T’aebong 泰封 and Wang Kŏn’s Koryŏ – as regards its institutions, its organization, its human resources, its territory – is too strong to detach T’aebong from the early years of the Koryŏ state.<sup>59</sup> In fact, there is compelling evidence to regard Wang Kŏn as the successor of Kungye, the second ruler of Kungye’s T’aebong.<sup>60</sup> The founding of a new dynasty only came much later and was most probably achieved in retrospect. At the time of the ousting from power of Kungye, it appears that Wang Kŏn concentrated on seizing and consolidating power in T’aebong and on holding his own in the bitter struggle with Kyŏn Hwŏn, rather than on immediately founding Koryŏ, as most later accounts have characterised Wang Kŏn’s ascent to power.

<sup>58</sup> General designations for the peninsula that I have omitted are among other even less common designations Chindan 震檀, Tongjin 東震, Tonghan 東韓 that have never been in common use.

<sup>59</sup> Wang Kŏn ousted Kungye, but he kept the structure of the state largely intact. One of the few changes he made, was a renaming of institutions and offices set up by Kungye. The new names were according to Shilla usage, so that the people would not be confused. He did not implement any structural changes. See Cho Insŏng 趙仁成, “Kungye chŏnggwŏn-ŭi chungang chŏngch’i chojik: irŭnba Kwangp’yŏngsŏng ch’eje-e taehayŏ 弓裔政權의 中央政治組織 – 이른바 廣評省 體制에 대하여,” *Paeksan hakpo* 白山學報 33 (1986): pp. 63-83.

<sup>60</sup> In several sources Wang Kŏn (or others) refer to Kungye as “the previous ruler”. The overall maintenance of Kungye’s state also suggests that Wang Kŏn was in effect the successor of Kungye and the second ruler of the state of Koryŏ. A final, compelling argument is that for purposes of legitimation Wang Kŏn did not want to “break” the Heavenly Mandate and as such also presented himself – at least in the beginning of his rule – as Kungye’s successor, the next receiver of the Heavenly Mandate. After he had consolidated his power – at least to the extent that he had no external enemies left who could claim the Heavenly Mandate – the emphasis was shifted towards the founding of a new dynasty. For an elaboration of the last argument, see Sem Vermeersch, *The power of the Buddha: The ideological and institutional role of Buddhism in the Koryŏ dynasty* (Ph. D. diss., SOAS, 2001), pp. 39-48. For instances in which Kungye is referred to as the “previous ruler”, see: *NYKSM* 1:171; *NYKSM* 1:133; *KS* 1:8b; *KS* 69: 32b; *KS* 93: 3a. This usage survived until late Koryŏ, as is indicated by the poem *Kungwang kodo yu’gam* 弓王故都有感 [Sadness for the old capital of King Kung] by Kang Hüibaek 姜淮伯 (1357-1402), a late Koryŏ official. See *TMS* 17: 9a.

According to the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事, in 901 Kungye called his newly established state ‘Koryŏ’, although the *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 does not specify the name of the state Kungye established.<sup>61</sup> In view of the contemporary circumstances in which regional loyalties were mobilized under the banners of Kyŏn Hwŏn in the former territories of Paekche and Kungye in parts of old Koguryŏ, it is very likely that Kungye named his state Koryŏ.<sup>62</sup> Kungye was leaning on a past of more than a thousand years when he so ostentatiously appealed to the Koguryŏ sentiments among the local population. The use of ‘Koguryŏ’, often abbreviated as ‘Koryŏ’, was well attested by the tenth century. Centuries of use in Chinese and Korean sources had firmly entrenched Koguryŏ in the historical consciousness of East Asia. Moreover, there was little confusion over the precise meaning of the term ‘Koguryŏ’; it referred to the state that had existed for almost eight centuries in the northern part of the Korean peninsula and –depending on the period different parts of– Manchuria and the Maritime Provinces. The term ‘Koguryŏ’ in Chinese sources is used in a consistent manner and with few departures from its principal meaning.<sup>63</sup> So what was the historic legacy of the term ‘Ko(gu)ryŏ’? What kind of associations did it inspire and what kind of legitimation did this designation carry?

By the time Shilla disintegrated and the kingdoms of Kyŏn Hwŏn and Kungye came into being, it had been more than two hundred years since Koguryŏ had fallen. Two centuries of Shilla rule had influenced and changed local society to a significant extent. Nonetheless, when Kungye rose to power, he clearly chose to adopt an ideology based on Koguryŏ, despite his own origins.<sup>64</sup> The attraction that identification with Koguryŏ held for Kungye and later for Wang Kŏn is usually explained by the majority presence of Koguryŏ descendants in the territory encompassed by Later Koguryŏ.<sup>65</sup> The presence of political identifications with

<sup>61</sup> *Samguk yusa* [hereafter *SGYS*] 1: 31.

<sup>62</sup> The *Samguk sagi* records a speech of Kungye that encourages the inhabitants of the provinces under his control to “avenge Koguryŏ”. His recorded words are as follows: “Shilla once requested the support of Tang armies and destroyed Koguryŏ. Because of this, P’yŏngyang, the old capital, is now a ruin overgrown with weeds. I shall absolutely have my revenge for Koguryŏ.” See *SGSG* 50: 467.

<sup>63</sup> One of the very few exceptions that appears in both Korean and Chinese sources is the reference in the *Xin Tangshu* to Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn as a person from Koryŏ, which of course should have been Shilla. This reference was also included in the *Samguk sagi*. See *Xin Tangshu* 60: 12b; *SGSG* 46: 444.

<sup>64</sup> According to his biography in the *SGYS*, Kungye was the son of King Hŏn’an 憲安王 (r. 857-860), who was abandoned after it was prophesied that he, being born on the fifth day of the fifth month, would harm his parents. He was rescued by his wet nurse and raised in obscurity. After entering a monastery at an early age to avoid unwanted attention, Kungye left the monastery some ten years later. He then started his career as a condottiere, finally becoming independent and setting up in the northern provinces of Shilla. There are some difficulties with this account, such as the story of Kungye’s descent. While there is not enough evidence to positively identify Kungye’s background, it seems more plausible that he belonged to an impoverished noble Shilla family that had become a victim of the continuous succession struggles during the ninth century. The fact that Kungye apparently maintained and even upgraded his Shilla descent while he pursued a Koguryŏ successionist policy, lends credence to this suggestion. See Cho Insŏng, “Kungye-ŭi ch’ulsaeng-gwa sŏngjang 弓裔의 出生과 成長,” *Tonga yŏn’gu* 東亞研究 17 (1989): pp. 61-82. As for his policy to identify with Koguryŏ, the most conspicuous elements were the above-mentioned adoption of ‘Koryŏ’ as the name for his state and the adoption of the name ‘Kungye’. Despite being a member of the obviously Shillan Kim clan, Kungye adopted a surname that clearly echoed the memories of a Koguryŏ past. ‘Kungye’, literally ‘heir to the bow’ plays on the legendary prowess with bows and arrows of the Koguryŏ people and of Chumong. It is not known what Kungye’s original name was, only his Buddhist name Sŏnjong 善宗 has been preserved.

<sup>65</sup> Pak Hansŏl has written lucidly on this subject and related issues. Although I strongly disagree with his conclusion that Koryŏ was founded as a continuation of the Koguryŏ state, his research is excellent. See Pak Hansŏl 朴漢高,

Koguryō by ruling families of Shilla origin even before the rise of Kungye supports this view.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, it has often been argued that the political identification with Koguryō of both Later Koguryō and Koryō was necessarily complete and thus entailed the ambition to conquer Koguryō's old territory.<sup>67</sup> This line of arguing overlooks the fact that the unification of the Korean peninsula was only achieved towards the end of T'aejo Wang Kōn's reign, which puts the Koguryō successionism into a different perspective entirely. The identification with Koguryō was aimed primarily and predominantly towards Shilla and Later Paekche and not towards the mainland Chinese dynasties.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, there was not much to choose from for both Kungye and Wang Kōn, since the Shilla state still existed and the state of Later Paekche 後百濟 had already been established in 892.<sup>69</sup> A nominal return to the period of the Three Kingdoms was, then, historically and socially the most suitable and expected option, even more so when the geographical location of the strongholds of Kungye and Wang Kōn is taken into consideration.

The identification with Koguryō and the adoption of the name 'Koryō' thus was, if not inevitable, then at least obvious. There was little to choose from and, moreover, an appeal to Koguryō splendours could count on more positive reactions from the local population than

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"Koryō T'aejo segye-üi ch'ago-e kwanhaeyō: Tang Sukchongsōr-ül chungshim-ūro 高麗太祖 世系の 錯譜에 關하여-唐 肅宗說을 中心으로," *Sach'ong* 史叢 17-18 (1973): pp. 215-232; Pak Hansōl, "Koryō kōn'guk-kwa hojok 高麗建國과 豪族," In *Han'guksa* 韓國史 (Kwach'ōn: Kuksa p'yōnch'an wiwōnhoe 國史編纂委員會, 1993), edited by *Kuksa p'yōnch'an wiwōnhoe* 國史編纂委員會, volume 12; Pak Hansōl, "Koryō-üi Koguryō kyesüngüishik 高麗의 高句麗 繼承意識," *Koguryō yōn'gu* 高句麗研究 18 (2004) pp. 573-590; Pak Hansōl, "Koryō T'aejo-üi Husamguk t'ongil chōngch'aek 高麗太祖의 後三國統一政策," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 7 (1989): pp. 35-64.

<sup>66</sup> Pak Chiyun 朴智胤 (d.u.), who was a member of the Pak-clan that ruled the P'yōngju 平州 area (P'yōngsan 平山, Hwanghae-do 黃海道) and that had submitted to Kungye, held the rank of *taemodal* 大模達, as had his father. *Taemodal* was a Koguryō-rank that was not used in Shilla. The fact that this family that traced its origins back to the mythical founder of Shilla, Pak Hyōkkōse 朴赫居世, used this title for its clan head indicates the continued importance of the Koguryō legacy in this area. See Pak Hansōl, "Koryō kōn'guk-kwa hojok," p. 142.

<sup>67</sup> Much has been written about this subject. The scholarly *communis opinio* is that T'aejo explicitly succeeded to Koguryō and aimed at recovering Koguryō's ancient territories in Manchuria. For some representative studies, see Pak Hansōl, "Koryō T'aejo segye-üi ch'ago-e kwanhaeyō," ; Pak Hansōl, "Koryō-üi Koguryō kyesüngüishik," ; Cho Insōng, "Koryō ch'o-chunggi-üi yōksa kyesüngüishik-kwa Parhaesa inshik 高麗 初, 中期의 歷史繼承意識과 渤海史 認識," in *Yi Kibaek sōnsaeng kohüi kinyōm han'guksahak non'chong: Kodae p'yōn, Koryō shidae p'yōn* 李基白先生古稀紀念 韓國史學論叢 - 古代篇, 高麗時代篇, edited by Yi Kibaek sōnsaeng kohüi kinyōm Han'guksahak nonch'ong palgan wiwōnhoe (Seoul: Yi Kibaek sōnsaeng kohüi kinyōm Han'guksahak nonch'ong palgan wiwōnhoe, 1994), volume one, pp. 723-738; Ch'oe Kyusōng 崔圭成, "Koryō ch'ogi-üi yōjin kwan'gye-wa pukpang chōngch'aek 高麗初期의 女眞關係와 北方政策," *Tongguk sabak* 東國史學 15-16 (1981): pp. 149-168; Ch'oe Kyusōng, "Kungye chōnggwōnha-üi chishigin-üi tonghyang 弓裔政權下의 知識人의 動向," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 31 (1992): pp. 113-34.

<sup>68</sup> The northern expansionist ambitions of Koryō have always been a popular theme in modern Koryō historiography, but the actual intensity and ubiquity of this expansionism must be severely doubted. Most instances of unabashed Koguryō successionism – especially territorially – were meant rhetorically and examples that testify of Shilla successionism can also be found to counter the previous examples. To underscore the rhetorical nature of Koguryō successionism, in quite a number of cases of Koguryō successionism 'corresponding' examples of Shilla successionism can be located, both by the very same person. See for example Pak Illyang's 朴寅良 diplomatic writings to the Liao 遼 court in which he declares Koryō to be the very same country as Koguryō and his eulogy for Munjong 文宗 in which he traces Koryō's history partially back to Pak Hyōkkōse (who is understandably not mentioned in the Liao missive). See 文王哀策 *Munwang aech'aek* in *TMS* 28: 5a-6b; *Sang Taeryo hwangje koju p'yo* 上大遼皇帝告奏表 in *TMS* 39: 5b-6b.

<sup>69</sup> *SGSG* 50: 470-1.



any other appeal. Kungye's apparent fidgeting about with names for his state seems to show the strenuousness of a complete identification with Koguryō. Both 'Majin' 摩震 and 'T'aebong' 泰封 distance themselves from 'Koryō', both conceptually and with regard to the associations evoked.<sup>70</sup> Wang Kōn restored the name of 'Koryō', which has led several scholars to suppose that he might have had more or less private reasons to do so.<sup>71</sup> Mainly based upon the legends recorded in the *Koryō segye* 高麗世系, it is argued that Wang Kōn's ancestors came down from the surroundings of Paektu-san 白頭山 and settled near present day Kaesōng 開城. The family myths were supposed to both explain the Wang family's provenance and its settlement in Kaesōng and to legitimate its position as the ruling family of Koryō. This interpretation is at bottom not implausible. It is very well possible that Chakche Kōn 作帝建<sup>72</sup> was of Koguryō descent, which would perhaps also explain Wang Kōn's warm reception of the Parhae heir apparent and his people. On the other hand, the evidence is flimsy at best and purely circumstantial. Each of Wang Kōn's decisions – naming his state 'Koryō', welcoming Parhae refugees in staggering numbers – can be explained from ideological and political motives. In a way, modern scholarship shows the tendency to consider Parhae as a sort of bridge, a repository bridging the territorial and temporal divide between Koguryō and Koryō. At the same time, interpreting Wang Kōn's actions solely with his Koguryō ancestry in mind is equivalent to reductionism. It is in fact to be doubted whether Wang Kōn, if we presume him to be of Koguryō stock, would have taken these decisions only based upon the history of his clan. Wang Kōn's actions in general speak of a very practical person, who was able to cut his coat according to his cloth, instead of the other way round, as is argued by some historians that take Koguryō successionism as the defining element of Koryō.<sup>73</sup> But, as has been shown by for example Kungye and the ruling Shilla families of the northern provinces before him, descent can be legitimately changed, if that is necessary to acquire or to maintain a leading position. Taking the above into account, it must be concluded that firstly, the availability of a political identification with Koguryō and secondly, the geographical location of Kungye's and later Wang Kōn's backing were decisive in choosing the name 'Koryō'. Before unification in 938 –

<sup>70</sup> Kungye first named changed the name of his state into Majin, then into T'aebong and finally back to Koryō. For an analysis of the concepts involved in his selection of names, see Ch'oe Kyusōng, "Kungye chōnggwōn-ūi sōngkyōk-kwa kukho-ūi pyōngyōn 弓裔政權의 性格과 國號의 變更," *Sangmyōng yōja taehakkyo nonmunjip* 상명여자 대학교 논문집 19 (1987): pp. 287-310; Richard D. McBride II, "Why did Kungye claim to be the Buddha Maitreya?: The Maitreya cult and royal power in the Shilla-Koryō transition," *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 2.1 (2004): pp. 35-62.

<sup>71</sup> This argument is best expressed in Pak Hansōl, "Koryō T'aejo segye-ūi ch'ago-e kwanhaeyō: Tang Sukchongsōr-ūl chungshim-ūro," and Pak Hansōl, "Wang Kōn mit sōnse-ūi sōng, myōng, chonch'ing-e taehayō 王建 및 그 先世의 姓·名·尊稱에 대하여," *Sabak yōn'gu* 史學研究 21 (1969): pp. 47-60.

<sup>72</sup> According to Pak Hansōl, the recurrent epithet *kōn* 建 among members of the Wang family was not a name. Rather, it was a title for a local chief, similar to the Shilla *kan* 干 or *maripkan* 麻立干. Pak's argument is based upon how *kōn* is used in the still extant sources and he provides a convincing argument—taking into consideration the general paucity of sources on early Koryō. In view of the use and meaning of *kōn*, I will use it as a title and write it as such. I.e., Chakche Kōn instead of Chakjegōn. See Pak Hansōl, "Wang Kōn mit sōnse-ūi sōng, myōng, chonch'ing-e taehayō," pp. 47-60.

<sup>73</sup> See the studies by Pak Hansōl mentioned before; also see Yi Usōng, 李佑成 "Samguk sagi-ūi kusōng-gwa Koryō wango-ūi chōngt'ong ūishik 三國史記의 構成과 高麗王朝의 正統意識," *Chindan hakpo* 震檀學報 38 (1974): pp. 203-207.

and even then – it was simply not feasible to pursue personal ambitions that perhaps never existed, while the two attempts at overthrowing Wang Kōn showed the precariousness of his position as new king of Koryō.<sup>74</sup>

The subsequent use of the official state designation ‘Koryō’ supports the assumption that it was adopted out of predominantly politically opportune motives. Inscriptions dating from the early years of Koryō – around the unification of the peninsula – without exception mention ‘Koryō’ at the very beginning of the stele. As is a rule with most extant stelae, the contemporary Chinese dynasty is mentioned, followed by ‘Koryō’ or ‘Koryō-guk’ 高麗國, which is then followed by more detailed information about the contents of the inscription, the place of erection, the date and so forth. Koryō epitaphs from this period are similar. The remarkable thing is that the word ‘Koryō’ is not mentioned in the contents of any of the stelae or epitaphs from this period, except in titles and the like. It is not just a substitution of the common *abang* 我邦/我方 (‘our country’), *ajo* 我朝 (‘our court’), *agukka* 我國家 (‘our state’), *ponbang* 本邦 (‘this country’), *ponjo* 本朝 (‘this court’) and similar self-referring designations, but a complete absence of the designation ‘Koryō’ except when explicitly referring to the state of Koryō. Instead, designations such as ‘Haedong’, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Tongbang’ and ‘Samhan’ are used, according to their differing semantic values discussed above. Examples from the early Koryō are without exaggeration abundant.<sup>75</sup> Epitaphs from about a century later show exactly the same phenomenon. ‘Koryō’ or ‘Koryō-guk’ only appears at the head of the epitaph, in order to situate it, as it were, in its national and international surroundings by mentioning the reigning Chinese dynasty, the state on the peninsula and further necessary concrete information about the epitaph.<sup>76</sup> The absence of ‘Koryō’ as a self-referring designation except in explicit relation to the state is mirrored in the literary and ritual writings of the period. The *P’abanjip* 破閑集 for instance does not include the word ‘Koryō’ even once; instead ‘Haedong’, ‘Tongguk’ and ‘Samhan’ appear. The diverse samples of Koryō poetry, prose, memorials, ritual texts and edicts collected in the *Tong munsŏn* 東文選, again, confirm the absence of ‘Koryō’ in favour of the above-mentioned designations.<sup>77</sup> It was only when such important source materials as the *Koryōsa* 高麗史 and the *Koryōsa chōryō* 高麗史節要 were compiled, that Koryō came to be referred to as Koryō. Of course, this practice was begun with the compilers of the Chosŏn dynasty; it had not been a contemporary practice of Koryō scholars. The presence of many instances of ‘Haedong’, ‘Tongguk’, ‘Tongbang’ and ‘Samhan’ in the *Koryōsa* and the *Koryōsa chōryō*, due to the inclusion of pieces of original texts, points to the Koryō preference of referring to itself by avoiding the name of the state. All extant documents of the Koryō period exhibit this preference. Although it is beyond dispute that these documents were issued by the

<sup>74</sup> See for instance Mun Kyōnghyōn 文暉鉉, *Koryōsa yŏn’gu* 高麗史研究 (Taegu 大邱: Kyōngbuk taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu 慶北大學校出版部, 2000), esp. chapter five.

<sup>75</sup> See for example the inscriptions for Buddhist masters in the *Namal Yōch’o kŏmsŏngmun*. NYKSM I: 33-4 for examples (Haedong, Samhan) from 937; NYKSM I: 60, 63 (Samhan, 939); NYKSM I: 74 (Haedong, 940); NYKSM I: 88 (agukka Samhan, 940).

<sup>76</sup> Any random sample from the extant epitaphs from early to mid-Koryō suffices to illustrate this point. See KMC 13:392.

<sup>77</sup> Those Koryō documents that use the word ‘Koryō’ prominently, such as the *Koryōsa*, the *Koryōsa chōryō* or the genealogies of Koryō lineages, were all (re-) compiled after the transition to the Chosŏn dynasty.

state or by its local representatives, 'Koryŏ' is not mentioned. Instead, and predictably, we predominantly find 'Samhan'.

The sources on Koryŏ are limited and, accustomed as contemporary historians of Koryŏ are to make extensive use of secondary sources such as the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*, it is quite natural to think of Koryŏ as 'Koryŏ'. The above review has, however, suggested that 'Koryŏ' was mainly used to refer to the state of Koryŏ and conspicuously less frequently to refer to Koryŏ as a country with a history or to its people. Whereas 'Samhan' came to be used as a supradynastical designation for the peninsula and its people, the designation 'Koryŏ' was firmly wedded to the state and underwent all the vicissitudes the state went through. Just as had happened with official state names as 'Shilla' and 'Paekche', 'Koryŏ' disappeared after the fall of the dynasty.<sup>78</sup>

The fact that several designations for the peninsula existed and developed into general designations, each with slightly differing connotations, which semantically covered the peninsula, its inhabitants and its history, offers a starting point for inquiring into the communal identity of Koryŏ. Naming a community entails determining who belongs and perhaps more importantly who does not. Geonyms for the peninsula such as 'Haedong', 'Tongguk', 'Tongbang' and 'Samhan' signify belonging or exclusion. Nonetheless, the semantic development of these geonyms has shown that they are by no means 'impermeable'. Sometimes, erroneous use of collective epithets resulted in the acceptance of a name or in the change of semantic value of another name. 'Samhan', for instance, was an originally Chinese name that came to be used to refer to the people of the peninsula in a domestic context. 'Koryŏ' has turned out to be a designation for the state that was used much less than is presumed.

Collective names and designations current on the peninsula under the Koryŏ state are necessary elements of a communal identity. Next, the status of Koryŏ as a spatially and temporally limited realm should be looked into. Above we have established the existence of several general designations for Koryŏ, both supra-historical and historical. Before investigating the people who were supposed to inhabit the territory called 'Koryŏ', 'Haedong', 'Tongguk', 'Tongbang' or 'Samhan', this territory should first be charted.

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<sup>78</sup> Except, ironically, in the name "Korea" or in "Gaoli", the Chinese pronunciation of "Koryŏ" and still in use sometimes to refer to Korea.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A HISTORIC TERRITORY IN KORYŎ

The notion of a historic home territory is of immediate importance to the process of identity formation, the establishment of a community and the formation of transregional identifications. This notion not necessarily implies the physical possession of a home territory at any given point in history. The histories of the Jewish and Armenian peoples have shown that even without the actual possession of a home territory, a strong memory of it that is kept alive through various cultural devices may suffice.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Koryŏ, the historic home territory was possessed by the people who according to themselves were supposed to inhabit it. Nonetheless, even during the early Koryŏ dynasty and certainly during the Chosŏn dynasty, there were heated discussions with much at stake about the precise boundaries of the ancestral lands of the people of the peninsula. In other words, to some extent the boundaries of the historic home territory were subject to redefinition. The Koryŏ dynasty was founded by reuniting the three states that had come into being after the disintegration of the Shilla state. The Wang lineage was not a foreign clan, nor was the unification of the peninsula achieved by relying on great numbers of foreign troops.<sup>2</sup> This effectively meant that Koryŏ had a dynastic myth that explained and legitimated the origins of the ruling family, but no myth of descent for its subjects. The consciousness of succeeding to previous states on the same peninsula was strong enough not to feel the need to create a myth of descent that would distinguish Koryŏ from its preceding states. I will deal with the issue of political identification and successionism below, but suffice it to say here that except for the dynastic myth of the Wang lineage, identification with previous inhabitants of the peninsula was thought to be complete.<sup>3</sup> In order to look at the notion of a historic home territory, we should then look further back than Koryŏ, well into Shilla times. Before doing so, it is important to establish beforehand that the territory of Koryŏ was thought to be limited, i.e. not subject to endless expansion. If Koryŏ was indeed a spatially limited realm, it follows that the people who inhabited this particular piece of land,

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Grosby, "Religion and nationality in antiquity," *European Journal of Sociology* 32 (1991): pp. 229-265; Grosby, "Kinship, territory and the nation in the historiography of ancient Israel," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 105 (1993): pp. 3-18; Grosby, "Sociological implications of the distinction between 'locality' and extended 'territoriality' with particular reference to the Old Testament," *Social Compass* 40 (1993): pp. 179-198; Grosby, "Territoriality: The transcendental primordial feature of modern societies," *Nations and Nationalism* 1.2 (1995): pp. 143-162; Grosby, "Borders, territory and nationality in the ancient Near East and Armenia," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40.1 (1997): pp. 1-29; Anthony D. Smith, *The nation in history: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, Wang Kŏn's cavalry was for a large part Jurchen.

<sup>3</sup> Kwak Tongsun 郭東珣 (fl. early twelfth century) summed this kind of consciousness up in the statement that "our T'aejo [...] unified Chin[han], Pyŏn[han] and Ma[han] into one state". In this simple statement, he connected the Three Han to Koryŏ through continuous succession. See *P'algwangboe Sŏllang hap'yo* 八關會仙郎賀表 in *TMS* 31: 21b-23a.

were somehow different from all the peoples that lived in other territories. The notion of limitedness is indispensable for the notion of distinction, much like naming is (the act of naming is in effect the imposition of limits).

The perception of the spatial finiteness of Koryŏ has been well documented from the beginning of the dynasty. It is of course hardly surprising that the inhabitants of the states on the Korean peninsula should have experienced the spatial restrictedness of their states; territorial resources comparable to the immense resources the Chinese and northern dynasties had at their disposal, were simply not available. This subsequently determined the expectations one could realistically entertain about the possibilities of spatial expansion. Consequently, territorial ambitions in Koryŏ were limited. The famous debates on expansion to and subjugation of the north (the only region to which expansion was practically feasible) are precisely this: debates with clearly limited goals – at least spatially. Both Wang Kŏn's expansionist dreams and the ultimately failed attempts at subjugation of the northern plains by Yun Kwan's 尹瓘 Nine Fortresses were essentially aimed at creating safe borders and not at the acquisition of ever more territory.<sup>4</sup> In contrast with the Koguryŏ of the aptly named King Kwanggaet'o 廣開土王 ("Broad expander of territory") and despite the occasional rhetoric that sought to associate Koryŏ with the northern territories of Koguryŏ, Koryŏ was not a conqueror dynasty. An atypical instance of unmitigated expansionism can in fact only be found during the short period that Myoch'ŏng's ideas held sway.<sup>5</sup>

The fact that Koryŏ was perceived as a spatially limited place does not mean that there was always agreement with regard to the precise location of its borders. As the turbulent foreign politics of the eleventh and twelfth centuries clearly show, there were many different opinions about the guarding of the borders, about the question of what lands belonged to Koryŏ and where the border should run. Although historical arguments were used to solidify claims to territories associated with the glory of former days, these arguments were often purely rhetorical and possessed little claim to historical veracity—which the speakers knew very well.<sup>6</sup> They appealed to the splendours of a vague and ill-defined peninsular past, but did little

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<sup>4</sup> The construction of the Nine Forts found its origin in the desire to check the growing force of the Jurchen in the north. See chapter nine on diplomacy in this study. Wang Kŏn's plans to expand to the north were also of a limited nature: he aimed at the recovery of the ancestral T'aebaek 太白 mountains. The legitimation of his family's rule over Koryŏ was connected to this mountain range, as were the origin and the destiny of the Three Han. See Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn 崔柄憲, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi ohaengjŏk yŏksagwan 高麗時代의 五行的 歷史觀," *Han'guk hakpo* 韓國學報 13 (1978): pp. 17-51, esp. p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Myoch'ŏng's faction advocated the vanquishing of the Jin and Myoch'ŏng himself prophesied that thirty-six countries would come to surrender and bring tribute. Yi Pyŏngdo believed that thirty-six in this case – as in other prophecies – is a pseudo-number that represents the world as known by Koryŏ. I find this hard to believe, given that the number of actual countries named in Koryŏ sources exceeds this number. Yi Pyŏngdo 李丙燾, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu: t'ŭkbi to'cham sasang-ŭl chungshim-ŭro* 高麗時代의 研究 – 특히 圖讖 思想을 中心으로 (Revised edition. Seoul: Asea munhwasa 亞細亞文化史, 1980), pp. 202-203.

<sup>6</sup> Take for example the rhetorical claims made by Sŏ Hŭi 徐熙, when he tried to convince a Liao general not to take possession of territories at the northern frontier. The perhaps honest admiration for Koguryŏ's achievements and the sense of succession shown by Sŏ Hŭi does not imply that he envisioned a similar destiny for Koryŏ. Interestingly, Sŏ Hŭi does not – and perhaps cannot – refute the Liao general's assertion that Koryŏ is successor to Shilla and the Liao to Koguryŏ. But such rhetoric was bound to strike a note with a general of the still expanding and conquering Liao dynasty. One has to distinguish between the purpose of rhetoric and its contents. It is doubtful whether Sŏ Hŭi would have used the same rhetoric towards a Song general. See *KS* 94:4b-5a.

to reduplicate these in the Koryŏ of the time. It is conspicuous that most instances of overt territorial identification with Koguryŏ were occasioned by immediate territorial threats – that often menaced more territory than those few pieces of undisputed Koguryŏ territory that Koryŏ controlled. Even more remarkable is the relatively limited nature of Koryŏ’s identification with Koguryŏ: identification seems to have been mainly of a territorial-political nature.<sup>7</sup> It was to a significant extent both limited and opportunistic. By the time of Wang Kŏn’s unification of the peninsula, a more or less fixed idea of the historic home territories of the peninsula’s people had come into existence and within these historically determined borders the future of Koryŏ was imagined to take place—as well as the past to have taken place.

So what was this historic home territory? Where did its borders run? The notion of ‘Samhan’ can be helpful in determining the borders of Koryŏ’s historic territory. As seen above, ‘Samhan’ developed from a political and territorial notion into a supradynastical concept. For analytical purposes, the distinction in this chapter between ‘Samhan’ as a general designation for the peninsula and its people and the notion of a historic territory of Koryŏ is convenient, but at the same time it is somewhat artificial. It stands to reason that the connections between a general designation of a territory and the historic home territory associated with that territory will be virtually inextricable. If the notion of ‘Samhan’ is considered from this point of view, it yields a number of intimations on the historic home territory of the people on the peninsula.

Domestically, the territorial notion of ‘Samhan’ evolved into a notion of supradynastical but territorially grounded entity on which Koryŏ was founded and which the Koryŏ kings kept in protective stewardship. Several sources attest to the presence of this notion, stating that “our country completely possesses the Samhan”, that “the territory of Koryŏ contains the Samhan” and that “generations of Koryŏ kings have protected the Samhan”<sup>8</sup>. It is also mirrored in contemporary Chinese sources, particularly in letters of investment. The 933 Later Tang 後唐 letter of investment mentions that T’aejo “unified the mighty Five Tribes and attained control of the territory of the Three Han”. A 1049 investment of Munjong’s 文宗 son as heir apparent described Koryŏ as “the old territory of the Samhan and the former name of Paekche”.<sup>9</sup> Two letters of investment from the Song sent to Sŏngjong 成宗 in 983 and 985 elaborate on the same theme: “you [i.e. Sŏngjong] possess the old territory of the Samhan and the former feudal lands of Paekche”.<sup>10</sup> Despite the recurrent notion of the territorial succession to the Samhan, the Chinese diplomatic letters show a keen insight in the intricacies of territorial politics by limiting Koryŏ’s territory to Samhan and Paekche. Although it is not known how the borders of the historical Three Han kingdoms ran, it can be assumed from the contents of the cited letters of investment that the Chinese suzerains of Koryŏ referred to a Koryŏ that did not lay claim to anything beyond the Amnok 鴨綠江 (Yalu) river. The lands to the north of the Amnok were considered to have been the old territory of Koguryŏ and the

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<sup>7</sup> I shall deal with this issue below. For an inventory of the historical memories of Koguryŏ in Koryŏ and Chosŏn, see John B. Duncan, “Historical memories of Koguryŏ in Koryŏ and Chosŏn,” *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2004): pp. 90-117.

<sup>8</sup> *KS* 74:29b; *KS* 135: 42a-b.

<sup>9</sup> *KS* 2:3b; *KS* 7: 33a-b.

<sup>10</sup> *KS* 3: 6a.

lands to the south to Shilla, though historically this is somewhat inaccurate.<sup>11</sup> Koryŏ references to the Amnok as the border of the country appear as early as Kungye's reign, as for instance in the puzzling mirror inscription that predicted Wang Kŏn's ascendancy.<sup>12</sup> According to the interpretation of the scholars of Kungye's court, Wang Kŏn would "first grab the chicken and then strike the duck", which meant that Wang Kŏn would first occupy Shilla (also known as Kyerim 鷄林, Chicken Grove) and then bring the peninsular territory up to the Amnok river (literally "duck-like green river) under his control.<sup>13</sup> The belief that the Amnok river was the 'natural' northern boundary of Koryŏ was a widespread notion during the Koryŏ period and was believed to have existed from times immemorial.<sup>14</sup> Pak Illyang in his famous memorial to the Liao emperor stated that "the shape and energies of the Amnok river divide our country [from others] and form a boundary."<sup>15</sup> Ch'oe Ham 崔咸 (fl. mid-twelfth century) wrote a formal expression of gratitude to the Jin 金 emperor, part of which went as follows:

And moreover, the frontiers of our country have run from times immemorial until the Amnok river. It is only a recent event that the Khitan took this territory away from us. Although we communicated our goodwill to them, they begrudged its return. The collapse of that country caused the guardians of those fortresses [along the Amnok] to scatter and disperse. My father, your servant of old, then said: "That land is part of our territory. I have requested it [to be returned] a long time ago. Fortunately, the Son of Heaven has now returned it to us, so it is natural for us to take possession of it." Minister Sha Yihe 沙乙河 of your great court came to us and made the mandate of the previous Emperor known to us, saying: "Poju 保州 [Üiju 義州] is originally Koryŏ territory. Koryŏ can take possession of it." Hence, we sent our officials there.<sup>16</sup>

Both Pak Illyang and Ch'oe Ham emphasized that the Amnok river had been a boundary demarcating the line between their country and others, whether barbarian or not.

<sup>11</sup> Shilla, of course, claimed and possessed the territory on the peninsular side of the Amnok, but Koguryŏ's capital of P'yŏngyang was situated well beneath this border. The site of the Koguryŏ capital of Kungnaesŏng 國來城 was, literally, a borderline case. During the Koryŏ dynasty it was a location that was frequently fought over and the spot of regular Koryŏ military build-ups. There is even evidence that Shilla at times also claimed the territory to the north of the Amnok. See *KS* 3: 6a; *KS* 82: 42b-43a; for the mention of Shilla's border at the Amnok, see *KS* 14:21a-b.

<sup>12</sup> *KS* 6a-8a.

<sup>13</sup> *KS* 1:7b. Not everybody agreed that the borders of Koryŏ should run along the Amnok. This is what Yi Chehyŏn had to say about it in his commentary to this passage in the *Koryŏsa*: "[...] When our T'aejo ascended the throne, Kim Pu 金傅 had not surrendered [the throne of Shilla] yet. It was before Kyŏn Hwŏn was taken alive. Nonetheless, [T'aejo] went to the Western Capital 西京 from time to time to inspect the northern defences himself. His ambition was to secure the ancient territories of Koguryŏ's King Tongmyŏng as a treasured heritage for our country. He intended to take it without reserves. How could the scope of his ambitions have been limited to first grab the chicken and then strike the duck?" *KS* 2: 19a. I will deal with this issue later, but Yi Chehyŏn himself indicates why T'aejo went to the Western Capital, which was to inspect its fortifications. It was a place of immense strategic importance, especially because of the Jurchen presence there and later the Liao threat across the Amnok.

<sup>14</sup> *KS* 7: 33a-34b. In an official missive to the Liao emperor, Munjong wrote as follows: "Our country has made the Amnok river its boundary ever since [the establishment of] Kija's old territory. Not only that, your previous emperor also acknowledged the Amnok river as the boundary in the benevolent mandate he sent us. Notwithstanding, you recently built bridges and fortresses in our territory. We have been most sincere and sent envoys and letters asking you to return to us the territory we used to have [...]" In a comment on conducting the state affairs of early Koryŏ, Yi Chehyŏn stated that all of Koryŏ was south of the Amnok, i.e. on the peninsula proper. See *KS* 2:19a.

<sup>15</sup> *TMS* 39: 5b-6b; *TMS* 28: 5a-6b

<sup>16</sup> *TMS* 35: 6b-7b.

Their point of view was not uncommon, despite the prevalent tendency to ascribe a strong Koguryō-successionist identity to Koryō.<sup>17</sup> In 1117 the assembled officials (*paekkwon* 百官) offered a memorial to Yejong 睿宗 (1079-1105-1122) in which they voiced their concern about the tense situation at Ŭiju, Koryō's newly established defence headquarters for the northern Amnok river region, while simultaneously congratulating the ruler with the return of Ŭiju into Koryō territory.<sup>18</sup>

The ancient Amnok river region was the old territory of Kyerim [i.e. Shilla] and it has been a strategic defensive stronghold ever since the times of our ancestors. When decline set in [in Shilla], we suffered invasions from the Khitan barbarians and they took it away from us. This is not only something that angered people, but even shamed the spirits. Due to the recent wars between our two enemies [i.e. Liao and the Jurchen], we had feared a continuation of the problems with our two strongholds, but the promise of the Malgal 靺鞨 [i.e. Jurchen] to return the strongholds to us is in compliance with the will of Heaven. The quiet disappearance of the Sōnbi 鮮卑 [i.d. Jurchen] is also not an act of men. Our springs and our wells [i.d. our territory] have been returned into our territory and have been cultivated. We have expanded our territory.<sup>19</sup>

The text then concludes with congratulations and a toast to the ruler. This text, that was obviously meant for court consumption only, emphasizes the status of the Amnok as the time-honoured boundary of both Shilla and Koryō. In fact, the legitimation for considering the Amnok as such is wholly traced back to its function during the Shilla period. This tracing of legitimation is remarkable in the sense that the majority of modern historians have called attention to the fundamentally Koguryō-based identity of Koryō, starting with the name of the dynasty. To be sure, there is a definite and important Koguryō element in Koryō identity, which I will deal with later in this chapter when reviewing the tracing of legitimation during the Koryō. Nonetheless, territorially identification with Koguryō was, as is evident from the citation above, by no means exclusive or even taken for granted. In order to get a better notion of the politics of territorial identification in Koryō, let us take a look at an instance of undisputed identification with Koguryō. In 1126, an Koryō envoy went to the Jin emperor to complain about the Jin occupation of much-contested Poju [Ŭiju].

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<sup>17</sup> Koryō opposition was fierce every time the Liao tried to establish fortifications and bridges along the Amnok river in what was considered to be Koryō territory. This kind of fierce opposition should, however, not be equated with Koguryō-like expansionism, which is very different. Koryō opposed incursions into its own territory; it did not try to conquer the Manchurian plains that had once been Koguryō's. Koryō's attitude was directly informed by security concerns, and not by expansionist ambitions. Munjong's reign is known as the zenith of Koryō and is characterized by its stability. Yet at this time, protests against the construction of Liao fortifications at the Amnok were at their peak, which makes it impossible to characterize these protests as expressions of expansionism. The fierce protests in the preceding and succeeding reigns of Chōngjong and Sōnjong are similar. See *KS* 6: 16b; *KS* 10:8b; *KS* 10: 15a. A case in point that shows the nature of Koryō's diplomatic assertiveness not to be expansionist, is the realization that although the east of the Amnok river is undoubtedly Koryō territory, the lands west of it are not. Both Sukchong and Yejong and their officials admitted this and did not attempt to lay claims to this territory. On the contrary, they complied with Liao or Jin requests not to station garrisons at the Amnok at places that would threaten to make incursions on Liao or Jin territory. See *KS* 11: 30s-b; *KS* 13: 19b-20b.

<sup>18</sup> For the establishment of the Ŭiju Defence Commissioner and the tensions between Koryō, the Liao and the rising Jurchen in this period, see *KS* 14: 20a-22b.

<sup>19</sup> *KS* 14:21a-b.



On the *kyeyu* day the director of the Office for Regalia Kim Charyu 金子繆 and the office chief of the Ministry of Punishments Yu Tōngmun 柳德文 were dispatched to the Jin, where they thanked the emperor for the dispatch of an imperial envoy. Their memorial read as follows: “According to the secretly transmitted message delivered by Ko Paeksuk 高伯淑, it is your Imperial Highnesses intention to return Poju to Koryō and not to claim it again. In my view, the territory of Koguryō had Yo-san 遼山 in its centre and the old site of P’yōngyang took the Amnok river as its boundary. Since then, there have been several changes and at the time of our forefathers, the Khitan took all the land and invaded part of the Three Han. Although we established friendly neighbouring relations with them, they did not return [the territory] to us. Then fortune smiled at our country, because a benevolent ruler appeared in your esteemed country. Beholding the righteousness of your armies, no one was left to guard their fortresses. At the time of our previous king, envoy Sha Yihe, who was in charge of the borders, came and transmitted the mandate of the emperor stating that “since Poju is originally Koryō territory, Koryō can take possession of it”. Hence, our king had walls and moats build and moved people there. At the time, we were but a small country, but we had not accepted your suzerainty yet. Your previous emperor returned our old territory to us with warm words that were particularly aimed at establishing cordial relations.<sup>20</sup>

The memorial continues to praise the imperial virtue of the Jin emperor, but that need not concern us here. The similarity in contents with the 1117 congratulatory text is clear. The only significant difference is the location of territorial legitimation in Koguryō; the 1117 text after all had traced the origin of the Amnok boundary to Shilla. This contrast is important and resurfaces in comparisons of other diplomatic writings with writings meant for domestic consumption. I will treat this theme in more detail below, but suffice it to say here that identification with Koguryō was not nearly as complete as is often maintained.<sup>21</sup> More significantly, although institutional identification with Shilla has often been recognized to have played an important role in early Koryō, its territorial aspirations were always thought to have derived from a desire to reclaim the ancestral lands of Koguryō. Examples like the ones presented above, suggest that this was not the case.

The establishment of the Amnok river as a physical and natural boundary delineated the Koryō historic home territory. Since Koryō was situated on a peninsula of modest dimensions, it is not hard to imagine that the sea will have formed the boundaries in the south, east and west. This is in fact exactly what we find when we look at the sources. Koryō is invariably described as a peninsula, surrounded by the sea at three sides. The Geography Section of the *Koryōsa* states:

Our Haedong blocks the sea at three sides. Only one side is connected to the mainland.

<sup>20</sup> See *KS* 15: 20a-21a. The memorial was written by Kim Puū 金富義 and has also been included in the *Tong munsōn*. See *Sa pulsubok Poju p’yō* 謝不復保州表 in *TMS* 35: 6b-7b.

<sup>21</sup> For different views on this subject, see the aforementioned studies by Pak Hansōl and Ch’oe Kyusōng. Also see Yi Chōngshin 李貞信, “Koryō T’aejo-ūi kōn’guk inyōm-ūi hyōngsōng-gwa kungnae-oe chōngse 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내외 정세” *Han’guksa yōn’gu* 韓國史研究 118 (2002): pp. 35-74; Yi Chōngshin, *Koryō-shidae-ūi chōngch’i pyōndong-gwa taeoe chōngch’aek* 고려시대의 정치변동과 대외정책 (Seoul: Kyōngin munhwasa 景仁文化社, 2003).

The width of the peninsula nears 10,000 *li*.<sup>22</sup>

Another representative description from the *Koryŏsa* reads as follows:

[...] The territory of Koryŏ is surrounded by the sea on three sides and one side is supported by mountains. Its girth measures several thousand *li*.<sup>23</sup>

With the Amnok guarding the northern border and with the sea watching over the other three borders, a clear picture of Koryŏ's home territory emerges.<sup>24</sup> This historically formed notion of the Amnok river guarding the north is also mirrored in the symbolic function it assumed. The crossing of the Amnok came to mean to go or to return from abroad.<sup>25</sup> In 1055, Munjong, upon hearing that the imperial Liao envoy had crossed the Amnok, immediately cut down on the number of side dishes at meals and forbade music to be performed and animals to be slaughtered or hunted.<sup>26</sup> It is not so much this show of respect that is of interest here, but rather the positioning of the Amnok as the boundary. Reports on barbarian incursions in the northern territories assumed pregnancy when the court was informed that they had "crossed the Amnok". In this case, the natural defensive function of the Amnok river and the strongholds that had been built and manned along its banks and its symbolic meaning as the boundary between Koryŏ and the barbarians converge. All through the Koryŏ, the Amnok region was contested. In the beginning of the dynasty, the Liao frequently tried to establish strongholds and fortified bridges along and across the Amnok and this proved to be one of the major headaches for Koryŏ diplomats.<sup>27</sup> From the twelfth century on, the Jin dynasty was the rival party. Many of Koryŏ's battles with invaders took place around the Amnok, and Koguryŏ and Shilla as well had fought some of their battles there. Ŭlchi Mundŏk 乙支文德 had been victorious at the Amnok river when he routed the Sui 水 armies there.<sup>28</sup> Sŏ Hŭi 徐熙 negotiated his famous settlement with the Liao armies to regain these parts of the Koryŏ territory. Yun Kwan built his Nine Fortresses in the Hamgyŏng area to protect this territory.<sup>29</sup> The Amnok river provided Koryŏ not only with an easily defensible natural boundary, but also with a symbolic boundary that marked the transition into foreign territory.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, it was

<sup>22</sup> *KS* 56: 1a.

<sup>23</sup> *KS* 137: 23b. The same description is also encountered in Chinese diplomatic writings to Koryŏ. See for example *KS* 136: 15a.

<sup>24</sup> The Amnok, Tuman and Paektu-san as Koryŏ's boundaries also seem to have been recognized in the Song as the border between the Khitan and Koryŏ: see Chen Jun 陳均, *Huangchao biannian gangmu beiyao* 皇朝編年綱目備要 3-28, in Chang Tongik 張東翼 (ed.), *Songdae Yŏsa charyo chimnok* 宋代麗史資料集錄 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2000), pp. 175-177.

<sup>25</sup> See for instance *Chŏng Ingyŏng myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 424: 5 (returning from the Yuan court is styled as "crossing the Amnok"); *Wŏn Ch'ung myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 496: 12 (King Ch'unghye is welcomed by his officials on his return from the Yuan at the banks of the Amnok); *TMS* 15, *Song Yi Hallim hwanjo* (On taking leave of Yi Hallim who returns home) by Yi Chehyŏn.

<sup>26</sup> *KS* 7: 35a-b; *KS* 64: 18a.

<sup>27</sup> See chapter nine.

<sup>28</sup> *SGSG* 34: 421-422; see *KS* 58: 32b.

<sup>29</sup> *KS* 58: 32b.

<sup>30</sup> In wishing both the ideological and geographical boundaries between China and the peninsula to disappear, Kwŏn Kŭn illustrates this point very well in a poem on the Amnok river written on command of the Ming emperor:

inextricably connected to a kind of “frontier mentality”. It was at the banks of the Amnok river that the country had to be defended. The list of skirmishes, struggles and battles that took place there is virtually endless. Sōngjong had sent censor Yi Kyōmūi 李謙宜 there to build frontier fortresses, but the Jurchen kidnapped him and only one out of three soldiers came back.<sup>31</sup> In 1016 a large Khitan army led by generals Yelu Shiliang 耶律世良 and Xiao Qulie 蕭屈烈 invaded via this route. The *Koryōsa* reports that tens of thousand soldiers died in the ensuing battle. When the Khitan sent an envoy to Koryō to restore relations, they were not allowed to cross the Amnok.<sup>32</sup> In his famous victory against the numerically superior Khitan armies in 1018, Kang Kamch’an 姜邯贊 (948–1031) virtually wiped out the Khitan army at the battle near the fortress of Hūnghwajin 興化鎮 (Ūju).<sup>33</sup> The defensive line of fortresses built by Tōkchong 德宗 in 1031 and 1032 also testifies to the frontier mentality of the Amnok region; these fortresses were built of stones, but each of them was 25 *ch’ōk* high and 25 *ch’ōk* thick. One *ch’ōk* equalling 30 centimetres, these fortresses were by no means meant to be insignificant outposts.<sup>34</sup> These fortresses, physical representations of Koryō’s symbolic boundaries, were not the first to be built there. Wang Kōn had already had fortresses constructed in the north. Nor were they the last. Yejong had Yun Kwan built the infamous Nine Fortresses there, from which an all-out attack on the Jurchen who were growing stronger day by day was launched.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps even more so than the events recorded in the *Koryōsa*, inscriptions and epitaphs from the early and middle Koryō give a trenchant picture of the reality of the northern border in the lives of Koryō officials.<sup>36</sup> In short, the northern boundary of the Amnok river was of the utmost importance for Koryō, both defensively and ideologically. This multi-layered importance, is

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The villages at the border are cold, the trees old/The river, long as a root, keeps Liaoyang at a distance/The imperial virtue does not distinguish between China and the barbarians/So how could geography keep our territories divided?/Leaving the rocking of my small boat to the waves/I look with pleasure at the sun shining at even the remotest places/Who knows the busy, busy intentions of these comings and goings?/I shall tell my lord the message of the emperor. *STYS* 53: 4.

<sup>31</sup> *KS* 3: 6a

<sup>32</sup> “In the seventh year of Hyōnjong in the first month of spring of *kyōngsul* day the Khitan generals Yelu Shiliang and Xiao Qulie invaded Kwakchu. Our armies fought them and tens of thousands died. Plundering the possessions of our soldiers the Khitan armies left. On *kabin* day a Khitan envoy of 10 people arrived at the Amnok river, but they were not received.” *KS* 4:19b.

<sup>33</sup> *KS* 9a-12b.

<sup>34</sup> *KS* 82: 31b-32a. Also see *Koryōsa chōryo* [hereafter *KSC*] 4: 5a. The *Koryōsa chōryo* mentions the names of the places where the fortresses were built. The line of defence ran from the place where the ancient capital of Koguryō, Kungnaesōng, had been located on the west coast where the Amnok river ran into the sea to the east coast, measuring more than a thousand *li* in total. The fortifications started in the west with Wiwōn Hūngwha 威遠興化, Chōngju 靜州, Yōnghae 寧海, Yōngdōk 寧德, Yōngsak 寧朔, Unju 雲州, Ansuchōngsae 安水清塞, P’yōngno 平虜, Yōngwōn 盈遠, Chōngyung 定戎, Maengju 孟州, Sakchu 朔州 and ended at the three most eastern fortresses of Yodōk 耀德, Chōngbyōn 靜邊 and Hwaju 和州.

<sup>35</sup> Ch’u Myōngyōp 秋明輝, *Ilse’gimal-12se’gich’o Yōjin chōngbōl munje-wa chōngguk tonghyang* 11世紀末~12世紀初 女眞征伐問題와 政局動向 (M.A. thesis, Seoul National University, 1999); Ch’u Myōngyōp, “Koryō chōn’gi ‘pōn’ inshik-kwa ‘tong-sobōn’-ūi hyōngsōng 고려 전기 ‘번(蕃)’인식과 ‘동·서번’의 형성,” *Yōksa-wa hyōnshil* 역사와 현실 43 (2002): pp. 14-46. For an informative account of how Koryō’s frontier fortification system concretely worked see Song Yongdōk 宋容德, *Koryō chōn’gi kukkyōng chidae-ūi chu-chinsōng p’yōngje* 高麗前期 國境地帶 州鎮城編制 (M.A. thesis, Seoul National University, 2001).

<sup>36</sup> There are hardly any epitaphs of high-ranking scholar-officials that do not, in some way or other, refer to the continuous struggle to safeguard the northern borders.

well expressed in this poem by Chǒng Mongju (1337-1392):

Üju is the gateway to our land,  
Heavily defended since old.  
When was the long wall built  
That meanders along the mountains and hills?  
The waters of Malgal flow widely  
To the west, forming the border.  
I have already travelled those thousand miles  
Arrived here, wandering aimlessly about.  
Tomorrow morning I will cross the river, going home  
The sky over the Crane Field will be distant and high.<sup>37</sup>

Yi Saek (1328-1396) wrote the following poem on the Amnok river, showing its function as a symbolic boundary:

The fragrant spring breeze blows on the traveller's way  
The setting sun shines on my homeland.  
In the drizzle the sound of the waves is audible  
The grasses in the wide valley look cold  
If I go north, a million miles lay before me  
Returning east, I will reach the Three Han.  
Where now is my four-horse-drawn cart?  
My face fills with embarrassment.<sup>38</sup>

The northern frontier's importance did not derive entirely from the functions of the Amnok river. The northern part of the peninsula also housed two mountains that were at the centre of the founding myths of Koguryō and Koryō. Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san both figure prominently in the myths and legends of the peninsula. Although the Amnok river figures more prominently in the annals of the Koryō due to its strategic importance, Paektu and T'aebaek, while lacking strategic importance, loom impressively at the background of the historic home territory of Koryō. The Amnok river rises in Paektu-san and much of its symbolic meaning derives from its origins. To begin with, Paektu-san is the place of origin of the royal Wang lineage. Kim Kwanüi 金寬毅 (fl. late twelfth century) recorded the foundation myth of the Koryō dynasty in his *P'yōnnyōn t'ongnok* 編年統錄, which has survived as a part of the *Koryōsa*:

There was a man named Hogyōng 虎景 (Tigerish Effulgence) who, claiming to be the highest Holybone General, wandered down from Paektu-san. Having reached the valley to the east of Puso-san 扶蘇山, he took a wife and settled there.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Shinjūng Tongguk yōji sūngnam* [hereafter STYS] 53: 4b.

<sup>38</sup> STYS 53: 5a.

<sup>39</sup> I have borrowed Michael Rogers's translation in Peter H. Lee (ed.), *Sourcebook of Korean civilization: From early times to the sixteenth century*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 266.

The foundation myth of the Koryŏ was a dynastic foundation myth. It did not pretend to provide an explanation for the origins of the peninsula and its people, but merely an account and legitimisation of the provenance and road to power of the Wang lineage. It has been suggested that the Wang lineage sorely needed this kind of ideological backing, because their origins were anything but illustrious. They did not have a surname, to cite just one possible obstacle to claiming the rule over the peninsula.<sup>40</sup> It is then to be expected that the foundation myth of the Koryŏ would have fallen back on earlier myths and established patterns of legitimisation. Here it is important to highlight the role of Paektu-san in it. The Wang lineage is described as originating in the neighbourhood of Paektu-san and this mountain figures two more times in the myth. After it has been established that Hogyŏng is from Paektu-san, a geomantic analysis of Kaesŏng clarifies the ultimate source of Kaesŏng's geomantic auspiciousness. Its mountain range is a branch of the Great Trunk 大幹 (*taegan*) mountain range of Paektu-san, the patriarch mountain of the peninsula.<sup>41</sup> A memorial from 1357 from the deputy director of the Institute of Astronomical Observation reiterated the importance of Paektu-san and the Paektu mountain range for Koryŏ's well-being:

On the *mushin* day, the deputy director of the Institute for Astronomical Observation, U P'irhŭng 于必興, presented a memorial to the king that read as follows: "The *Record of the Jade Dragon* 玉龍記<sup>42</sup> says that our country originated in Paektu-san and ends in Chiri-san. Our earth-force [*chise* 地勢] takes water as its roots and wood as its branches. All things black are our parents and all things azure constitute our body. If our customs are in harmony with the land, we will prosper, but if they go against the land, calamities will occur. Customs are constituted by the dress, costumes and headgear of the ruler and his ministers, by the melodies of our music, by the implements used during ceremonies. Accordingly, henceforth all officials, both civil and military, must wear black clothes, azure hats, monks must wear black hempen hoods or large hats, and women must wear clothes made of black wool. Furthermore, all mountains must be completely planted with pine trees, which must be groomed until they grow in abundance. All ritual implements used must be brassware or else pottery. By doing so,

<sup>40</sup> Pak Hansŏl, "Wang Kŏn mit sŏnse-ŭi sŏng, myŏng, chonch'ing-e taehayŏ," pp. 47-60.

<sup>41</sup> According to the *P'abanjip* [hereafter *PHJ*] this mountain range originated in Paektu-san and ended in Chiri-san 智異山. See *PHJ* 1: 6-7.

<sup>42</sup> The *Record of the Jade Dragon* is a no longer extant work about Koryŏ geomancy, that is attributed to Tosŏn 道誥 by some scholars. The Ongnyong-sa temple [Jade Dragon Temple] is the temple where in 1150 literatus Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng's 崔惟清 (1094-1173) commemoration was inscribed on a stele. It also housed a stele that was erected in Tosŏn's honour sometime during the reign of Injong. Tosŏn had founded this temple to house his own Sŏn lineage, which explains why the steles were erected here. See *Ongnyong-sa wangsa Tosŏn kabong Sŏn'gak kuksa kyoso* 玉龍寺王師道誥加封先覺國師教書 in *TMS* 27: 9a-9b; *Ongnyong-sa wangsa Tosŏn kabong Sŏn'gak kuksa kwan'go* 玉龍寺王師道誥加封先覺國師官告 in *TMS* 27: 9b-10b; *Paekkyesan Ongnyong-sa chŭngshŭi Sŏn'gak kuksa pim'yŏng* 白鷄山玉龍寺贈諡先覺國師碑銘 in *TMS* 117: 16b-22b. For representative studies on Tosŏn, see *Sŏn'gak kuksa Tosŏn-ŭi shin yŏn'gu* 先覺國師道誥의 新研究, ed. Yŏngam-gun 靈岩郡 (Yŏngam: Yŏngam-gun, 1988). Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn's studies are still the most authoritative. See Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn, "Tosŏn-ŭi saengae-wa Namal Yŏch'o-ŭi p'ungsu chirisŏl: Sŏnjong-gwa p'ungsu chirisŏr-ŭi kwan'gye-rŭl chungshim-ŭro 道誥의 生涯와 羅末麗初의 風水地理說-禪宗과 風水地理說의 關係를 중심으로 하여", in *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 11 (1975): 101-146; Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn, "Koryŏ kŏn'guk-kwa p'ungsu chirisŏl 高麗建國과 風水地理說", in *Han'guksaron* 韓國史論 18 (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1988), ed. Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, pp. 227-239; Choi Byŏng-hŏn (Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn), "Tosŏn's geomantic theories and the foundation of the Koryŏ dynasty", in *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 2 (1989): pp. 65-92.

we will be in harmony with the peculiarities of the land.<sup>43</sup>

The above citation is noteworthy in numerous aspects. I will postpone the important issue of geomancy to a later chapter and confine the discussion here to Paektu-san. The causal relationship that Paektu-san has with Koryŏ's well-being is remarkable: the fact that the geography of Koryŏ is directly traced back to Paektu-san has very concrete and inevitable consequences. This notion was first explicitly articulated by the geomancing monk Tosŏn who played a crucial role in the legitimization of the rule of the Wang lineage. When he met with Wang Kŏn's father Chakche Kŏn, he had just returned from Paektu-san where he had been initiated into the practices of geomancy.<sup>44</sup> In this manner, the relationship between Koryŏ, the Wang lineage, geomancy and Paektu-san was strengthened. The belief that Paektu-san occupied a special position in the spiritual and geomantic life on the peninsula clearly predates the Koryŏ period.<sup>45</sup> Paektu-san is mentioned prominently in the myths of descent of Koguryŏ and Paekche. The source of the Amnok river, Paektu-san figured as the background of the birth of Ko Chumong 高朱蒙, the later King Tongmyŏng 東明王. Chumong, who had been conceived at the bank of the Amnok, founded Koguryŏ at the foot of Paektu-san.<sup>46</sup> In Koguryŏ, Ko Chumong was honoured with his own ancestral shrine.<sup>47</sup> On the site of his palace [Kuje-gung 九梯宮: Nine-Step Ladder Palace] the Yŏngmyŏng-sa temple 永明寺 [Eternal Light Temple] was built, which would become famous for lodging Ado 阿道 (d.u.), the monk that transmitted Buddhism to Koguryŏ.<sup>48</sup> The Koryŏ monarchs frequently visited King Tongmyŏng's palace whenever they were in Sŏgyŏng (which had been Koguryŏ's capital P'yŏngyang).<sup>49</sup> According to the Song envoy, Xu Jing 徐兢, there was a shrine dedicated to

<sup>43</sup> *KS* 39: 18b-19a.

<sup>44</sup> It is in fact very doubtful whether Tosŏn ever left the peninsula and if he did, whether he did so in order to learn the geomancer's art. See Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn, "Tosŏn-ŭi saengae," pp. 101-110.

<sup>45</sup> Michael Rogers did not think so, but he made two mistakes. Firstly, he criticises the tendency of Korean scholars to identify too many mountains as either T'aebaek-san or Paektu-san, but he mistakenly identifies T'aebaek-san in Kangwŏn-do as the Manchurian T'aebaek-san. The Kangwŏn-do T'aebaek-san was revered as one of the Five Sacred Mountains (Oak 五岳) of Shilla and rituals in honour of it should be looked at in this context. Kangwŏn-do T'aebaek-san worship should not be construed to criticize modern Korean historians of haphazardly identifying mountains with the legendary mountains Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san. Secondly, whether or not some identifications are mistaken, it is not these modern identifications that matter, but the contemporary significance attached to them. From this perspective, both Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san were frequently identified with each other and with other historically and religiously important mountains. See Michael C. Rogers, "P'yŏnmyŏn t'ongnok: The foundation legend of the Koryŏ state," *Journal of Korean Studies* 4 (1982): pp. 3-72, esp. 33-36.

<sup>46</sup> The myth of King Tongmyŏng has been recorded in different sources, which means that there are considerable differences as to the places of importance.

<sup>47</sup> Sŏ Yŏngdae 徐永大, "Koguryŏ-ŭi kukka cherye: Tongmaeng-ŭl chungshim-ŭro 高句麗의 國家祭禮 - 東盟을 중심으로," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 120 (2003): pp. 1-32; Pak Sŏngbŏm 朴承範, "Cheŭi-rŭl t'onghaesŏ pon Koguryŏ-ŭi chŏngch'esŏng 祭儀를 통해서 본 高句麗의 正體性," *Koguryŏ yŏn'gu* 18 (2004): pp. 433-468.

<sup>48</sup> The biography of Ado can be found in *SGYS* 3: 28-32. For an historical investigation of the Kuje-gung, see Yi Tohak 李道學, "P'yŏngyang Kuje-gung-ŭi sŏngkyŏk-kwa kŭ inshik 平壤 九梯宮의 性格과 그 認識," *Kukhak yŏn'gu* 國學연구 3 (1990): pp. 229-234.

<sup>49</sup> According to the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* Kuje-gung palace was visited by Sŏnjong in 1087, by Sukchong in 1102, by Yejong in 1109 and 1116, by Injong in 1127 and 1132 and by Ŭijong in 1169. See *KS* 72: 32a-37b; *KS* 72: 46b-48a. For other examples, see *KS* 4: 9a; *KS* 4: 14a; *KS* 7: 7b; *KS* 9: 1a; *KS* 9: 16b; *KS* 9: 35a; *KS* 10: 13b; *KS* 11: 28b; *KS* 11: 35b; *KS* 13: 3b; *KS* 14: 11a; *KS* 14: 12b-13a; *KS* 15: 22a; *KS* 19: 2b; *KS* 28: 44a; *KS* 30: 39b; *KSC* 3: 55a; *KSC* 5: 40b; *KSC* 5: 41a-b; *KSC* 7: 16a-b; *KSC* 7: 21a; *KSC* 8: 30a; *KSC* 10: 14b-15a; *KSC* 11: 20a; *KSC* 11: 46a-b; *TMS* 43: 10b-12b; *TMS* 104:

Tongmyǒng and one dedicated to his mother “because she gave birth to Chumong, the founder of Koguryō” – in the mountains just outside of Kaesǒng.<sup>50</sup> Both shrines were popular both with the people and the court officials.<sup>51</sup> The ancestral rites that were frequently held in honour of Tongmyǒng and the several honours that were bestowed upon his spirit, confirm the continued importance of Tongmyǒng both on a popular and an ideological level.<sup>52</sup> There was, in other words, a widespread knowledge of the Tongmyǒng mythology and of the places associated with him, which is precisely how Yi Kyubo put it in the foreword to his epic poem *Tongmyǒngwang py'ŏn* 東明王篇, saying that “[t]he mysterious tales of King Tongmyǒng are so well known that even ignorant men and simple women can tell them”.<sup>53</sup> Geomancing monk *cum* rebel leader Myoch'ōng 妙清 (?-1135) took advantage of the legends and legitimacy associated with Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san and named the first of his eight saints (*p'alsōng* 八聖) that protected the peninsula “Country-Protecting T'aebaek Holy Hermit of Paektu” (*Ho'guk Paektu-ak T'aebaek sōnin* 護國白頭嶽太白仙人).<sup>54</sup> The “Country-Protecting T'aebaek Holy Hermit of Paektu” was, according to Myoch'ōng, none other than Manjusri himself, a bodhisattva often associated with Paektu-san.<sup>55</sup>

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8b-10a. The fact that Yōngmyōng-sa temple had been the place of the temporal burial of T'aejo (*baengjaeso* 行在所) adds much significance to the importance of Kuje-gung. T'aejo had visited the Western Capital at least ten times: in 921 (*KS* 1: 16a), 922 (*KS* 1: 16b; *KSC* 1: 18b), 925 (*KS* 1: 17b; *KSC* 1: 19b), 926 (*KS* 1: 19b; *KSC* 1: 21a), 929 (*KS* 1: 26a; *KSC* 1: 27b), twice in 930 (*KS* 1: 27a; *KSC* 1: 29b; *KSC* 1: 30a), 931 (*KSC* 1: 30b), 932 (*KS* 2: 2a), 934 (*KS* 2: 6a; *KSC* 1: 34a) and 935 (*KS* 2: 8b; *KSC* 1: 37a).

<sup>50</sup> *Gaoli Tuijing* 高麗圖經 17: 178. The shrine dedicated to the mother of Chumong – according to the legend she was the daughter of river god Habaek (“Count of the River” 河伯) – was called “Shrine of the Sacred Mother of the Eastern Spirit”.

<sup>51</sup> *Gaoli Tuijing* 17: 178-9. This shrine was one of the places where rain ceremonies were held in times of drought. Other ceremonies took place at the royal ancestral shrines, Songak mountain, near the famous Pagyōn waterfalls 朴淵 or at the tombs of former rulers. The Tongshin-sa shrine 東神祠 was in fact among the places that had been emphatically recommended by the court astronomer for holding rain prayers. The fact that the Tongshin-sa shrine figured as the place for rain praying ceremonies is not only a testimony to its importance – in an agrarian society few things are as important as sufficient rain – but also to yet another connection with Koguryō. In Koguryō, Habaek – who was incidentally the maternal grandfather of Ko Chumong or Tongmyǒng – was the god of agriculture. See *SJS* 155: 1a-b; *KS* 54:20a; *KS* 54: 20b; *KS* 22:a.

<sup>52</sup> There are a number of entries pertaining to Tongmyǒng and his cult during the early to middle Koryō. See *KS* 4: 9b; *KS* 13: 3b-41; *KS* 58: 31a; *KSC* 7:7b. It is also noteworthy that Koryō had a Chungmo-hyōn 中牟縣. Chungmo 中牟 is one of the names Ko Chungmong appears under in the *Samguk sagi*. The *Koryōsa* mentions that the name of the Shilla *hyōn* Toan 道安 was changed into Chungmo after the transition to Koryō. It was located on undisputed Shilla territory. See *KS* 57: 22b. Other names under which Chumong was recorded in Chinese sources include Ch'umo 鄒牟, Sanghae 象解, Chunghae 衆解 and Tomo 都慕.

<sup>53</sup> *Tongguk Yi Sangguk Chip* 東國李相國集 [hereafter *TYS*] 3:1a. I borrowed the translation from Richard Rutt. See Rutt, “The lay of King Tongmōng,” in *Korea Journal* 13.7 (1973), pp. 48-54. For studies on Tongmyǒng and Ko Chumong, see Kim Hwagyōng 金和經, “Koguryō kōn'guk shinhwa-ūi yōn'gu 高句麗 建國神話의 研究,” *Chindan hakpo* 86 (1998): pp. 27-47; Chang Sugūn 張壽根, “Ko Chumong shinhwa-ūi minsokhakchōk yōn'gu 高朱蒙神話의 民俗學的 研究,” *Minsokhak yōn'gu* 민속학연구 1 (1994): pp. 105-137; O Sunje 吳舜濟, “Paekche-ūi Tongmyōng-gwa Koguryō-ūi Chumong 百濟의 東明과 高句麗의 朱蒙,” *Shirhak sasang y'ŏn'gu* 實學思想研究 12 (1999): pp. 55-91.

<sup>54</sup> *KS* 127: 29a.

<sup>55</sup> The other seven ‘guardian angels’ of Koryō also evoke strong associations with the landscape and the mountains of Koryō. All of them are identifications of Buddhas, bodhisattvas or devas with mountain gods. They are: Yongwi-ak yukt'ongjon 龍圍嶽六通尊者, manifestation of Sakyamuni; Wōlsōng-ak ch'ōnsōn 月城嶽天仙, a manifestation of Sarasvatī 大辯天神; Kuryō P'yōngyang sōnin 駒麗平壤仙人, manifestation of the Yōndūng Buddha 燃燈佛; Kuryō mongmyōk sōnin 駒麗木覓仙人, a manifestation of Vipasyin 毗婆尸佛; Songak chinjusa 松嶽震主居士, a

Paektu-san was known under a number of names: Ungshim-san 熊心山, Ungshin-san 熊神山, Paek-san 白山 and its most widespread alternative name Changbaek-san 長白山. Confusingly, T'aebaek-san, the origin of the T'aebaek mountain range and an important mountain in peninsular mythology and geography, did not only share its geographical location with Paektu-san, but also the name of Changbaek. The confusion does not end here, because there is more than one T'aebaek-san on the peninsula and T'aebaek-san was also known under the alternative designations Kaema-san 蓋馬山, Chongt'ae-san 徙太山, T'aehwang-san 太皇山 and Purham-san 不咸山.<sup>56</sup> It will be no surprise, then, that the T'aebaek-san that figures in peninsular mythology is not always easily identifiable. For our purposes here, this does not pose a severe problem, because the people that told and wrote down the myths had to deal with the same confusing facts and because the other T'aebaek mountains were named so following the example of and deriving authority from the original T'aebaek-san. This means that they are part of the same mythological structure and can be treated as possessing the same ideological significance, irrespective of their geographical location. T'aebaek-san formed the background of the myth of Ko Chumong, just as Paektu-san did and was thought to be the origin of the Han River that flows through the peninsula.<sup>57</sup> According to Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, the survivors of Koguryŏ had gathered at the foot of T'aebaek-san after their defeat to the combined Tang-Shilla armies and it had been there that Tae Choyŏng 大祚榮 (r. 699-719) had proclaimed the foundation of Parhae.<sup>58</sup> The inaccessibility of the mountain only heightened its status, as is apparent from a poem by An Ch'uk 安軸 (1282-1349), in which he describes T'aebaek-san as the origin of everything under heaven, so close to heaven it seems like one can climb there from its top.<sup>59</sup> This poem has strong Daoist overtones (it describes flying through the white clouds sitting on a crane), as has the poem Kim Kŭkki 金克己 devoted to it, but T'aebaek-san also figured as the background to narratives of Buddhist enlightenment. A stele

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manifestation of Vajrapāsa 金剛索菩薩; Chŭngsŏng-ak shinin 甌城嶽神人, a manifestation of Kūnu chŏ'nwang 勒叉天王 and finally Tu-ak ch'ŏnnyŏ 頭嶽天女, a manifestation of Akopya upāsikā 不動優婆夷. See John Jorgensen, "Who was the author of the Tan'gun myth?," in *Perspectives on Korea* (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1998), edited by Lee Sang-oak and Duk-soo Park, pp. 222-255.

<sup>56</sup> There is considerable confusion with regard to T'aebaek-san. Not only is there also a T'aebaek-san in Kangwŏn-do which during Shilla was worshipped as one of the Five Sacred Peaks 五岳, T'aebaek-san was also frequently used for Paektu-san. And to add to the confusion, Myohyang-san 妙香山 was also called T'aebaek-san before it acquired its present name. Due to spatial considerations, the question of T'aebaek-san will not be settled here, but some observations may be made. The *Shinjŭng Tongguk yŏji sŭngnam* [hereafter *STYS*] only recognizes the T'aebaek-san in Kangwŏn-do, while the *Chŭngbo munbŏn pigo* [hereafter *CMP*] 增補文獻備考, relies on the authority of famous historian and geographer Han Paekkyŏm 韓百謙 (1552-1615) to establish that there are two mountains called T'aebaek-san; one in Kangwŏn-do, the other in Hamgyŏng-do, to the north of Paektu-san. This is roughly what Chinese sources also state, although confusion with Paektu-san does occur. Koryŏ period sources such as the *Samguk yusa* and the *Samguk sagi* consistently conflate Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san. See *STYS* 3b-4a; *CMP* 13: 25a-b; *CMP* 20: 30b; *CMP* 23: 33b; *KS* 58:39a; *SGYS* 1: 199-200; *SGSG* 13: 145; *SGYS* 2: 199. Modern scholarship has not settled the question, but what matters here are the contemporary Koryŏ identifications of T'aebaek-san, even though they may have been mistaken. From this perspective, both Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san were frequently identified with each other and with other historically and religiously important mountains. See Rogers, "P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok: The foundation legend of the Koryŏ state", pp. 33-36.

<sup>57</sup> *YKP* 4: 475.

<sup>58</sup> *SGSG* 46: 442-443.

<sup>59</sup> *Tŭng T'aebaek-san* in *TMS* 15: 7a.



inscription from 1153 describes how monk Kang Kyoung 康教雄 became enlightened on a trip there with national preceptor Muaeji 無碍智國師.<sup>60</sup>

The special position in both peninsular geography and mythology occupied by the Amnok river and Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san is not unique. Chiri-san in Kyōngsan-do, for instance, is also a mountain richly adorned with mythological and historical lore.<sup>61</sup> The Taedong river 大洞江 and the Yesōng river 禮成江 are similarly ornamented with tales, legends and histories. The difference is that neither Chiri-san nor both rivers were in contested frontier territory. The Amnok river and Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san were. Moreover, the Jurchen and the Khitan also claimed them as sacred places, something that shows clearly in Chinese sources.<sup>62</sup> The fact that they were positioned at the frontier and sometimes out of Koryō's influence, made their functions all the more significant. The *Chosōn wangjo shillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄 and the *Shinjūng Tongguk yōji sūngnam* mention that, probably sometime during the fifteenth century, a stele had been discovered in Hoeryōng 會嶺, a regional military command (*tobobu* 都護部) located near Paektu-san. This stele had been erected by Yun Kwan 尹灌 during his expedition against the Jurchen and it had four characters meaning "border of Koryō" 高麗之境 (*Koryō chi kyōng*) engraved on it. Originally there had been texts engraved on all four sides of the stele, but these had been chiselled off by "barbarians" since.<sup>63</sup> The stele had been torn down, which meant that only the side on which it had landed had been spared the chiselling; hence the survival of the "border of Koryō" into times that had to admit other rulers that Koryō in Paektu-san. Yun Kwan's stele is a tangible symbol for the importance of the whole Paektu-san region, rivers, mountains and all.

Often, the continued warfare at the northern border of Koryō is treated as if it was some sort of Clausewitzian event, that is the inevitable outcome of the continuation of politics with other means. But Koryō's northern frontier was not a place where politics were continued.

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<sup>60</sup> KMC 136: 12

<sup>61</sup> See for example the anecdotes in the *P'ahanjip* (chapter one) and the *Pobanjip* 補閑集.

<sup>62</sup> Chinese sources give an accurate impression of the importance of Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san, not only for Koguryō and Koryō, but also for their predecessors (such as the Ūmnu, Sōnbi and Okchō) and the northern peoples that originated in or emigrated to this area. The following excerpts will give some idea of this. According to the *Shanhaijing* 山海經, "amidst the great wilderness there was a mountain called Purham 不咸, which was the location of the country of the Sukshin 肅慎." The *Treatises of the Later Han* locate the "Eastern Okchō 東沃沮 east of Kaema-san 蓋馬山 in Koguryō territory". It also described the sacred character of this mountain: "In that country, there was Chongt'ae-san 從太山, also called T'aebaek-san by the Wi. There are tigers, leopards, bears and beasts, but they do not hurt anyone. People cannot go up the mountain and soil it. Those who pass through the mountain, all return prosperous." The section of the Malgal 靺鞨 in the *Bei shi* 北史 declares that "Chongt'ae-san is located in the south of the Malgal country, because of its appearance it is also called T'aehwang. The locals are very much in awe and afraid of it." Some more information is recorded in the section on Malgal in the *Xin Tangshu*: "The Malgal live on Sukshin territory. In Songmal-pu, its most southern part, T'aebaek-san, also called Paektu-san, is located. It borders on Koryō. The east of Songmal-pu is called Paeksan-pu 白山部 (White Mountain District)." The section on Parhae in the same work clarifies the importance of this mountain for Parhae: "The Tae 大 clan of Parhae crossed the Yo 遼 river. They entrenched themselves north-east of T'aebaek-san, blocked the Oru river 奧婁河 and built sturdy defensive walls". The *Liaoshi* finally emphasizes the sacred character of this mountain once more: "Changbaek-san is located more than a thousand *li* to the south-east of Neng-san 冷山. It is the dwelling place of White-Clad Avalokitesvara. All beasts and animals on this mountain are white. People do not dare to enter the mountain, because they fear that they will pollute the area and that they will be harmed by appalling things."

<sup>63</sup> STYS 50: 33b; SJS 155:1a.

In general it was a place where livelihood was difficult, soldiers and warriors abundant and policy largely absent.<sup>64</sup> There are scant sources that detail what the undoubtedly grim realities of life at the northern frontier must have done to the men and women that were stationed there. Through the five centuries of Koryŏ's existence, the northern frontier has always been a contested area, an arena of continuous warfare and battle. There were only short periods of relative peace and tranquillity. The automatic identification of mountains Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san and of the Amnok river with the natural and symbolic borders of Koryŏ, of the peninsula, was achieved during centuries of protracted warfare in those areas. Above, we have suggested that a certain sense of a simultaneously historical and supradynastical entity came into being during the eleventh to twelfth centuries, which was among other ways expressed in the new meanings of 'Samhan' and other designations for the peninsula and its people. This also showed in the disconnection of the notion of 'Koryŏ' and the notion of the peninsula and its people, resulting in the dominant view of Koryŏ entirely as a state. Geographically bounded historical events (mainly battles), myths and legends, national and local religious worship and the geographical circumstances of Korea – surrounded by the sea on three sides, walled off by mountains on the one remaining side – gave rise to the formulation of the idea that the peninsula was naturally and symbolically bordered by the Amnok river and Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san. "Ŭiju is the gateway to our land/heavily defended since old"; this is how Chŏng Mongju expressed this notion that was shared by a majority of Koryŏ literati. In this manner, a historic home territory was created where the Samhan were supposed to live and where Jurchen that were not considered as belonging to the Samhan and who were living at the banks of the Amnok "were driven away and made to live outside [the territory associated with] Paektu-san".<sup>65</sup>

The realization of a limited historic home territory is mirrored in the idea that there was a historic community that ought to live there. This community was not necessarily coterminous with Koryŏ, as is witnessed by an utterance of Ch'oe Sajŏn (1067-1139), scion of the powerful Haeju Ch'oe lineage, confidant of Injong and doctor with a dubious reputation, when he remonstrated to the king that he should be less negligent in administering the affairs of the state: "The Three Han are the Three Han of the Three Han. They do not stop at being Your Majesty's Three Han. Our former lord T'aejo has worked hard to achieve this and I beg Your Majesty not to be negligent [in taking care of it]."<sup>66</sup> Ch'oe Sajŏn explicitly states that not even the ruler is equivalent to the country, but that on the contrary he is there for the benefit of the country. The Three Han go beyond the ruler in the end. At the same time, such a contextualization of the ontologically unassailable position of the ruler puts into perspective the absolute nature of his status. Apparently, this status depended on its connection to the land and the people and on the condition that the ruler took good care of them. The latter is in itself is a classical Confucian doctrine, though not an undisputed one, because of its inherent revolutionary potential.<sup>67</sup> The emphasis on the land and the people – the Three Han – is not

<sup>64</sup> I shall return to the problem of the northern frontier in chapter nine.

<sup>65</sup> *KS* 3: 24a. This took place in 991, the tenth year of the reign of Sŏngjong.

<sup>66</sup> *Ch'oe Sajŏn myojimnyŏng* in *KMC* 70: 12-3.

<sup>67</sup> Mencius asserted that rulers could legitimately be deposed if they were unvirtuous. His contention was

necessarily Confucian; rather, it seems to be a Koryŏ elaboration of Confucian political theory. It points, however, to the assumption of an entity that is larger than Koryŏ and that transcends it not spatially but temporally. The idea of the temporal finity of Koryŏ, in other words the disconnection between Koryŏ and Samhan, is also supported by for instance the prevalent historiosophical beliefs that were based upon the theory of the five phases.<sup>68</sup> This theory assumed the continuous alternation of the five phases and explained the rise and fall of states using the sequence in which the five phases change into each other, resulting in a view of history that did not accommodate perpetual states and everlasting dynasties.<sup>69</sup> It had various applications during the Koryŏ, but one that is of particular relevance here, is the tenth century prophecy that predicted the fall of Kungye and the rise of Wang Kŏn and limited the lifespan of the Koryŏ dynasty to twelve generations or 360 years.<sup>70</sup> This prophecy, that surfaced on and again during the Koryŏ, shows both the awareness of the inherent finity of the dynasty and the manner in which it is connected to the theory of the five alternating phases.<sup>71</sup>

The assumption of the existence of a more principal entity than Koryŏ itself and of its temporal finity, effectively ‘devalues’ Koryŏ and makes it susceptible for pluralist approaches. The Samhan, however, spatially limited by the sea on three sides and the mountains and rivers on the other side, were granted a more or less limitless existence, as we have seen above.

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understandably much disputed due to its potential subversive qualities. A debate on whether the rule of a ruler was by definition absolute and unassailable in its dynastic legitimacy commenced among the pioneers of neo-Confucianism in Song China and was only settled in favour of Mencius due to Zhu Xi’s 朱熹 expression of support for the Mencian interpretation. The *chŏngt’ongnon* 正統論 itself finds its origin in the *obaeng chongsbi sŏl* 五行終始說, a theory that explains the rise and fall of states using the sequence in which the five phases change into each other. According to this theory, a dynasty is identified with one of the five phases that determine whether it is legitimate. Its phase should be the successor of the phase of the predeceasing dynasty according to the sequence of the five phases. During the Song this theory was adapted by Ouyang Xu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) in order to replace the correspondence between the sequence of the five phases and the succession of dynasties with the proper functioning of the country as the principle according to which legitimacy was to be judged.

<sup>68</sup> Ch’oe Pyŏnghŏn, “Koryŏ shidae-ŭi ohaengjŏk”; Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn’gu*.

<sup>69</sup> But all the more for politically subversive prophecies that employed this concept by emphasizing that the natural course of the present dynasty had expired. See the next note.

<sup>70</sup> See *KS* 1: 7a-b. For an interpretation, see Ch’oe Pyŏnghŏn, “Koryŏ shidae-ŭi ohaengjŏk I”, pp. 39-40. Another example is the water phase that Koryŏ identified itself with. According to the theory accepted in Koryŏ, water replaced metal and metal had been the phase identified with Shilla. It goes without saying that the “water” dynasty of Koryŏ would one day be replaced by a “wood” dynasty, just as it had replaced the “metal” dynasty itself. And indeed, the phase associated with the Chosŏn dynasty is wood. See Ch’oe Pyŏnghŏn, “Koryŏ shidae-ŭi ohaengjŏk”, pp. 17-51.

<sup>71</sup> See for example the biographies of Yi Ŭimin 李義旼 (?-1197) and Pae Chungson 裴仲孫 (?-1271); in both instances this old prophecy is used to legitimize rival claims to the throne. See *KS* 130:39b; *KS* 128: 22b.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SHARED IDEAS OF DESCENT

Narratives of origin and descent are rarely just that. How a country or people came into being is important not just for antiquarians. Susan Reynolds has noted that European medieval myths of origin are striking in “their concern with collectivities which generally corresponded to political units of the time when the stories gained currency but which were extremely unlikely to have had a single common descent.”<sup>1</sup> Narratives of origin fulfil functions on different levels; for a community, they address the need for a more or less coherent and believable story of origin that explains their social and biological provenance. For the ruling stratum, they address the need for a legitimation of their rule in terms of the social and biological descent of a people. Some narratives fulfil both needs at the same time, but more often a crucial distinction needs to be made between narratives that explain the origins of rulers and those that explain the origins of communities. In general, a narrative of origin explains and justifies the present situation by linking it explicitly to a past situation that cannot be argued about or that was ideal.<sup>2</sup>

Koryŏ was ruled by a dynasty. This dynasty was formed by a succession of rulers of the same line or family that governed the state of Koryŏ. Above, it has become clear that Koryŏ was thought of as a state and merely as such. Apparently, the historical heritage that had already been formed before the state of Koryŏ came into being, was of sufficient weight to instil a sense of descent that did not converge with Koryŏ’s coming-into-being. It is perhaps quite natural, then, that Koryŏ’s royal myth of descent would not only be limited to the Wang lineage, but would also try to forge links with earlier narratives of descent. On the other hand, despite the fact that this is the only myth of descent of Koryŏ, several historical works give accounts of the genealogy of Koryŏ. These genealogies are as important as the royal myth of descent in the sense that they furnish the background against which the royal myth was formulated. Strictly speaking, we can discover three kinds of origin-stories during the Koryŏ. The first sort is the royal myth of descent, aimed at the legitimation of the Wang lineage as rulers, at the construction of Koryŏ as their kingdom and at emphasizing the sacred quality of Kaegyŏng in terms of Koryŏ’s landscape and geomantic qualities. The second sort is a genealogy which may be termed peninsular genealogy. This kind of genealogy was primarily aimed at domestic consumption and explained the origins of Koryŏ from a peninsular perspective and with reference to peninsular realities. The third sort of origin-story is what we may call supra-peninsular. This refers to genealogies that explain Koryŏ’s origin with reference to non-peninsular persons and peoples. Although it is not always possible to sharply

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Reynolds, “Medieval *origines gentium* and the community of the realm,” *History* 68 (1983): pp. 375-390, esp. p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> Or, depending on the situation, it might advocate the return to a former state when things were as they were supposed to be.

distinguish between peninsular and supra-peninsular genealogies because mixed forms are found, it must be emphasized that they are nonetheless different, both in contents and in intended audience. One reason for the emergence of peninsular and supra-peninsular origin-stories is related to the available source materials. Koryŏ scholars had access to both Chinese and peninsular sources which more often than not tended to contradict each other, in particular with regard to the peninsula's ancient history. The inclusion of obviously contradictory statements and facts in the works of Koryŏ scholars that deal with the origins of Koryŏ can also be directly traced to the dual nature of their sources. It should be remembered that Chinese historical works were the ideal Koryŏ writers of history aspired to and if such a history contained factually incorrect information, most scholars were sufficiently aware of the authority of the Chinese classics of history not to directly correct such a mistake, but to record it in conjunction with their own information and to let the inconsistency or contradiction stand.

Another important characteristic of origin-stories in general is that they can be assumed to correspond to the notions and values of the people they were intended for. The purpose of most myths of descent and origin-stories lies for an important part in the satisfying of the need to know one's own origins and in the legitimation of rulers and social structures. In order to achieve this, it is imperative not to lose the rapport with the intended consumer of the story. In other words, the intended consumer has to recognize and feel empathy with elements from the story. An origin-story has to appeal to the commonly shared worldview, to the common sense. It has to subscribe to the reader's (or listener's) beliefs and values. It is therefore important to situate narratives of descent and genealogies in the contemporary climate of political thought. An analysis of Koryŏ's origin-stories, then, will facilitate understanding Koryŏ's identity-related issues.

## P'YŎNNYŎN T'ONGNOK

The recording of Koryŏ's narratives of descent itself poses intricate problems. The earliest known version of the royal myth of origin dates from the thirteenth century, more than 300 years after the founding of the dynasty. Despite the fact that the compiler of the genealogy of the royal Wang lineage (*P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* 編年通錄), Kim Kwanŭi 金寬毅, had access to no longer extant sources from the early Koryŏ, the absence of earlier recorded versions is troublesome. The positive reaction the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* received from king and court suggests that its compiler had taken care to incorporate all familiar elements of the story.<sup>3</sup> Since the original version – or even a version that predates the thirteenth century – is no longer

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<sup>3</sup> During the reign of Yejong 睿宗, Hong Kwan 洪灌 was ordered to write a history similar to an earlier royal genealogy, the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* 編年通載, but compiled based on sources from the 'Samhan' on. Apparently, the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* did not meet Yejong's demands for a royal genealogy. There are no more mentions of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* in Koryŏ sources, and since it is no longer extant, its contents remain unknown. See chapter six for a consideration of this work. See KS 121:9b.

extant, other contemporary sources will have to be culled for information pertaining to the Koryŏ myth of descent.

The compilers of the *Koryŏsa* included the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* by Kim Kwanŭi, presumably because there was little other information to be found that explained the origins of the Wang lineage. It is not clear whether the story ending with the birth of Wang Kŏn 王建 comprises the complete *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok*, but given the attention Ŭijong 毅宗 (1127-1146-1173-1173) paid to the founder of the dynasty and his ancestors, it is highly probable that the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* recorded in the *Koryŏsa* constituted an important part of the non-extant original version.<sup>4</sup> The most conspicuous element of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* is perhaps its combination of two different traditions, that of Shilla and Koguryŏ. References to the Paekche tradition are absent, which may have to do with the fact that Koryŏ arose in a territory more associated with Koguryŏ than with Paekche and with the fact that its institutions were copied from Shilla. The absence of meaningful identification with Paekche is puzzling, though, but perhaps it should be assumed that the original story was composed during the early tenth century when Later Paekche was still in existence and Koryŏ's main enemy.

Shilla and Koguryŏ elements are mixed in this myth of descent and apart from these elements there are other motives and themes that cannot be traced back as simply to a certifiable historical state on the peninsula. The obvious double ancestry in the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* has not very often been taken at face value. Rather, attempts at interpretation have been made that argued the case for either Shilla or Koguryŏ. As we have seen above, it is hard if not impossible to discount the contradictions in terms of historical identifications in the myth. They are there and they do not let themselves be explained away easily. Instead of choosing for one line of descent and discarding the other one, it is more feasible, and certainly more in line with what other sources divulge, to assume the existence of a notion of double descent in Koryŏ. The *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* shows how hard it was to ignore one in favour of the other. This was not necessarily a conscious choice, but may also have come from the inclination not to deny ancient documents, no matter how spurious they may have been thought to be.<sup>5</sup>

A conspicuously absent feature of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* is the definition of the country and the people over whom the Wang lineage had earned the divine right to rule. The noticeable characteristics of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* are, as we have seen above, important indicators of the ideological and social landscape in which the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* was created. These qualities ensured that it would be accepted by the consumers it was intended for. But equally important are those elements that are not articulated, that have been assumed and that

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<sup>4</sup> Ŭijong paid homage at the tombs of T'aejo Wang Kŏn 太祖王建 and Sejo Yong Kŏn 世祖龍建. This kind of attention, that was direct, visible and ritually charged, was not uncommon among the rulers of middle Koryŏ (*KS* 17:25b-26a), but Ŭijong's interest in his ancestors was connected to his ambitious undertaking to restore the glory of the Koryŏ rulers. As parts of this undertaking, he had a temple built in Sŏgyŏng that was named Chunghŭng-sa temple 中興寺 (Renaissance Temple) and a palace on U-san 牛山 in Paekchu called Chunghŭng-gwŏl 中興闕 (Renaissance Palace). Paekchu was one of the place strongly associated with the origins of the Wang lineage. See *KS* 18: 12a; *KS* 18: 3a.

<sup>5</sup> For a thorough analysis of this myth, see Rogers "P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok: The foundation legend of the Koryŏ state," pp. 3-72. Although Rogers does not escape the tendency to dichotomize Koryŏ into Shilla and Koguryŏ-based elements, his analysis of the individual elements of this myth is excellent.

are unreasoned, for it is precisely this that the contemporary reader or listener will have known without needing to be told. The foremost assumed, unspoken and unreasoned element of the Koryŏ dynastic legend is the identity and the location of the country to be ruled. References to the precise boundaries of the country to be ruled by “the third Kŏn” (which was how Wang Kŏn was referred to by Tosŏn 道誥 in his prophecies in the *P’yŏnnyŏn t’ongnok*) make it clear that it is to consist of the Samhan – symbolically – bordered by Paektu-san in the north and by the sea at all other sides. Further mentions of specific places are restricted to the places under control of the Wang lineage – Kaeju 開州, Chŏngju 貞州, Yŏmju 鹽州 and Paekchu 白州 – and to Tang China. The places surrounding Kaegyŏng 開京 are only mentioned to give an impression of Wang lineage power at the end of Shilla and to ingrain them as shared cultural memories. Kaegyŏng’s geomantic characteristics are examined and presented in detail to establish it as the peninsula’s foremost location. Tang China is used in contrast to Koryŏ, the Eastern Land, and to borrow its cultural prestige. It is assumed, in other words, what country this story applies to. The *P’yŏnnyŏn t’ongnok* is aimed at establishing who should rule and where that rule originates, both territorially and ideologically, but it barely mentions where Wang Kŏn should rule. This is self-evident to the extent of not having to mention it.

The second important assumption of the text concerns the identity of the subjects of Wang Kŏn’s rule. The *P’yŏnnyŏn t’ongnok* seems to assume that the people of the Three Han – that still had to be unified – were meant to form an enduring political and cultural community. Despite the doubly ancestry that Koryŏ proclaims, neither Shilla’s nor Koguryŏ’s heritage is explicitly associated with the people. As I will show later, these identities were assumed and shedded with conspicuous ease. Even more so than the Eastern Land, the true identity of the people is assumed to be self-evident. A similar kind of consciousness was apparent from ninth, tenth and eleventh-century inscriptions regarding the Samhan, Haedong and Tongbang. A certain idea of common descent had come into being and the wholly implied identity of this descent group in the Koryŏ dynastic narrative of origin testifies to this belief. It also points at the strict conceptual separation of state and people. The ruler, the personification of the state, was *de iure* and *de facto* dependent on communal consent. In particular during the process of unifying the peninsula, the ruler was little more than the first among his equals. Later, Chinese cosmology was borrowed to explain the position of the ruler in moral and cosmological terms, which made abstract the concrete workings of rule. The ruler, by virtue of his special position, had obligations towards the community that was now bound to him by ties of lawful – and cosmological – order.

## HISTORICAL GENEALOGIES

The dynastic narrative of origin of Koryŏ furnished the Wang lineage with a convincing claim to rulership which identified Kaesŏng as the actual and geomantic centre of the peninsula. The narrative made use of and responded to contemporary popular beliefs, facilitating its acceptance and enhancing its credibility; its most readily recognizable elements

consists of references to Koguryō (Wang Kōn's ancestors were from Paektu-san), Shilla (one of the ancestors held a Shilla rank), Tang China as the foreign Other, the idea that landscape quite literally produced the people belonging in that particular landscape, the idea that the landscape can be moulded to produce special people (in this case, by planting pine trees), the accuracy of prophecies of wandering Buddhist monks who can read the landscape, the power of prophesying dreams. The themes that emerge in this myth reveal valuable portions of Koryō's ideological world. As important as the presence of shamanistic, geomantic and Buddhist beliefs in Koryō's state myth is the implicit assumption of the identity of the ruled. The people of Koryō are never mentioned, except as 'the people of Samhan'. Borders are implied, but never explicitly stated. The reason that this was possible is that there must have been some sort of consensus of the identity of the people of Koryō as well as the proper location of the boundaries. If we are to find out more about shared ideas of descent of Koryō, we will have to look at other sources. This is not an easy task, not even during Koryō's heyday. In his *Chin Samguk sagi p'yo* 進三國史記表 (*Dedication of the 'History of the Three Kingdoms'*) Kim Pushik laments the absence of historical works on the peninsula:

There are now scholars and high officials who are well versed in the Five Classics, the writings of Chinese philosophers and the historical treatises of the Qin 秦 and Han 漢, but they are completely in the dark about our own history from beginning to end. This truly pains my heart. [...] Our own histories are furthermore unrefined and there are gaps in the recording of historical facts.<sup>6</sup>

So, according to Kim, there were histories, but they were unrefined and deficient and in need of being rewritten. Unfortunately, none of these old histories survive, which makes Kim Pushik's account of the peninsula its oldest extant history. Apart from Kim's account there is of course the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 (*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*) of almost one-and-a-half century later. Regrettably, there are very few direct documentary sources on Koryō's descent, which means that we have to take recourse to an indirect manner of reconstructing Koryō's genealogy. Although difficult, this is not impossible. Scattered indications in the *Koryōsa* 高麗史, the *Tong munson* 東文選, epitaphs and inscriptions contain valuable morsels of information of how Koryō's ancestry was viewed. Nonetheless, the absence of a documented narrative of descent is surprising given the degree of literacy and the attested interest in popular beliefs during the Koryō dynasty. The narratives of descent in the *Samguk yusa* and *Samguk sagi* (as well as other versions of these narratives in other works) are fundamentally of the same kind as the Koryō dynastic narrative; they explain the provenance of a certain person or a lineage and legitimate his or their claim to the rule over a certain country and people.<sup>7</sup> There is no cosmological creation myth as such, nor is there any myth dealing with the provenance of the peninsular people. Nonetheless, it is possible to delve into Koryō's genealogy a little bit deeper. The two extant historical works of the Koryō dynasty are

<sup>6</sup> TMS 44: 12b-13b.

<sup>7</sup> These myths are those pertaining to Tongmyōng 東明/Chumong 朱蒙, the three royal clans of Shilla, the Koryō royal lineage, the founder of Kaya 伽倻, Tan'gun 檀君, the eastern Puyō 東扶餘 and the western Puyō 西扶餘, the six clans of Sōrabōl 徐羅伐 and the three clans of T'amna 耽羅 (Cheju).



revealing in this aspect. Both the *Samguk sagi* (*History of the Three Kingdoms*, 1145) and the *Samguk yusa* (*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, 1285) are clear indicators of what Koryŏ's peninsular heritage was thought to be. It is no coincidence that there has never been a *Memorabilia of the Four Kingdoms* or a *History of the Four Kingdoms*. Koryŏ's ancestry was related to the consecutive clusters of three states on the peninsula, the Three Han, Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla and Later Koguryŏ (Koryŏ), Later Paekche and (Later) Shilla. Chapter states for the Koryŏ state accordingly also appeared in threes: the Three Han (although the Three Han were more often seen as one polity) and Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla. Despite an impressive amount of Chosŏn historiography to lament this situation and argue the contrary, Parhae was never considered a part of Koryŏ's heritage.<sup>8</sup> Nor is this situation a creation of the twelfth century. The no longer extant original *Samguksa* 三國史 (according to convention, the title is translated as *The old history of the Three Kingdoms*), that according to Yi Kyubo was significantly less sinophile than the *Samguk sagi*, was the first historical work to put this triple descent down in writing.<sup>9</sup> The *Samguk sagi* is known for its outspoken pro-Shilla bias, while it is surmised that the *Samguksa* was characterized by a Koguryŏ-oriented perception of the peninsula's history.<sup>10</sup> Both points are valid to some extent, although it is hard to accept the sometimes extreme opinions regarding the respective successionist orientations of these historical works (I will deal with this issue in detail in chapters six and seven), since the title of both works so prominently displays the fundamentally threefold notion of descent.<sup>11</sup> Both histories were histories of Koryŏ and its predecessors. Kim Pushik makes this very clear in his dedication in which he refers to "our own history"; the three kingdoms of Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla together constituted the heritage of Koryŏ. As concluded above in the section on the geonym 'Samhan', one of the reasons for its enduring popularity was the direct association with the

<sup>8</sup> The idea of a Nambukcho 南北朝 (Southern Court-Northern Court) period in Korean history is a relatively recent concept. It was not a concept known by Koryŏ historians, but appeared in the Chosŏn period and was resurrected during the colonial period as a response to the studies of Japanese historians that challenged the idea of historical Korean unity. For a discussion of the reaction of Korean colonial historians when confronted with the studies of their Japanese colleagues, see Remco E. Breuker, "Contested objectivities: Ikeuchi Hiroshi, Kim Sanggi and the tradition of Oriental History (*Tōyōshigaku*) in Japan and Korea," *East Asian History* 29 (2005): pp. 69-106. The inclusion of the history of Parhae in the history of Korea is a late Chosŏn period phenomenon and has recently received an impetus on account of the state-led Chinese academic initiative to claim the historical legacies of Koguryŏ and Parhae as Chinese histories. Korean academia has reacted lividly, which is understandable given the fact that Parhae and Koguryŏ's historical legacies are certainly not unconnected to Korean history (although inclusion goes too far), while Chinese historical works from the *Records of the grand historian* to the dynastic history of the Qing have consistently disavowed any kind of relationship with Parhae or Koguryŏ, other than tributary relationships. The literature on the subject is truly staggering in quantity. A recently published biography has done much to collect and arrange academic studies on Parhae, including studies in among other languages Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Russian and English. See Koguryŏ yŏn'gu chedan 高句麗研究財團 (ed.), *Parbaesa yŏn'gu nonch'ongnok* 渤海史研究論叢錄 (Seoul: Koguryŏ yŏn'gu chedan, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> The *Samguksa* is referred to in Ŭich'ŏn's *Taegak kuksa munjip* 大覺國師文集 (*Collected writings of national preceptor Taegak*) as *Haedong Samguksa* 海東三國史 (History of the Three Korean Kingdoms) and by Yi Kyubo as *Ku samguksa* 舊三國史 (*Old history of the Three Kingdoms*). See the foreword of *Tongmyŏngwang p'yŏn* in *TYSC* 3: 1a-2a.

<sup>10</sup> Chŏng Kubok 鄭求福, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa* 韓國中世史學史 (Seoul 서울: Chimmundang 集文堂, 2000), pp. 189-225; Kim Ch'ŏlchun 金哲俊, "Koryŏ chunggi-ŭi munhwa ūshik-kwa sahak-ŭi sŏngkyŏk 高麗中期的文化意識과史學의性格," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 9 (1976): pp. 59-86.

<sup>11</sup> Unbelievably, this very prominent proclamation of Koryŏ's plural descent has never been taken seriously.

historical Three Kingdoms and then afterwards with the historical Later Three Kingdoms. The notion of triple descent was in other words very real and through its codification, first in the *Samguksa* and later the *Samguk sagi* very tangible as well. Nor is this a mere matter of antiquarian interest, because as Kim Pushik continues in his dedication, it becomes clear that this history was intended to serve as a mirror for Koryŏ's statesmen, to instruct them in the peculiarities and characteristics of their own history. General lessons could of course be learned from Chinese histories, but as the dedication says, these have "written tersely about foreign [i.d. Korean] matters and not a few things have been left out".<sup>12</sup> Moreover, despite the confusion in Chinese sources about the use of the proper names for states on the Korean peninsula, the arrangement of the Chinese official histories precluded the sense of ancestry and historical legacy that the *Samguk sagi* and the *Samguksa* conveyed. As was usual, states on the peninsula were assigned a separate section each, in which all relevant information about and dealings with the concerned state were recorded. This, of course, barred a direct identification of all past competing states on the peninsula with the state that had unified them, Koryŏ.

The positioning of the *Samguk sagi* – and as far as can be ascertained the *Samguksa* – as the history of Koryŏ was presented to be self-evident. The *Samguk sagi* does not contain any explicit reference to the incorporation of the peninsular pasts into Koryŏ's past. The fact that it was compiled to serve as the history of Koryŏ, as is apparent from the dedication, is an implicit but unambiguous affirmation of Koryŏ's absorption of the histories of the peninsula. The mechanism by which the pasts of the peninsula were incorporated into Koryŏ was in effect simple. By the twelfth century, the notion of 'Haedong' as a geopolitical historical unity had become firmly rooted in both the Korean and Chinese consciousness and Kim Pushik simply lumped together peninsular history under the common denominator of 'Haedong'. Politically and ideologically, this made perfect sense; and it has to be admitted that historically too, this classification is certainly not groundless.

There have been states in Haedong for a long time. From Kija 箕子 on, [these states] were invested by the Zhou 周. Wiman 衛滿 illegitimately established a country during the early Han. But since those days are far in the past and documents [pertaining to them] are scarce, it is not possible to know about them in detail. From the time that the Three Kingdoms came into being like the legs of a three-legged cauldron, the consecutive generations of rulers have been many. Shilla had 56 kings and existed for 992 years. Koguryŏ had 28 kings and existed for 705 years. Paekche had 31 kings and existed for 678 years.<sup>13</sup>

The above quotation is the short introduction to the Historical Tables of the *Samguk sagi*. It is not only telling in the respect mentioned above, namely the conception of 'Haedong' as a historical supra-entity that encompassed the peninsular states, but also for the metaphor that Kim Pushik chose to use, the three-legged cauldron. This metaphor implies that the three

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<sup>12</sup> TMS 44: 12b-13b.. The contents of the *Samguk sa* were most probably significantly more mythical and supernatural than those of the *Samguk sagi*, making the former unsuitable to serve as a reliable mirror to guide the behaviour of scholars and statesmen. See chapters six and seven.

<sup>13</sup> SGS 29: 269.

legs of the cauldron together support the bowl of the cauldron, its most important part. In a like manner, Kim Pushik implied that the three states of Shilla, Koguryŏ and Paekche together constituted something bigger and more essential than each of them by itself.<sup>14</sup> Seen from the perspective of twelfth-century Koryŏ, this kind of teleological interpretation was wholly justified; the three legs of the cauldron had supported what had by then developed into the ‘Samhan’ in the state of Koryŏ. Thus, in retrospective, Kim Pushik’s metaphor seems valid, for Shilla, Paekche and Koguryŏ had coalesced into Koryŏ, each of them constituting one part of the whole that in its entirety surpassed the sum of its constituent parts. A characteristic of the *Samguk sagi* that corroborates this interpretation is the way in which Kim Pushik distributed praise and blame. Heroes such as Ŭlchi Mundŏk – who is still considered a champion of the nation – were praised by Kim, even though Ŭlchi was a general of the expansionist Koguryŏ state that did not acknowledge the proper etiquette of international relations.<sup>15</sup> The praise for the anonymous defender of the Anshi Fortress 安市城 and for Yŏn’gaesomun 淵蓋蘇文 also follows this pattern.<sup>16</sup> In the battle with other peoples, any country of the Three Kingdoms was to be rooted for. There is a large amount of ambiguity in this praise for the Koguryŏ generals; the exploits of Yŏn’gaesomun and the anonymous lord of the Anshi fortress directly obstructed the unification of the Three Kingdoms. Nonetheless, Kim extolled their virtues in protecting their country. The tension between his praise of the Koguryŏ generals and his support of the Shilla-led unification is not solved in the *Samguk sagi*, although it is alleviated by the outcome of the unification, Kim’s native Koryŏ. It is important, however, to be aware of this too often-overlooked fundamental tension in the *Samguk sagi*.

Elsewhere in the *Samguk sagi* Kim discusses the relationship between the origins of Paekche and Koguryŏ in one of his commentaries (*nonch’an* 論贊) that make this work so interesting. Dismissing the origin myth of the Shilla royal Kim clan as “weird and not to be believed”, he concludes that Paekche and Koguryŏ are both offshoots of the Puyŏ tribe. He discredits the popular legends that the Shilla Kim clan were the descendants of mythical Chinese emperor Xiaohao Jintien 小昊金天 or that the royal Ko 高 family of Koguryŏ had the

<sup>14</sup> The metaphor is repeated in the dedication of the *Samguk sagi*; “[...] when Shilla, Koguryŏ and Paekche were founded and were like the three legs of a three-legged cauldron [...]”. See *Chin Samguk sagi p’yo* in *TMS* 44: 12b-13b. It is also found in other places, as in the *T’aejasa Nanggong Taesa pi* erected in 954: “The stars have shone on the Three Han for a long time, but a harmful fog descended upon the Four Commanderies [...] until afterwards Koryŏ pacified the Four Commanderies and established the Three Han like the legs of a three-legged cauldron”. See *CKS* 58: pp. 181-186. The *Koryŏsa* includes the lyrics of a piece of ritual music performed for the ancestral shrine of Hyejong: “He assisted our previous king/he was always valiant/and eliminated the remnants of evil/he established the Three Han like the legs of a three-legged cauldron.” See *KS* 70: 16b. The *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* list more instances of the use of this metaphor, all in the same context.

<sup>15</sup> “The military lustre of Emperor Yang’s 煬帝 expedition to Liaodong 遼東 has no precedents in the past. That Koguryŏ, a small country of the plains, managed not only to hold off [Emperor Yang’s armies], but also virtually wiped them out, is the sole merit of Mundŏk. The *Zhuozhuan* 左傳 rightly says: ‘If there had not been a gentleman like this, how could the country have continued to exist?’” *SGSG* 44: 422.

<sup>16</sup> Koguryŏ general Yŏn’gaesomun had defeated the invading Tang forces of Emperor Taizong 太宗 in 655. Kim praised Yŏn’gaesomun’s effort to rescue his country and recognized his extraordinary talents, but he simultaneously judged him to be a traitor for usurping the throne in Koguryŏ. The defender of Anshi fortress on the other hand was praised by Kim not only for his defence of the fortress against the Tang Emperor Taizong, but also for his loyalty. See *SGSG* 44: 462-464.

mythical Chinese emperor Yao as their ancestor, but he does concede the important role that Chinese refugees had played in the coming-into-being of the Three Kingdoms. Before concluding that a severe lack of proper ethics towards each other and towards the Tang Son of Heaven in the end caused the downfall of each of the three states, Kim rejoiced in the longevity of each of these states, wondering whether it were not possible that “the forebears of the Three Kingdoms were the descendants of the sages of old? How else could the states have enjoyed such longevity?”<sup>17</sup> In short, Kim established the ancestry of Koryŏ on the basis of those facts that he thought he could prove, refusing to admit those stories that he considered mythical, confabulated or implausible. The Three Kingdoms were well documented predecessors of Koryŏ, but Koryŏ’s attested genealogy did not stop here. The earlier states on the peninsula may not have been possible to “know in detail”, there nonetheless seems to have been little doubt in the mind of Kim Pushik that Kojosŏn was the oldest verifiable state on the peninsula, then Kija, Wiman – though illegitimately - and the four Han commanderies. These commanderies finally developed into Koguryŏ.<sup>18</sup>

An interesting aspect about Kim Pushik’s notion of Koryŏ descent is that it derives its legitimacy from other factors than blood.<sup>19</sup> According to Kim, Paekche and Koguryŏ were clearly related to each other, but Shilla was not and neither was Kaya. Moreover, Kim acknowledged a large influx from Chinese migrants into the peninsula, not to mention the arrivals of first Kija and then Wiman, each of whom was accompanied by his own people. Moreover, by excluding Wiman on the grounds that he had illegitimately declared himself the ruler of Wiman Chosŏn, Kim showed that by establishing the genealogy of Koryŏ in this manner, legitimacy was more important than blood. In the same vein, Kim ascribed a legitimate status on the basis of the fulfilment of the duties towards China.<sup>20</sup> Much has been

<sup>17</sup> SGSG 28: 268.

<sup>18</sup> SGSG 29: 269.

<sup>19</sup> The emphasis on the importance of the blood lineage in Korean history is quite recent and certainly did not play any role in Koryŏ historiography. Because of its ubiquity nowadays, however, I have chosen to mention it explicitly.

<sup>20</sup> The clearest expressions of this notion in the *Samguk sagi* are to be found in the unsurpassed commentaries added by Kim Pushik to state his own opinion about persons and matters. See the next chapter for a review of these commentaries. Most scholars still hold the opinion that Kim Pushik was unjustifiably pro-Shilla and sinocentric and that the *Samguk sagi* also was (or the other way round), although there are some voices that are more nuanced. In this respect, the studies by Ko Pyŏngik and Edward Shultz are particularly worth mentioning. This discussion is almost inextricably intertwined with the aforementioned discussion whether Koryŏ traced back its historical descent to Shilla or Koguryŏ. See Ko Pyŏngik 高柄翊, “Samguk sagi-e issŏsŏ-ŭi yŏksa sŏsul 三國史記에 있어서의 歷史敘述,” in *Kim Chaewŏn paksŏ hoegap kinyŏm nonch’ong* 金載元博士回甲紀念論叢, edited by Kim Chaewŏn paksŏ hoegap kinyŏm nonch’ong p’yŏnch’an wiwŏnhoe 金載元博士回甲紀念論叢編纂委員會 (Seoul: *Kim Chaewŏn paksŏ hoegap kinyŏm nonch’ong p’yŏnch’an wiwŏnhoe*, 1969), pp. 51-86; Yi Usŏng, “Samguk sagi-ŭi kusŏng-gwa Koryŏ wangjo-ŭi chŏngt’ong ŭishik,” pp. 203-207; Kim Ch’ŏlchun 金哲俊, “Koryŏ chunggi-ŭi munhwa ŭishik-kwa sahak-ŭi sŏngkyŏk,” ; Ha Hyŏn’gang 河炫綱, “Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏksa kyesŏngŭishik 高麗時代의 歷史繼承意識,” *Yibwa sabak yŏn’gu* 梨花史學研究 8 (1976): pp. 12-20; Edward J. Schultz, “Kim Pushik-kwa Samguk sagi 金富軾과 三國史記,” *Han’guksa yŏn’gu* 韓國史研究 73 (1991): pp. 1-20. A good and unbiased introduction may be found in Shultz, “An introduction to the *Samguk sagi*,” *Korean Studies* 28 (2004): pp. 1-13; Shin Hyŏngshik 申滄植, *Samguk sagi yŏn’gu* 三國史記研究 [(Seoul: Ilchokak 一潮閣, 1981); Shin Hyŏngshik, “Kim Pushik 金富軾,” in *Han’guk yŏksaga-wa yŏksabak* 韓國 역사가와 역사학, vol. I (Seoul: Changjak-kwa p’ipyŏng 장작과 비평, 1994), edited by Cho Tonggŏl 趙東杰, Han Yŏngu 韓永遇 and Pak Ch’ansŏng 朴贊勝; Shin Hyŏngshik, *Han’guk sabaksa* 韓國史學史 (Seoul: Samyŏngsa, 1999), pp. 84-120; Yi Kangnae 李康來, *Samguk sagi chŏn’goron* 三國史記典據論 (Seoul: Minjoksa 民族社,

made of this by later historiographers, in particular those hostile to Kim Pushik's historiography or to the views ascribed to him. Often, though, the rather pragmatic aspect of this judgment has been overlooked in favour of overly ideological interpretations. For Kim it was an undisputable fact that both Koguryŏ and Paekche had been defeated by Tang armies; in the case of Koguryŏ a long history of war and battle had determined its relations with the successive Chinese dynasties.<sup>21</sup> Shilla, on the other hand, had managed to maintain relatively cordial relations with the Tang, undoubtedly aided by their geopolitical location. Be that as it may, from a purely pragmatic point of view, Shilla's policy of "serving the greater" had paid off and the antagonistic policies of Paekche and Koguryŏ had not. It should also not be forgotten – as it usually is – that Shilla had to wage a war against the Tang to remove their armies from the peninsula and in particular from former Paekche territory.<sup>22</sup> When it came to securing its territorial conquests, Shilla had no qualms whatsoever about serving the greater a taste of its own medicine. It is not my contention that there is no ideological part in Kim's judgments as contained in the historical commentaries. There certainly is and there is also little doubt Kim Pushik was an orthodox Confucian scholar-official whose judgments were shaped by his beliefs and convictions. The historical context can, however, not be separated from the commentary that was made upon it and then be subjected to a crude ideological scheme.<sup>23</sup> In this instance, the historical context clearly points at a different and successful way of dealing with the far more powerful Chinese mainland dynasties and only by forcefully making the facts

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1996); Chŏng Kubok, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 227-284. Particularly interesting to mention here is Shin Ch'aeho 申采浩, (1880-1936), who was almost single-handedly responsible for the bad press Kim Pushik and the *Samguk sagi* have received. The dichotomous perception of twelfth century has been a staple notion of Koryŏ historiography since Shin Ch'aeho's famous lamentation on the outcome of the "most important event in Korean history for a thousand years". In his view, the future of the Korean nation hung in the balance when the reactionary forces of Confucianist Kim Pushik and the pro-independence troops of Myoch'ŏng clashed in 1135-1136. Sinocentric Confucianism triumphed and Kim went on to become, arguably, the most powerful statesman and influential scholar of the Koryŏ period. Apart from the justified concern over whether history can be unalterably predetermined over such a long period of time, Shin's assertion that sinocentric Confucianism (*hwap'ung* 華風) had prevailed over native traditions (*kukp'ung* 國風) is problematic as well. Despite the obvious questions Shin's paradigm – for that is what it effectually became – raises, many historians have in some respects worked within the framework that Shin created. His writings have been collected, edited and published in *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho sŏnsaeng kinyŏm saŏpboe* 丹齋申采浩全集, edited by *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho sŏnsaeng kinyŏm saŏpboe* 丹齋申采浩先生記念事業會 (Revised edition in 4 volumes, Seoul: Hyŏngsŏl ch'ulp'ansa 螢雪出版社, 1994). Recently, a shift has begun to appear with regard to the evaluation of Kim Pushik and the *Samguk sagi*. Chŏng Kubok, for example, who had been quite clear in his estimation of Kim as sinocentric, has rephrased his erstwhile criticism. Not to the extent of exonerating Kim of the crime of not being a nationalist, but to the extent of admitting that in the twelfth century, the concept of the nation was still unknown and that as such Kim Pushik can hardly be blamed for not showing nationalist fervour, but instead attachment to the culture of Song China. This shift in position entails even more problems than the older idea that Kim Pushik was a sinocentric flunkey and it still projects present-day concerns unto the past. It can in fact be shown that Kim Pushik's position, both ideologically and practically, was Koryŏ-centric and that he maintained distance from the Song when he found that necessary. Even so, equating admiration of Song culture with a lack of a sense of belonging in Koryŏ is rather non-sensical, because the two positions do not in any way exclude each other. See Chŏng Kubok, "Kim Pushik-ŭi (1075-1151) saengae-wa ŏpchŏk 김부식의 (1075-1151) 생애와 업적," *Chŏngshin munhwa yŏn'gu* 82 (2001): pp. 3-24.

<sup>21</sup> A past, incidentally, in which Kim Pushik took pride. See *SGSG* 44: 422.

<sup>22</sup> For this, see for instance Yi Hoyŏng 李昊榮, "Samguk t'ongil 삼국통일," in *Han'guksa*, volume nine, pp. 3-74, esp. pp. 56-65.

<sup>23</sup> I will return to this in chapter seven, but the consideration of the historical context is one of the defining characteristics of Kim Pushik's historiography.

to fit a preconceived ideological framework, can Kim Pushik be depicted as a sinophile who put propriety and etiquette above his country's interests.

I will deal with Kim Pushik's historical thought and with the ideological orientations of Koryŏ literati in chapters seven and ten, but it is important to discuss his views on the legitimacy of the state here to some extent in order to appreciate his view of the genealogy of Koryŏ. Kim's notion of legitimacy was not founded on Confucian propriety per se, but rather on a mixture of this and of sound national and international policy. The commentaries in the *Samguk sagi* show this, but it is also borne out by his political ideas and actions. In the end, the reason for the downfall of Paekche and Koguryŏ lay in their aggressive behaviour that did not correspond to the notion that "the treasure of a country is being on intimate terms with wise men and enjoying good relations with its neighbours".<sup>24</sup> The commentary appended to the 28<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of King Kaeru 蓋婁王 of Paekche warned against the evil machinations of a 'disloyal and immoral' person that had resulted in a loss of harmonious relations with Paekche's neighbouring states and the suffering of the peasant people.<sup>25</sup> Using a Confucian idiom that originated in such classical ideals of loyalty and integrity in ministers and wisdom in rulers and illustrating his plea with examples from the Chinese classics, this commentary shows how Kim Pushik applied his ethical notions inspired by his Confucian background to concrete political situations. In this commentary, there is a balance between the emphasis on ethically correct behaviour and on the consequences of the absence of this behaviour in concrete and worldly terms, namely unnecessary war and suffering. Similarly to his judgments on the illustrious Koguryŏ generals, Kim weighed the historical facts against the ethics of his Confucianism before pronouncing his verdict as a historian.

The genealogy of Koryŏ as articulated by Kim Pushik is the only 'complete' genealogy that has survived. It is an ambiguous genealogy, incorporating both elements from the peninsula's history and from the ideology of the contemporary Confucian scholar-officials. These elements do not necessarily contradict each other, but in Kim's present of practical engagement, they often did. Kim Pushik's solution was to judge on an ad-hoc basis, determining the aspects of events and people case by case and thus reaching a judgment. The prominent presence of references to Confucian values and examples and the constant use of a Confucian idiom have led to Kim's undeserved reputation as a rigid Confucian moralist.

## KIJA

Having looked at the royal and the peninsular narratives of descent, the supra-peninsular origin-story should now be looked at. Perhaps not surprisingly, Koryŏ's origin-story that focused on its neighbouring world was centred on the figure of Kija 箕子.<sup>26</sup> The *Gaoli*

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<sup>24</sup> SGSG 28: 268.

<sup>25</sup> SGSG 23: 230.

<sup>26</sup> Although Kija was originally Chinese, I will follow the convention and use the transcription of his name as pronounced in Korea. I will make an exception for those times when Kija (Chinese: Jizi) appears in direct

*Tujing* 高麗圖經 starts its account of Koryŏ by delineating the central position held by Kija in Koryŏ history.

[Your servant has heard that] the barbarian chiefs elevated their own positions by relying on deceit and violence. Titles and names of their country in particular are strange; they call themselves “Sönu” 單于 or Kahan” 可汗. There is nothing that is worth to be discussed in this. Only Koryŏ [i.e. the Korean peninsula] became a vassal through its virtue from the time on when Ji Zi [Kija] was invested. His descendants grew weak and vanished and other dynasties came to use the investment of the [Chinese] Han. [...] Koryŏ’s founding ancestor is Ji Zi Xuyu 箕子胥餘 [Ki Cha Söyŏ], who was invested in Chosŏn by King Wu of the Zhou 周武王. His family name was Zi 子. After the Zhou and the Qin 秦, in the twelfth year of Han Emperor Gaozong 高宗 [195 B.C.E.] Wei Man [Wiman] 衛滿<sup>27</sup> from Yan 燕 fled with a band of followers, invaded and gradually conquered the barbarians. He subjugated all territory of Chosŏn and ruled it as a king. More than eight hundred years after the establishment of the country by the Zi [Cha] dynasty, the Wei family ruled it for eighty years. Before all this took place, the king of Puyŏ 夫餘 had taken the daughter of the River God [*Hashin* 河神] and made her pregnant by having the sun shine its rays on her. She gave birth to an egg. [The child from] the egg grew up and became an excellent archer. Among the people they called an excellent archer “chumong 朱蒙”, so he was called Chumong. The people from Puyŏ found his birth strange and inauspicious, so they called for his elimination. [...] He called [it] “Koguryŏ”, which is why he made “Ko” his surname and he called his country Koryŏ. [...] Emperor Wu of the Han destroyed Chosŏn and made Koguryŏ into a county that fell under the administration of the Hyŏndo commandery. [...] Emperor Gaozong of the Tang ordered Li Zhang 李勣 to subjugate Koguryŏ. [...] The Ko dynasty fell a long time ago, but after a long period, it was gradually restored. At the end of the Tang dynasty, a king governed the country and in the first year of Emperor Dongguang 同光 of the Later Tang, they send an envoy to have an audience at court. The family name of the king has been left out by the historians and has not been entered into the records.<sup>28</sup>

The origin-story contained in the *Gaoli Tujing* shows a strong differentiation between the omnipresent barbarians who flout the proper ways and Koryŏ, a country that had been founded by Kija and that knew its proper place. The *Gaoli Tujing* betrays the precedence ideology can take over history; despite the fact that Chumong was chronologically earlier than Kija, the *Gaoli Tujing* mentions Kija first and he is instated as the founding ancestor of the country. It is not really surprising that Xu Jing gives precedence to Kija and treats Chumong more or less like a barbarian, given the general sinocentric orientation of the *Gaoli Tujing* and given the well-established precedents. When Wang Kŏn was invested by the Later Tang in 933, the letter of investment stated that “you succeed to the auspicious opening of the land by Chumong and the vestiges of the establishment of a vassal state by Jizi [Kija].”<sup>29</sup> The chronology of events was clear to the Chinese dynasties, as was the relative importance of each

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quotations from Chinese sources.

<sup>27</sup> I shall use the same convention and exception with regard to Wiman (Chinese: Weiman)

<sup>28</sup> *GT* 1: 19-25.

<sup>29</sup> *KS* 2: 3b-4a.

of these two founding ancestors. The emphasis on Kija by the Chinese was mirrored in the prominence of Kija in Koryŏ. Records of Kija worship are found as early as Koguryŏ, stating that rites were offered to a Kija shrine.<sup>30</sup> It is not improbable that Kija was worshipped as an ancestor spirit rather than a culture hero during Koguryŏ, for there are no references to his culture-bringing role during this time.<sup>31</sup> Evidence is scarce, but judging from the frequent references Chinese letters of investment made to Kija as the originator of culture on the Korean peninsula based upon the information contained in Chinese historical sources, it seems probable that not later than the early Koryŏ period, Kija had become the culture-hero of the peninsula.<sup>32</sup> This assumption is for instance corroborated by the ritual text read at the memorial service for Munjong 文宗 during the first year of Sŏnjong 宣宗 (1048-1084-1094), his son. The text had been composed by a Song envoy who also performed the memorial rites. It said that “the king had succeeded to a felicitous tradition and governed the fiefs of the predeceasing kings. He emulated the customs of Jizi [Kija], revered ritual etiquette and exerted himself in single-minded determination towards our court.”<sup>33</sup> Even earlier, the 1024 epitaph for Ch’ae Inbŏm 蔡仁範, a civil official during Kwangjong’s reign originally from Song China, established Koryŏ as the successor state to Kija Chosŏn.<sup>34</sup> The biography of late eleventh civil official Chŏng Mun 鄭文 (?-1106) mentions that he had requested to build an ancestral shrine for Kija somewhere before 1104.<sup>35</sup> In 1102 the Board of Rites requested that the rites for Kija, who had civilised the peninsula, be recorded in the ritual manuals, his tomb located and an ancestral shrine built. This request was subsequently sanctioned by Sukchong 肅宗 (1054-1095-1105).<sup>36</sup> The importance of Kija was once more confirmed when in 1178 the allocations of land to state institutions and to the different shrines in Sŏgyŏng 西京 was revised. The large amount of lands that the Kija shrine received at that time (50 *kyŏl* 結) was more than three times the amount the shrine for Confucius received (15 *kyŏl*).<sup>37</sup> The perception of the culture-bringing role of Kija had been codified when some fifty years earlier Kim Pushik had recorded the myth of Kija in the *Samguk sagi*. The rather perfunctory manner in which Kim recorded references to Kija and refrained from giving a detailed explanation only underscores the importance and the widespread knowledge of Kija in Koryŏ. Kim assumed that the reader

<sup>30</sup> *Jiu Tangshu* 199 (*hsang*): 1b.

<sup>31</sup> Han Young-woo [Han Yŏngu] maintains that the culture-bringing role of Kija was ‘invented’ by Kim Pushik, but this is not the case. There are Koryŏ references to Kija as a culture hero that clearly predate Kim Pushik. Han also denies that Kija was worshipped as a founding ancestor who was enfeoffed by the Zhou, but rather as an ancestral spirit who had little or no connection with the Zhou. The fact that Kija figures in Chinese histories so that his story and his flight to Chosŏn were well known, make this improbable. Kija was probably worshipped as an ancestral spirit, but one from China. His connection with the Zhou must have been known. See Han, Young-woo, “Kija worship in the Koryŏ and Early Yi dynasties: A cultural symbol in the relationship between Korea and China,” In *The rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), edited by Wm. Theodore de Bary and JaHyun Kim Haboush, p. 354.

<sup>32</sup> See the following entries in the *Koryŏsa* for mentions of Kija in Chinese letters of investment: *KS* 3: 29a-b; *KS* 7: 31a-b; *KS* 9: 1a-2b.

<sup>33</sup> *KS* 10: 4a.

<sup>34</sup> *KMC* 15: 21.

<sup>35</sup> Chŏng Mun’s biography in the *Koryŏsa* only mentions that he requested that a shrine be built for Kija before he was sent to the Song as an envoy in 1104, but it does not mention any specific dates. See *KS* 95: ; *KS* 12:

<sup>36</sup> *KSC* 6:44b.

<sup>37</sup> *KS* 78: 18a-b.



knew who Kija was and what his importance for Koryŏ was. In the commentary appended to the reign of Koguryŏ King Pojang-wang 寶臧王 (?-642-668-682), Kim described how Kija had introduced ritual etiquette, farming, sericulture, weaving and the Eight Injunctions to the people of the later commanderies of Lelang 樂浪 and Xuantu 玄菟, the ancestral territories of Chosŏn.<sup>38</sup> The implication that Kija was not only responsible for the cultural genesis of the Korean people, but also for its boundaries is echoed in the diplomatic correspondence between the Koryŏ court of Munjong and the Khitan Liao court. A dragging border dispute had the Koryŏ court assert that the territory beyond the Amnok river had been Korean since the time of Kija.<sup>39</sup> As the successor of Kija Chosŏn, Koryŏ claimed its old territorial possessions.

Kija was thus used as the supra-peninsular myth of origin of Koryŏ. Modern scholarship has sometimes bemoaned the prominent position Kim Pushik accorded Kija in the *Samguk sagi* – although he only mentioned Kija five times in total.<sup>40</sup> According to this argument, Kim elevated Kija to a position that he had never held, the Confucian patriarch of Korean culture.<sup>41</sup> The few other references to Kija from this period and earlier periods, however, suggest that Kim did not do much more than to codify one existing perception of Kija. The verifiable presence of the Kija story in Chinese sources, his excellent reputation and impeccable credentials made him an attractive figure to install as founding ancestor, perhaps not necessarily as the biological progenitor of the Korean people<sup>42</sup>, but then at least as its culture-hero par excellence. In this regard, it is remarkable that Xu Jing gave Chumong chronological though not ideological precedence over Kija, while Kim Pushik did the opposite. Although he was not clear about the precise chronology, he implied that Kija Chosŏn was succeeded by Wiman Chosŏn, the four Han commanderies and only then Koguryŏ. In this manner, he implied that the provenance of the people of the peninsula should be sought in Kija Chosŏn, rather than in Chumong's Koguryŏ.

## TAN'GUN

The most important origin myth of Koryŏ is the myth of Tan'gun 檀君, who is now seen as both the biological and the cultural progenitor of the Korean nation. But, as mentioned above, there is no recorded myth that explains the creation of the world or of the people inhabiting it.<sup>43</sup> Most probably, this is a problem related to the sources. Judging from the strong

<sup>38</sup> SGSG 22: 222-3.

<sup>39</sup> KS 9: 1a-2b..

<sup>40</sup> Han, Young-woo, "Kija worship in the Koryo and Early Yi dynasties," pp. 352-355.

<sup>41</sup> Kim described a veritable Confucian paradise when he portrayed the peninsula as a place where Confucius himself wanted to go to and live "even if he had to sail on driftwood to get there". See SGSG 22: 223.

<sup>42</sup> The idea of the existence of a biological progenitor of the Korean people is a modern idea and has as such no place in a discussion about Koryŏ. The acceptance of this idea is so widespread, however, that I have found it advisable to refer to it here.

<sup>43</sup> The Tan'gun myth only came to possess creational elements well into the Chosŏn period (with the composition of the *Munbŏn pigo* 文獻備考 in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to be precise). The literature on Tan'gun is truly overwhelming, even if only academic writings are taken into the account. Nonetheless, despite all these studies which range from academic

structural similarities between ancient Japanese myths of descent and the Tan'gun myth, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that both myths are structurally related to each other. In view of the relations between the Japan and Korea in ancient times, the Japanese myths of descent, that were recorded as early as the eighth century, must be considered related to the continental versions.<sup>44</sup> This is not to say that the Tan'gun myth of the thirteenth century is necessarily similar to the original myth, except in a structural manner. There is simply too much evidence that discredits this myth as original or that dethrones Tan'gun as a mythological figure with a historical pedigree that reaches farther back than the thirteenth century. The fact that Tan'gun is not mentioned in Korean sources is troubling, but the fact that he is not mentioned even once in Chinese sources – that have detailed although divergent accounts of the Chumong myth as early as the first century C.E. – is virtually insurmountable.<sup>45</sup> Also, the omission of Tan'gun in Kim Pushik's *Samguk sagi* is not as easily explained as it usually is.<sup>46</sup> I will deal with Koryŏ historiography in chapters five, six and seven and leave a detailed analysis of the *Samguk sagi* and Kim Pushik's historical ideas until then, but for now I should mention that the arguments that he left out Tan'gun to spite Myoch'ŏng<sup>47</sup> or because he did not attach credence

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pieces of philological excellence and ingenuity to studies that border on fantasy, the fact that there is no source attesting Tan'gun worship before the fourteenth century remains. To date, the most trustworthy inventory of sources related to Tan'gun, remains Yun Ihūm 윤이흠 (ed), *Tan'gun: kŭ ibae-wa charyo* 단군: 그 이해와 자료 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1994, revised edition, 1995)

<sup>44</sup>James H. Grayson, "Three structural patterns of Korean foundation myths," *Acta Koreana* 5.2 (2002): pp. 1-25.

<sup>45</sup>The Chumong myth is in almost every Chinese dynastic history. Although in general the space devoted to states on the Korean peninsula in Chinese dynastic histories is not remarkably much, important historico-religious characteristics such as the worship of Kija in Koguryŏ or the worship of the mother of Tongmyŏng-wang did not go unnoticed. Kim Chaewŏn has developed a theory which claims a Chinese Han tomb does in fact portray the Tan'gun myth in its wall paintings. His theory, ingenious though it is, is only held together by assumption and supposition and ignores Chinese archaeology. See Kim Chaewŏn 김재원, *Tan'gun shimbwa-ni shin yŏn'gu* 단군신화의 신연구 (Seoul: Ch'ŏngŭmsa 경음사, 1947), republished in 1980 and 1991 by T'amgudang 탐구당.

<sup>46</sup>John Jorgensen wondered why Kim Pushik did not include the Tan'gun myth in the *Samguk sagi*. This question suggests *ipso facto* a form of historical teleology. No evidence regarding Tan'gun has been found that predates *The memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms* which was compiled between 1277 and 1280. The obvious answer to this question, then, would be that there was no Tan'gun myth known when Kim Pushik compiled his history. Only by retrojecting the significance of the Tan'gun myth after this period back unto this period, can such a question be asked – and expect to be answered. Despite Jorgensen's sophisticated analysis of Buddhist esoteric elements in Myoch'ŏng's thought and in the Tan'gun myth, his conclusion that Kim Pushik hated Myoch'ŏng and *ergo* ignored the myth Myoch'ŏng created is a circular argument. It begins with the question why Kim Pushik did not record the myth and concludes with the assertion that since he did not include it, he must have ignored it. There is, however, no evidence whatsoever that makes plausible the existence of the myth during the first half of the twelfth century. Moreover, Jorgensen also fails to mention the *Song of the three capitals* 三京賦 by Ch'oe Cha 崔慈, a poem in prose style that prefigures much of the Tan'gun myth. This poem dates from the 1230's, suggesting that at that time, the divergent but quite characteristic elements found in the Tan'gun myth had not congealed yet into a new foundation myth. See *TMS* 2: 1a-5a. Another argument that is damaging to Jorgensen's contention is the absence of references to Tan'gun in Yi Kyubo's *Tongmyŏngwang p'yŏn*. In contrast to Kim Pushik, Yi Kyubo has never been accused of a distaste for mythology and the like. Yet he only mentions Tongmyŏng, who in later accounts was portrayed as the son of Tan'gun. See *TYSC* 3: 1a-2a; John Jorgensen, "Who was the author of the Tan'gun myth?," in *Perspectives on Korea* (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1998), edited by Lee Sang-oak and Duk-soo Park, pp. 222-255.

<sup>47</sup>Jorgensen, "Who was the author of the Tan'gun myth?," pp. 223-224, pp. 250-251; also see Imanishi Ryū 今西龍, "Dangun kō 檀君考," reprinted in *Chōsen koshi no kenkyū* 朝鮮古史の研究 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai 國書刊行會, 1970), pp. 1-130, edited by Imanishi Haruaki 今西春秋. The original study dates from 1929. Imanishi is also suspicious of Kim Pushik's motives in not recording the Tan'gun myth, for much the same reason as Jorgensen.

to it<sup>48</sup> are too superficial. The *Samguk sagi* is full of examples of myths and legends that Kim Pushik did not believe to be true. Nonetheless, he mentioned them and added his criticism in an appended commentary.<sup>49</sup> And as the compiler of the *Veritable records of Injong* 仁宗實錄, from which the *Koryŏsa* compilers took their materials, Kim Pushik had the opportunity to take Myoch'ong apart.<sup>50</sup> And, judging from the contents of Myoch'ong's biography, he did. He also did mention Myoch'ong's 'erroneous' beliefs in enough detail as to warrant the assumption that he would have mentioned the Tan'gun myth, had it been sufficiently popular at that time.<sup>51</sup> The fact that he did not do so indicates that he did not know the myth or did not think it important historically. This interpretation is corroborated by the account of the Chinese Song envoy Xu Jing who, otherwise very observant, did not mention Tan'gun in his account of Koryŏ, while he did mention the worship of Tongmyong and of his mother as well other religious peculiarities of Koryŏ.<sup>52</sup> The *Gaoli Tujing* furthermore starts with a brief account of the history of Koryŏ that explains its origins and that brings up Kija and Chumong prominently; again there is no mention of or reference to Tan'gun.<sup>53</sup>

Apart from the reasons mentioned above, there is a more compelling argument not to attach too much credence to the existence of the Tan'gun myth in its thirteenth century version during earlier times and that is the rather remarkable similarities it shows with the eleventh and twelfth-century development of the myths associated with King Tongmyong or Ko Chumong.<sup>54</sup> It is to this figure that we must look if we are to get a clearer view of Koryŏ

<sup>48</sup> This is the usual charge levelled against Kim Pushik, but the evidence for his alleged rejection of anything mythical or weird is just one sentence; the famous sentence in which he says, that the Shilla myth of origin is "weird and not to be believed". Upon this short sentence, magnificent edifices are constructed to prove that Kim Pushik as a rationalist and a Confucian had an ingrained prejudice against anything not readily to be understood by the reason. This, it seems to me, is clearly refuted by the many myths and strange stories Kim Pushik included in the *Samguk sagi*, whether or not he attached credence to them. I shall say more on this subject in chapter seven.

<sup>49</sup> For an excellent analysis of Kim Pushik's commentaries in the *Samguk sagi*, see Yi Kangnae, *Samguksagi ch'ongoron*.

<sup>50</sup> According to Pyŏn T'aesŏp, Kim Pushik gave free reign to his frustrations regarding Myoch'ong when he compiled Myoch'ong's biography for the veritable records from which the *Koryŏsa* was eventually compiled. See Pyŏn T'aesŏp, *Koryŏsa-ŭi yŏn'gu*, p. 197.

<sup>51</sup> Myoch'ong's biography in the *Koryŏsa* is unusually long and detailed. See *KS* 127: 26b-36a.

<sup>52</sup> Chapters 17, 18 and 19 of the *Gaoli Tujing* are devoted to shrines, Daoism in Koryŏ and Buddhism in Koryŏ respectively, yet there is no mention of Tan'gun.

<sup>53</sup> *GTI*: 19-35.

<sup>54</sup> The *Tong munson* contains the *Song of the three capitals* (*Samgyŏngbu* 三京賦) by Ch'oe Cha, written during the evacuation of the capital at Kanghwa-do. At bottom, the composition boils down to a plea against the arrogance of the ruler and the luxurious decadence of the people, which brought the calamities of the Mongol incursions upon Koryŏ. The new capital at Kangdo offers Koryŏ a chance for a new start. The song compares Sŏgyŏng and Kaegyŏng and, interestingly, Ch'oe describes Tongmyong as the ancient ruler of Sŏgyŏng who descended from heaven in a cart drawn by five dragons, leading all spirits and in the company of the Master of Rain and the Count of the Wind. This 'upgraded' version of the Tongmyong myth is very reminiscent of the Tan'gun myth as recorded in the *Samguk yusa* and if the period of composition is taken into consideration – the Mongol invasions – the similarities between these two myths are compelling. Further research is necessary, but Ch'oe's song seems to occupy the middle ground between Tan'gun's first appearance in the *Samguk yusa* and the *Samguk sagi* that does not mention him at all, but that instead positions Kija and Chumong as founding ancestors. It seems probable that Ch'oe Cha consulted the now no longer extant *Samguksa* when he wrote this song, because the elements of the descent from heaven and Tongmyong's retinue also appear in Yi Kyubo's *Tongmyŏngwang p'yŏn*. It is generally assumed that Yi's version of the Tongmyong myth is true to its original in the *Samguksa*. The occurrence of the same elements in this late twelfth century epic poem provides another clue of how the myth of Tongmyong may have come to constitute the mould for the Tan'gun myth. See *TMS* 2: 1a-5a; *TYSC* 3: 1a-2a.

ancestry and descent.

## TONGMYÖNG

Above we have seen that Tongmyöng worship was widespread during Koryö, both among the people who worshipped at the shrines and among the ruling stratum that held national ceremonies for Tongmyöng. Tongmyöng worship had been a common phenomenon in Koguryö and in Paekche with deep historical roots. The *Samguk Sagi* mentions that there was a shrine for the worship of Tongmyöng in Liaodong in 645 when Koguryö ruled that area.<sup>55</sup> The presence of a substantial shrine outside of P'yöngyang, which after all was the capital of Tongmyöng, points at a significant degree of dissemination and state support of this cult in the territories that were ruled by Koguryö.<sup>56</sup> Korean sources mention the number of times kings of Paekche and Koguryö visited the ancestral shrine of Tongmyöng and paid homage to their founding ancestor.<sup>57</sup> Taking into account the fragmentary nature of the *Samguk sagi*, it can be inferred that both Koguryö and Paekche kings paid homage to Tongmyöng on a regular basis.<sup>58</sup> No Myönggho argues convincingly for the position of Tongmyöng as the founding ancestor of Paekche, different both from his son Onjo 溫祚, who is usually seen as the founding ancestor of Paekche by modern scholarship, and from Kut'ae 九台, whom No concludes to be the founding ancestor of the Paekche royal house.<sup>59</sup> According to No, Tongmyöng/Chumong came to fulfil a double role in Koguryö. As the original founding ancestor of Puyö, the worship of Tongmyöng (Tongmyöng-shin) was the most important part of Puyö socio-religious life. After the Puyö had split up, this worship was maintained by the resulting young states that would eventually become Paekche and Koguryö.<sup>60</sup> In Koguryö, the Ko 高 clan of Kyerubu 桂婁部, one of the five traditional Koguryö tribes, eventually secured the definitive struggle for state supremacy, during which process they had come to identify their own clan origins with Tongmyöng/Chumong, who thus came to possess a dual function. Tongmyöng figured both as the ancestor of the people and as the founding ancestor of the ruling house. Owing to the

<sup>55</sup> SGSG 21: 209-210. The same reference can be found in *Xin Tangshu* 220: 3b.

<sup>56</sup> No Myönggho, "Paekche-üi Tongmyöng shinhwa-wa Tongmyöngmyo: Tongmyöng shinhwa-üi chaesaengsöng hyönsang-gwa kwallyönhayö 百濟의 東明神話와 東明廟-東明神話의 再生成 現象과 관련하여," *Yöksahak yön'gu* 歷史學研究 10 (1981): pp. 39-89; O Sunje, "Paekche-üi Tongmyöng-gwa Koguryö-üi Chumong," pp. 59-60.

<sup>57</sup> The *Samguk sagi* lists nine visits of Koguryö kings to Tongmyöng's tomb: in 20 (Taemushin-wang 大武神王 3), in 167 (Shindae-wang 新大王 3), in 180 (Kogukch'ön-wang 故國川王 2), in 231 (Tongch'ön-wang 東川王 2), in 250 (Chungch'önwang 中川王 3), in 332 (Kogug'wön 故國原 2), in 520 (Anjang-wang 安藏王 3), in 560 (P'yöngwön-wang 平原王 2) and finally in 619 (Yöngnyu-wang 營留王 2). See *Samguk sagi, Koguryö pon'gi* for the years concerned. It also lists eight visits of Paekche kings to his tomb: in 19 (Onjo-wang 溫祚王 1), in 29 (Taru-wang 多婁王 2), in 227 (Kusu-wang 仇首王 14), in 287 (Ch'aekkye-wang 責稽王), in 299 (Punsö-wang 汾西王 2), in 311 (Piryu-wang 比流王 8), in 393 (Ashin-wang 阿莘王 2) and finally in 406 (Ch'önji-wang 天智王 2). See *Samguk sagi, Paekche pon'gi* for the years concerned.

<sup>58</sup> No Myönggho, "Paekche-üi Tongmyöng shinhwa-wa Tongmyöngmyo," pp. 39-89; O Sunje, "Paekche-üi Tongmyöng-gwa Koguryö-üi Chumong," pp. 51-90.

<sup>59</sup> No Myönggho, "Paekche-üi Tongmyöng shinhwa-wa Tongmyöngmyo," pp. 39-89.

<sup>60</sup> No Myönggho, "Paekche-üi Tongmyöng shinhwa-wa Tongmyöngmyo," pp. 70-89.

relatively great territory that Puyŏ had dominated, the vast extent of lands Koguryŏ came to rule and the southward movement of Paekche, Tongmyŏng worship was spread over the Korean peninsula.<sup>61</sup> The annual elaborate celebration of the Tongmaeng 東盟 ritual in Koguryŏ not only served to strengthen royal power by honouring the birth of its founding ancestor, but was also characterized by extended repetitions of the founding myth of Koguryŏ.<sup>62</sup>

In Koryŏ, Tongmyŏng was in fact the only ‘founding ancestor’ (*sbijo* 始祖) of the Three Kingdoms that was honoured with his own shrine. His tomb was located in Sŏgyŏng and was known as the ‘Real Pearl Tomb’ (Chinju-myŏ 眞珠墓). Sŏgyŏng also possessed a shrine to worship Tongmyŏng, popularly known as the “Shrine of Holy Emperor Tongmyŏng” (Tongmyŏng sŏngje-sa 東明聖帝祠).<sup>63</sup> An entry in the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* states that in 1105 Sukchong sent an envoy there to celebrate a ritual and to bestow on the shrine a gift consisting of silk clothes.<sup>64</sup> The *Koryŏsa* mentions that Koryŏ kings used to send envoys there to perform the ancestral rites and also have the shrine’s officials perform rites every full moon and the last day of every month.<sup>65</sup> The sources also divulge that Tongmyŏng was worshipped at his shrine in P’yŏngyang until late in the Koryŏ dynasty; Hyŏnjong 賢宗, Sukchong, Yejong and Ch’ungnyŏl 忠烈 are recorded as having celebrated these rites.<sup>66</sup> Since Sŏgyŏng was the old capital of Koguryŏ, the presence of both the tomb and the shrine are less than surprising, but the fact that in Kaesŏng there were also shrines dedicated to Tongmyŏng – as well as to his mother Yuhwa 柳花, daughter of river god Habaek 河伯 – clearly indicates the continued importance of the founding ancestor of Koguryŏ during Koryŏ.<sup>67</sup> As Yi Kyubo wrote in his *Tongmyŏngwang p’yŏn* (The lay of King Tongmyŏng), “[t]he mysterious tales of King Tongmyŏng are so well known that even ignorant men and simple women can tell them”.<sup>68</sup> Yet another indication of Tongmyŏng’s importance and ubiquity is the fact that both the *Samguk sagi* and the *Samguk yusa* point out that in 1110 a Chinese Song envoy performed the ancestral rites in honour of Tongmyŏng’s mother, supplying as the reason the story that she was the daughter of a Chinese emperor.<sup>69</sup> The *Samguk yusa* has a similar story, with the difference that

<sup>61</sup> Kim Ch’anghyŏn 金昌賢, “Koryŏ-shidae P’yŏngyang-ŭi Tongmyŏng sungbae-wa mingan shinang 고려시대 평양의 동명 숭배와 민간신앙,” *Yŏksa hakpo* 歷史學報 188 (2005): pp. 103-135.

<sup>62</sup> Sŏ Yŏngdae, “Koguryŏ-ŭi kukka cherye: Tongmaeng-ŭl chungshim-ŭro,” pp. 1-32; Pak Sŏngbŏm “Cheŭi-rŭl t’onghaesŏ pon Koguryŏ-ŭi chŏngch’esŏng,” pp. 433-468.

<sup>63</sup> *KS* 58: 31b.

<sup>64</sup> *KSC* 7:7b.

<sup>65</sup> *KS* 58: 31b.

<sup>66</sup> *KS* 4: 9a; *KS* 4: 14a; *KS* 7: 7b; *KS* 13: 3b; *KS* 28: 44a; *KS* 30: 39b.

<sup>67</sup> The Song envoy who recorded this was less than impressed with what he saw: “The shrine of Tongmyŏng [Tonghin-sa 東神祠] is inside the Gate of Bestowed Benevolence. Its floors are even and wide, but the altar is dirty. The thirty outbuildings are dilapidated and in need of repairs. In the main shrine there is a sign upon which “Altar of the Holy Mother” has been written, hidden from sight by a curtain. The statue is carved from wood and made to represent a female. Somebody told me that she is the daughter of the River God and the wife of the king of Puyŏ. She gave birth to Chumong, who became the founding ancestor of Koguryŏ. That is why she is worshipped according to the ancient customs. When an envoy arrives, an official is dispatched to sacrifice offerings. The ritual of sacrificing animals and offering ritual wine is similar to that in honour of the Mountain Spirit of Songak.” See *GT* 17: *Tongshin-sa* 東神祠.

<sup>68</sup> The translation is by Richard Rutt. See Rutt, “The lay of King Tongmyŏng,” p. 48. For the original, see *TYSC* 3: 1a-2a.

<sup>69</sup> *SGSG* 12: 143-144. In the same historical commentary Kim Pushik relates an anecdote about his first visit as an

there Yuhwa gave birth not to Tongmyöng, but to Pak Hyökköse 朴赫居世, the future founding ancestor of Shilla.<sup>70</sup> Kim Pushik related how he realized from a sentence in Chinese Song envoy Wang Meng 王囊's ritual text ("she gave birth to a wise son who established a country") that the mother of Tongmyöng was indeed a historical figure and that the whole story (or at least its bones) were based on fact.

As we have seen above, Koryö had different narratives of origin, aimed at different audiences or referred to in different circumstances. So what was the purpose of these stories? On a daily level, they satisfied the need to know where one came from and hence where one was going or was supposed to go at least.<sup>71</sup> On another level, the level of recording, manipulating and adapting the original stories, they were used to promote the unity of the people on the peninsula, whether consciously or unconsciously. The reason why such narratives could have a strong impact is that the political thought of this period subscribed to the idea that although there was a distinct difference between the ruler and the people, they were both essential elements of the state to which both ruler and ruled were bound by ties of due and lawful order. The notion that the ruler was the link between heaven and earth projected the cosmological order on earth and made the state a cosmologically ordained community (I will deal with this crucial notion in a following chapter). There might be heated discussion on the proper way the state was administered, but there was none on the *raison d'être* of the state as the reflection of the principles of Heaven on earth. It is less than surprising, then, that the state should also have been perceived as a community of common descent. Narratives that explained and promoted this common descent could potentially act as powerful tools in the forging of a sense of solidarity and unity. The regular association of common descent with religion (Tongmyöng) and law (e.g. the Eight Prohibitions of Kija) and with territory (Tongmyöng, Kija) further helped to create a sense of territorial boundedness that was increased by the royal myth of origin that explained who should rule this territory which was defined by common descent, religion and law. According to the political ideas that held sway during Koryö, a state often was its ruler. The ruler represented Heaven and as such was the natural and necessary head of the community.

The complicated historical genesis of the Koryö state also conditioned the usability of its narratives of origin. As mentioned above, the state of Koryö had to deal with several competing narratives of origin. The double or even triple historical heritage of Koryö complicated a simple and straightforward claim to the past. A claim to the past of the Koryö state entailed a necessary and obvious choice between Shilla, Koguryö and Paekche. In the following chapter I shall look into Koryö ideas on state legitimation with reference to the peninsular past.

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envoy to Song China with Yi Charyang 李資諒 (?-1123). Having arrived at court, they are shown a statue of a female deity. Their host Wang Meng 王囊 explains that it is a statue of a Chinese imperial princess who went to Chinhan and gave birth to the first ruler of Haedong. According to the *SGYS*, this princess was called Saso 娑蘇. After giving birth to her son, she was said to have retreated to Söndo-san 仙桃山 near Kyöngju 慶州, where she became a mountain goddess called the Holy Mother of Söndo-san 仙桃山神母.

<sup>70</sup> *SGYS* 5: 237-238.

<sup>71</sup> For a concise, but discerning analysis of the importance of origin stories, see Susan Reynolds, "Medieval *origines gentium* and the community of the realm," *History* 68 (1983): pp. 375-390, esp. p. 378.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE TRACING OF LEGITIMATION

Few debates on Koryŏ history have been as heated as the debate on the tracing of the dynasty's legitimation. I have already alluded to it in the previous chapters, but this theme is directly related to the identity of the dynasty and to contemporary issues that are thought to be related to it.<sup>1</sup> It has been asserted that Koryŏ identified with Koguryŏ, with Shilla or with both, depending on the period under consideration. The locus classicus of the modern debate about Koryŏ identity can be traced back to Shin Ch'aeho 申采浩 (1880-1936) who lamented the outcome of the "most important event in Korean history for a thousand years", i.e. the clash between Kim Pushik and Myoch'ŏng. In his view the future of the Korean nation hung in the balance when the reactionary forces of Confucianist Kim Pushik and the pro-independence troops of Myoch'ŏng clashed. Sinocentric Confucianism triumphed and Kim went on to become, arguably, the most powerful statesman and influential scholar of the Koryŏ period.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The idea of expansion toward the north has often been used as a yardstick to measure the nationalist calibre both of historical states and figures and of historians. The idea of reclaiming the lost lands of Manchuria (*Manju subok* 滿洲收復 or *sangji subok* 傷地收復) was a popular notion during the colonial period. One of its most influential adherents was the young Shin Ch'aeho. Koryŏ identification with Shilla instead of with Koguryŏ is still seen by many to be somehow 'untrue' to Korean history and the expansion to the north to reclaim the ancestral lands in north China and Manchuria is often equated with the redemption of an ancient historical promise. It is not surprising, then, that this notion that has enjoyed popularity for more than a century, has exerted influence upon the historical debate on the identity of the Koryŏ dynasty. For a comprehensive inventory of such views held by Korean historians during the colonial period, see Han Yŏngu, *Han'guk minjokchuii yŏksahak* 韓國民族主義 歷史學 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1993); with regard to Manchuria, see pages 14-15, pp. 89, 93, 174, 223. Also see André Schmid, "Looking north toward Manchuria," in *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 99.1 (2000): pp. 219-240; Schmid, "Rediscovering Manchuria: Sin Ch'aeho and the politics of territorial history in Korea," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56.1 (1997): pp. 26-46. I have mentioned works on historical legitimation above, but these are the most representative: Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ T'aejo segye-ŭi ch'ago-e kwanhaeyŏ: Tang Sukchongsŏr-ŭl chungshim-ŭro," ; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ kŏn'guk-kwa hojok," ; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ-ŭi Koguryŏ kyesŭngŭishik," ; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ T'aejo-ŭi Husamguk t'ongil chŏngch'aek; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ T'aejo segye-ŭi ch'ago-e kwanhaeyŏ," ; Cho Insŏng, "Koryŏ ch'o-chunggi-ŭi yŏksa kyesŭngŭishik-kwa Parhaesa inshik; Ch'oe Kyusŏng, "Koryŏ ch'ogi-ŭi yŏjin kwan'gye-wa pukpang chŏngch'aek," ; Yi Usŏng, "Samguk sagi-ŭi kusŏng-gwa Koryŏ wangjo-ŭi chŏngt'ong ŭishik," pp. 203-207; Yi Usŏng, *Han'guk-ŭi yŏksasang: Yi Usŏng yŏksa nonjip* 韓國의 歷史像: 李佑成歷史論集. (Seoul: Ch'angjak-kwa pip'yŏngsa 創作과批評社, 1982; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Koryŏ chunggi-ŭi munhwa ŭishik-kwa sahak-ŭi sŏngkyŏk," ; Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏksa kyesŭngŭishik," ; Kim Ŭigyū 金毅圭, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik 高麗前期의 歷史認識," *Han'guk'saron* 韓國史論 6 (Seoul: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1981), pp. 22-33; Shin Hyŏngshik, "Koryŏ ch'on'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik 高麗前期의 歷史認識," in *Han'guk sahaksa-ŭi yŏn'gu* 韓國史學史의 研究 (Seoul: Ŭryu munhwasa, 1985), pp. 35-66; Chŏng Kubok, "Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi yŏksa ŭishik 高麗時代の 歷史意識," in *Han'guk sasang taegyŏ* 韓國사상사대계 3 (Sŏngnam: Han'guk chŏngshin munhwa yŏn'guwŏn 韓國정신문화연구원), edited by Chŏng Kubok, pp. 67-110; Chŏng Kubok, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*. The idea that Koryŏ traced back its succession to Koguryŏ is the most widely held opinion on Koryŏ's perception of its history in modern historiography on Koryŏ, despite the fact that there is still significant discussion.

<sup>2</sup> Shin Ch'aeho, *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho chŏnjip* 丹齋申采浩全集, edited by *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho sŏnsaeng kinyŏm saŏphoe* 丹齋申采浩先生紀念事業會 (Revised edition in 4 volumes, Seoul: Hyŏngsŏl ch'ulp'ansa 螢雪出版社, 1995), vol. 2,

Even now, historians still unflinchingly refer to Shin who set the parameters for the discussion of Koryŏ identity. Due to Shin Ch'aeho's enormous influence, Koryŏ identity has been reduced to a choice between Shilla and Koguryŏ successionism, which in itself has also been reduced to the purported respective views of foreign relations. Koryŏ identity is not this easily reduced to five centuries of diplomacy, but nonetheless more than one attempt to do so has been made. The boundaries set by Shin Ch'aeho at the beginning of the twentieth century have proven to be very difficult to venture outside of.

The most influential studies on Koryŏ successionism started to appear in the 1970's. Ha Hyŏn'gang 河炫綱 has argued that Koryŏ identified with Koguryŏ at the founding of the dynasty, but soon switched to a dual successionism after the unification of the peninsula. According to Ha, the 993 Khitan invasion prompted Sŏngjong to adopt a domestic policy that stressed a identification with Shilla and simultaneously a foreign policy that propagated Koguryŏ successionism.<sup>3</sup> Kim Ch'ŏlchun, on the other hand, denied this and stressed that the increased economic affluence of the *bojok* 豪族 and the growing digestion of Confucian ideology resulted in a Shilla-successionist *sadae* 事大 identity.<sup>4</sup> Yi Usŏng maintained that the Koryŏ period up until the military coup was Koguryŏ successionist, during the military period it was "somewhat different", and finally, during the late Koryŏ it became Shilla-successionist.<sup>5</sup> With the exception of Ha, for most historians the debate was about the question Koguryŏ/Shilla. If it was not Koguryŏ, then it had to be Shilla and vice versa. Kim Ŭigyū qualified this approach by arguing that Koryŏ had maintained duality in its identity vis-à-vis peninsular history. He furthermore contended that it was not that self-evident that any policy of northern expansion could matter-of-factly be linked to Koguryŏ, just as any indication of the opposite could not just like that be connected to Shilla.<sup>6</sup> His position is akin to that of Shin Hyŏngshik, who also argued for a nuanced approach to this issue, avoiding the pitfalls of extreme opinions.<sup>7</sup> Finally, Chŏng Kubok, reaping the rewards of twenty years of debate, concluded that although political identification with Koguryŏ was clearly the ideology of Koryŏ at the time of its founding, the unification of the peninsula caused the incorporation of a Shilla-successionist ideology, resulting in political identifications that changed according to the circumstances.<sup>8</sup> He also analysed Koryŏ's successionist consciousness using such categories as rational, superstitious, mythical and legendary. Shilla-successionist Confucian historiography was rational and fact-based, while the Koguryŏ-oriented perception of Koryŏ history was steeped in mysticism, myth and legend.<sup>9</sup>

What are the assumptions that underlie this debate and the conviction that Koryŏ identity is to be located in the Shilla-Koguryŏ question? A proper investigation of this question

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pp. 103-124.

<sup>3</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏksa kyesŭngŭishik", pp. 14, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Koryŏ chunggi-ŭi munhwa ŭishik-kwa sahak-ŭi sŏngkyŏk", pp. 137-141, pp. 148-50.

<sup>5</sup> Yi Usŏng, "Samguk sagi-ŭi kusŏng-gwa Koryŏ wangjo-ŭi chŏngt'ong ŭishik", pp. 203-207; Yi Usŏng, *Han'gug-ŭi yŏksasang*, p. 206.

<sup>6</sup> Kim Ŭigyū, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik", pp. 32-33.

<sup>7</sup> Shin Hyŏngshik, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik", pp. 37-44.

<sup>8</sup> Chŏng Kubok, "Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi yŏksa ŭishik", pp. 68-89.

<sup>9</sup> Chŏng Kubok, "Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi yŏksa ŭishik", pp. 68-89.



entails a short excursion to the historiography of the colonial period. Japanese colonial historiography laid much emphasis on notions such as the stagnation of Korean society, the fundamentally different nature of Korean history or the idea that Korea and Manchuria should serve as buffer areas to protect Japan.<sup>10</sup> One of the most contested issues was what influence the loss of the northern Koguryō territories had exerted on the development of Korean history. Japanese historians concluded that Korea had lost its progress when it lost its territorial possessions in Manchuria, after which decline had set in.<sup>11</sup> During the colonial period many Korean historians shared this opinion, with Shin Ch'aeho as the most famous example. It was widely held that with Shilla's unification of the peninsula Korean history had reached a turning point. The loss of the Koguryō territory would cause Korea's future predicament.<sup>12</sup> Against this historiographical background it is easier to comprehend the fixation on how to determine Koryō's identity as reflected in its consciousness of succession to either Shilla or Koguryō.

The debate has been determined by a number of unspoken assumptions, the most important of which is the assumption that Koguryō represents nativist independence and Shilla subservient sinocentrism. This dichotomy is in differing degrees of potency present in most historiography on this issue. It is elaborated by the notion that expansion to the north is part of Koguryō history and is thus an expression of independence, whereas the absence of ambitions to recover the lost territories in Manchuria is equated with Shilla and hence with sinocentric subservience. Further assumptions are made about the nature of Koryō identity. Due to the much-contested nature of Koryō identity, it has come to be synonymous with the foreign policy it pursued or wanted to pursue. Hence the equalization of identity, successionism of Shilla or Koguryō and foreign policy, particularly at the disputed northern border. The last assumption that plays an important but largely unrecognized role in this debate is the idea that the identification on the part of Koryō with one element that can be ascertained to belong to either Shilla- or Koguryō-successionism entails the complete acceptance of the respective tradition.

Unravelling Koryō's tracing of legitimation is not an easy undertaking. Until now, the discussion has focused on Koryō's foreign policy, implying that those measures, beliefs or

<sup>10</sup> A set of interlinked theories on Japan in relation to *tōyō* 東洋, East Asia, developed thanks to the researches of the historians connected to the Research Bureau of the South Manchurian Railway. Some of these theories were in fact nothing but updated, sophisticated versions of theories already propagated by Japanese *kokugakusha* 國學者 (nativist scholars). Other theories were essentially 'Japanized' versions of European diffusionist theories or were academized versions of then current political issues. Telling examples are the *Nissen dōso ron* 日鮮同祖論, the *teitaisei ron* 停滯論, the *tarissei ron* 他律性論 and the *Man-Sen chūritsūchika ron* 滿鮮中立地論, respectively the theory that the Japanese and the Koreans were of the same descent, the theory that only Japan knew progress and that the other Asian countries were stagnant by nature (*teitaisei*), the theory that this stagnancy was not temporal, but ontological (on the grounds that 'the others' were fundamentally different from Japan, i.e. *tarissei*) and the theory that Korea and Manchuria were best to be used as a neutral buffer zone between Japan and the Asian continent, since their historical role had always been such. See Hatada Takashi 旗田巍, *Nihonjin no Chōsenkan* 日本人の朝鮮觀, (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1967), p.188; Goi Naohiro 五井直弘, *Kindai Nihon to tōyōshigaku* 近代日本と東洋史學 (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten 青木書店, 1976), p. 42, pp. 72-74; Yi Manyōl 李萬烈, "Ilche kwanhakcha-dül ūi Han'guk yōksa sōsul 日帝官學者들의 韓國史 敘述," in *Han'guk saron* 6; Breuker, "Contested objectivities".

<sup>11</sup> See for example Ikeuchi Hiroshi 池内宏, "Shiragi no bushiteki seishin ni tsuite 新羅の武士的精神に就いて," *Shigaku zasshi* 史學雜誌 40.8 (1929), p. 35-37.

<sup>12</sup> Cho Tonggöl, *Hyōndae Han'guk sabaksa* 現代韓國史學史 (Seoul: Na'nam ch'ulp'ansa 南南출판사, 1998).

institutions that did not have any noticeable influence upon Koryŏ's dealings with foreign countries, were not altogether that relevant. To view Koryŏ successionism solely in these terms is reductionist, because it departs from the notion that Koryŏ merely reacted to the actions of other countries. It does not take into account the possibility that Koryŏ at times acted at its own initiative or that some actions were undertaken without explicit reference to abroad. Care has to be taken, in other words, not to connect everything unreservedly to conscious efforts on the part of the state and its officials to create an identity to be propagated abroad.

The problems with Koryŏ's successionism begin at the establishment of the dynasty. The naming of the dynasty seems to give a clear clue, but as we have established above, firstly, the ready availability of political identification with Koguryŏ – as opposed to the no longer available identifications with Paekche and Shilla – and secondly, the geographical location of Kungye's and later Wang Kŏn's backing were decisive in choosing the name 'Koryŏ'. Wang Kŏn's hold on the political power was too precarious to allow personal ambition to dictate policy. The swift change from Kungye's administrative system to that of Shilla after the absorption of Shilla into Koryŏ supports this interpretation.<sup>13</sup> A more important aspect of the issue of choosing a name for the dynasty is the fact that Kungye and Wang Kŏn chose to refer explicitly to the period of the Three Kingdoms. The choice for reviving the Koguryŏ is mainly significant in conjunction with the existence of Shilla and Later Paekche on the peninsula. By choosing for Koguryŏ, the new state proclaimed that it considered the Three Kingdoms to belong together. This is a theme that returns frequently in the Koryŏ dynasty and one that has been consistently overlooked. Naming the new state Koguryŏ meant affirming the peninsular history, rather than propagating expansion to the north. Interpreting the naming of Koryŏ in this manner is, historically speaking, also more logical. Wang Kŏn did not only aim at succeeding Koguryŏ, but even more at taking the place of Shilla, the state that had unified the peninsula. Wang Kŏn said so himself:

The next day T'aejo said to Ch'oe Ŭng 崔凝: "Long ago, Shilla erected a nine-story pagoda and consequently completed the great undertaking of the unification. Now, I want to construct a seven-story pagoda in Kaegyŏng and a nine-story pagoda in Sŏgyŏng. [Thus] I shall pray for miraculous charity, dispel bands of evil people and I shall unite the Three Han in one house. I want you, dear sir, to compose the prayer on my behalf."<sup>14</sup>

This passage has been interpreted as an expression of Shilla-successionism (because of the imitation of a Shilla precedent) as well as an expression of Koguryŏ-successionism (because of the prominence of Sŏgyŏng, Koguryŏ's old capital). Undoubtedly, there is something to say for both of these alternatives, but the exclusion of either one does not seem

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<sup>13</sup> An entry from the first year of T'aejo in the *Koryŏsa* reads as follows: "[...] The former lord Kungye changed the outmoded titles of Shilla ranks and offices and those of provincial districts into a new system. Although the titles have been in use for many years, the people have not easily understood them, leading to confusion. From now on, we restore the Shilla system and preserve those parts of Kungye's new system that are easily understood." See *KS* 1: 11b (translation from Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 261). For further references see *SGSG* 33: 330; *KSC* 1: 8a-b; *KS* 76: 1a. Also see Cho Insŏng "Kungye chŏnggwŏn-ŭi chungang chŏngch'i chojik", pp. 63-83.

<sup>14</sup> *KS* 92: 9a-b.

plausible, which is why there have also been interpretations that stress the dual nature of Koryŏ successionist ideas.<sup>15</sup> As we shall see, there is certainly much to say for the simultaneous existence of the elements of several traditions in Koryŏ, but more to the point in this instance is an interpretation that does not pass over the most important element of the above passage as well as of the whole debate on Koryŏ successionism. Taejo's great wish, as has been expressed by him both in words and through actions, was the unification of the Three Han under his rule. The purpose of the construction of the pagodas was to facilitate the unification. Identifications with either Shilla or Koguryŏ, though clearly simultaneously present and contradicting each other, came second to that. There is in fact no source that explicitly affirms Taejo's intention to re-establish Koguryŏ. Instead, the sources constantly refer to "the unification of the Three Han." The concept of the Three Han is important in this respect; T'aejo seemed to have a preconceived idea about the re-unification of the peninsula, as is among other things borne out by the analysis of the concept of "Samhan" in chapter one.<sup>16</sup> It is also supported by the very fact that official histories such as the *Samguk sagi* and the *Samguk yusa* existed. The important element here is the idea that the Three Han or the Three Kingdoms belonged together, no matter which one held the upper hand. The prominence of Koguryŏ or of Shilla was relative to the notion that the Three Kingdoms or the Three Han formed a historical unit. Again, it should be emphasised that all sources consistently speak of the unification of the Samhan; there is no reference to the absorption of Shilla and Paekche into Koryŏ as such. Unification of what belongs together is the key concept that keeps asking for our attention.

The Fifth injunction is often used to support the Koguryŏ-successionism propagated by T'aejo. It reads as follows:

Fifth injunction: I relied on the mysterious help of the mountains and streams of the Three Han to bring the great enterprise to completion. In the Western Capital [P'yŏngyang] the aquatic force is balanced and smoothly flowing and is the root of the terrestrial arteries of our country. It is the place of the great dynastic undertaking for ten thousand generations – therefore, royal visits to the Western Capital should be made four times a year in the second, fifth, eighth, and eleventh months – and the monarch should reside there a total of more than one hundred days. By this means secure peace and prosperity.<sup>17</sup>

The central position of Sŏgyŏng in this injunction has received ample attention, but again the crucial element here is the unification of the country, Samhan, next in terms of importance is the founding of the royal dynasty and only then does Sŏgyŏng matter. The country, by virtue of the elements of mountains and rivers, is that which made possible the founding of the dynasty, not the other way round. Sŏgyŏng has been awarded the central

<sup>15</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏksa kyesŏngŭishik" ; Kim Ŭigyu, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik" ; Shin Hyŏngshik, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik" ; Chŏng Kubok, "Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi yŏksa ŭishik".

<sup>16</sup> See for instance *KS* 2: 2a-b.

<sup>17</sup> *KS* 2: 15b-16a. This is the text of the original injunction: 其五曰, 朕賴三韓山川陰佑, 以成大業. 西京, 水德調順, 爲我國地脈之根本, 大業萬代之地, 宜當四仲巡駐, 留過百日, 以致安寧. The translation has been made with reference to the translation of this injunction in Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 264. As mentioned before, the injunctions are a forgery from the eleventh century. See chapter thirteen for more details.

position in the argument that Koryŏ intended to consciously follow in the footsteps of Koguryŏ. It is usually argued that the importance attached to Sŏgyŏng by Wang Kŏn as the capital of Koguryŏ and his awareness of Sŏgyŏng's unique geomantic features.<sup>18</sup> The sources leave little room for doubt that T'aejo did consider Sŏgyŏng to be of the utmost importance and that he planned to move his capital there. Only three months after ascending the throne of Koryŏ, he started to rebuild and repopulate Sŏgyŏng.<sup>19</sup> The reasons for fortifying P'yŏngyang were of a more mundane nature than is often considered: still involved in a protracted war with Later Paekche and faced with pockets of Shilla resistance, Wang Kŏn needed to secure the backdoor to the peninsula. The border tribes could not be left unattended.<sup>20</sup> He also needed a safe haven to build his power base. The strength of the *bojok* was such during the early Koryŏ that Wang Kŏn was little more than the *primus inter pares*.<sup>21</sup> P'yŏngyang was excellently suited, not only because of its strategic position, but also because the local leaders had deserted it.<sup>22</sup> P'yŏngyang offered Wang Kŏn an excellent place to start building his dynasty. The rich historical and religious past of P'yŏngyang was also an attractive aspect of choosing this city as the new capital. Contrary to common perception, the unique geomantic qualities of P'yŏngyang were not recognised at the founding of the dynasty. With regard to T'aejo's Koguryŏ-successionist orientations as materialized in his choice of P'yŏngyang, it should be mentioned that, according to the *Koryŏsa*, T'aejo only started to be interested in its geomantic features more than 15 years after his ascension to the throne.<sup>23</sup> T'aejo's plans to build his capital in P'yŏngyang were quickly abandoned, however. Before the fourth year of his reign, the name of P'yŏngyang was changed into Sŏgyŏng, meaning Western Capital.<sup>24</sup> The act of renaming P'yŏngyang as Western Capital signified a change in status for T'aejo's capital-to-be. From the second year of T'aejo until 997 Koryŏ had two capitals, Central Capital Kaesŏng and

<sup>18</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko 고려 西京考," *Yŏksa hakpo* 歷史學報 35:36 (1967): pp. 139-174 (reprinted in Ha Hyŏn'gang, *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 韓國中世史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1988); Yi Hyeok 李惠玉, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Sŏgyŏng seryŏng-e taehan il koch'al 高麗初期 西京勢力에 대한 一考察," *Han'guk hakpo* 韓國學報 26 (1982): pp. 105-132; Yi Chŏngshin 李貞信, "Koryŏ T'aejo-ŭi kŏn'guk inyŏm-ŭi hyŏngsŏng-gwa kungnae-oe chŏngse 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내외 정세," 韓國史研究 118 (2002): pp. 35-74; Kang Ogyŏp 姜玉葉, "Yŏch'ŏ Sŏgyŏng kyŏngyŏng-gwa Sŏgyŏng seryŏk-ŭi ch'ui 麗初 西京經營과 西京勢力의 推移," *Tongdae sabak* 東大史學 1 (1995): pp. 3-27; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al 高麗 西京의 風水地理의 考察," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論總 71 (1996): pp. 69-101.

<sup>19</sup> The *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* mentions the following in the ninth month of the first year of T'aejo: "T'aejo told his assembled officials: "The old capital of P'yŏngyang has been a ruin for a long time, overgrown with abundant brambles and thorns. Our Jurchen vassals hunt between its ruins. Therefore, they often plunder. We should relocate people and have them live there. We should make it into a sturdy border defence." The *Koryŏsa* has recorded that "in the first year of T'aejo's reign the Great Capital Protective Government [*Taedobobu*] was established in P'yŏngyang. Two important officials were dispatched to protect it. Four to five assistant officials were stationed there." These officials were Wang Kŏn's trusted nephew Wang Shikkyŏm and Executive of the Chancellery Yŏlp'yŏng. See *KSC* 1: wŏnnyŏn 9: *KS* 1: wŏnnyŏn 9; *KS* 77: 1a-b.

<sup>20</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko", p. 316.

<sup>21</sup> H.W. Kang, "The first succession struggle of Koryŏ, in 945: A reinterpretation," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 36 (1977): pp. 411-428. This study gives a faultlessly researched and analyzed state of affairs with respect to the influence of the local strongmen, maritime traders and old Shilla nobility in early Koryŏ.

<sup>22</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko", p. 317.

<sup>23</sup> *KS* 2:2a-b.

<sup>24</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko", p. 319.

Secondary Capital P'yöngyang.<sup>25</sup> In 997 Söngjong inaugurated a Three Capital system that revolved around the Central Capital 中京 (Chunggyöng) of Kaesöng, the Southern Capital (Namgyöng) of Mongmyök 木覓, and the Western Capital (Sögyöng) of P'yöngyang.<sup>26</sup> During the reign of Munjong, this was changed into a Four Capital system that consisted of the Central Capital (Chunggyöng) of Kaesöng, the Southern Capital (Namgyöng) of today's Seoul, the Eastern Capital (Tonggyöng) of Kyöngju and the Western Capital (Sögyöng) of P'yöngyang.<sup>27</sup> The Western Capital of P'yöngyang has always been one of the focal points of attention for Koryö rulers, but as is indicated by the changeable nature of the secondary capital system, in this it was not unique. The Southern Capital also received its share of geomantic attention.<sup>28</sup> Nonetheless, since it was not associated with Koguryö or Shilla, it played no role in the debate of state legitimization. So, partly at least, the debate about Koryö's idea of successionism has been determined by a rather biased selection of themes and topics enlisted to defend one or the other points of view.

The Koryö dynastic narrative of origin also shows elements that are commonly identified as Koguryö-successionist. The provenance of the Wang lineage, the tiger motive and the excellent archery are but three of these.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, the description of Hogyöng as Holybone General (*sönggöl changgun* 聖骨將軍) is taken to be a clear reference to Shilla and a claim to the highest Shilla ancestry.<sup>30</sup> These elements are clearly present and I have little doubt that they do play on feelings of identification with the bygone era's of Koguryö and Shilla. Nonetheless, these hints as they might perhaps be called are hidden in the text; they were to be read, associated with the reader's knowledge of peninsular history and interpreted. This is exactly what most historians have done, but at the expense of the most important message of the text, which is the theme of the unification of the Three Han. All references to Koguryö, to Shilla, to the Tang are used to reinforce the strength of the message that the Samhan are destined to be unified under Wang rule. The fact that the Tang ancestry of the Wang lineage is usually ignored or disposed of as unbelievable – presumably in contrast with Hogyöng's exploits or Chakche Kön's 作帝建 adventures – tells us as much. A claim to Tang ancestry does not support either Shilla or Koguryö successionism. If the text is read without this debate in

<sup>25</sup> KS 56: 2a; KS 56: 9b.

<sup>26</sup> KS 57: 1b-3a.

<sup>27</sup> KS 8: 33a. It should be mentioned, though, that Kyöngju's status as Eastern Capital never seems to have amounted to much, both in ideological and political terms.

<sup>28</sup> Yannick Brunetton, "Seoul a l'époque Koryö," *Revue de Corée* 101 (1997): pp. 230-260.

<sup>29</sup> Pak Hansöl, "Koryö T'aejo segye-üi ch'ago-e kwanhaeyö: Tang Sukchongsör-ül chungshim-üro" ..

<sup>30</sup> Pak Hansöl has argued that the concept associated with *sönggöl* or holy bones also occurs among Mongolian tribes and can therefore not be solely identified with Shilla. He interprets it as a reference to Koguryö. Though Pak is right in asserting the existence of a similar tradition among Mongol peoples, I find it too far-fetched to conclude that the Holybone General in the *P'yöngnyön Tongnok* is a representation of this tradition, rather than the obvious Shilla tradition much closer at home. The presence of a similar Mongol tradition would rather suggest that Shilla's bone rank system was related to the Mongol system; for Koguryö there are no other indications that such a system was ever practiced, while for Shilla there is in this regard a wealth of evidence. Even if Pak is right and the Holybone General does represent a distinct Koguryö tradition, it is very doubtful if the consumers of the text would not have associated it more or less automatically with Shilla that after all ruled over the area for more than two centuries. Kungye's efforts at procuring bona fide Shilla ancestry for himself underlines the potential for legitimization that Shilla had in its former Koguryö territories.

mind, however, it is not difficult to establish what this narrative is primarily about. The first prophecy of the narrative (by geomancer *kamgan* 監干 P'arwön 八元) clearly establishes the purpose of the text:

If you will move the commandery seat south of the mountains and plant pine trees on it so that its rock formations are not exposed, the resulting auspices will be such that he who brings the Three Han together under his rule will come forth from here.<sup>31</sup>

The *telos* of history as told in the text and the historical destiny of the Wang lineage is not the resurrection of either Koguryō or Shilla, nor of the creation of a new country; it is the unification of the Three Han. Tosōn's more detailed prophecy confirms the words of this predecessor:

A reverently offered scripture. Bowing a hundred times, I present this scripture to His Excellency the Lord Taewōn, The Ruler Who Will Unify the Three Han.<sup>32</sup>

It is not the idea of succession to Koguryō or to Shilla that consistently defines both the occurrences and the characters. The idea of unifying the Three Han is present from the beginning until the end. Chakche Kōn not only expressed this wish when the Dragon King asked him what he wanted most earnestly, he is even defined by it, for he grows up with “the desire of unifying the Three Han.”<sup>33</sup> His son Yong Kōn 龍建 is also characterized by this “resolve to bring the Three Han under his control.”<sup>34</sup> The dream of Ije Kōn's 伊帝建 younger brother that prefigured the rise of the Wang lineage to peninsular rulership was about the “inundation of the mountains and rivers of the Three Han”.<sup>35</sup>

The dynastic narrative of origin of Koryō is an expression of the underlying principle of the dynasty, which was the unification of the Three Han. Despite many readings to the contrary, the associations with Koguryō and Shilla found in it, are not of primary importance; these only add to the strength of the claim of the Wang lineage to rule the Three Han, to which both Shilla and Koguryō belong. Seen from this perspective, the contradictions in this narrative are not as great as is often believed and both elements of Koguryō successionism and of Shilla successionism can be taken at face value. They are not opposed to each other in the context of the very clearly expressed purpose of the Koryō dynastic narrative of descent, the unification of the Three Han.

An analogous form of seeming contradiction in this regard is the way Koryō represented itself abroad. The emphasis on Koguryō in foreign policy is usually taken as an indication of Koguryō-successionism, but there are instances known of Shilla expansionism to the north.<sup>36</sup> , and, to be sure, the famous speech of Sō Hūi 徐熙 to Liao general Xiao Hengde

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<sup>31</sup> *KS segye*: 2a. Translation is from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 267.

<sup>32</sup> *KS segye*: 8a. Translation is from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 272.

<sup>33</sup> *KS segye*: 7a.

<sup>34</sup> *KS segye*: 7a. Translation is from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 271.

<sup>35</sup> *KS segye*: 2a.

<sup>36</sup> The eighth century in particular saw many Shillan attempts at both consolidation and expansion at the northern

蕭恒德, seems to underwrite this interpretation unqualifiedly.<sup>37</sup>

Xunning said to Hŭi, “Your country rose in Shilla territory. Koguryŏ territory is in our possession. But you have encroached on it. Your country is connected to us by land, and yet you cross the sea to serve China. Because of this, our great country came to attack you. If you relinquish your land to us and establish a tributary relationship, everything will be alright.”

Hŭi replied, “That is not so. Our country is in fact former Koguryŏ, and that is why it is named Koryŏ and has a capital at P’yŏngyang. If you want to discuss territorial boundaries, the Eastern Capital of your country is within our borders. How can you call our move an encroachment? Moreover, the land on both sides of the Yalu River is also within our borders, but the Jŭrchens have now stolen it. Being obstinate and crafty, they shift and deceive, and they have obstructed the roads, making them more difficult to travel than the sea. That we cannot have a tributary relationship is because of the Jurchen. If you tell us to drive out the Jurchen, recover our former territory, construct fortresses, and open the roads, then how could we dare not to have relations? If you take my words to your emperor, how could he not accept them out of sympathy?”<sup>38</sup>

There is some doubt pertaining to this event ever taking place except in the imagination of Koryŏ.<sup>39</sup> It is indeed not likely that the encounter between the Koryŏ general and the Liao general unfolded exactly as has been recorded in Sŏ Hŭi’s biography. What can be established, is that firstly, the rhetoric used was thought to be effective. The claims and counterclaims in the dialogue between the two generals were made with reference to a shared historical framework. Secondly, it is highly unlikely that it was just a border dispute that had gotten out of hand. There was a long history of border disputes between Koryŏ and the Liao.<sup>40</sup> It is much more plausible that Koryŏ’s continued and barely veiled diplomatic contacts with the Song – “crossing the sea to serve China” – triggered the large-scale Liao reaction.<sup>41</sup> Seen from this perspective, Sŏ Hŭi’s verbal victory is easier to comprehend. It was not so much the return of disputed territory to Koryŏ, but rather the discontinuation of Koryŏ-Song diplomatic relations that was at stake here. The ease with which the Liao proceeded to violate their promises confirms this.<sup>42</sup> Instead of reading the Sŏ Hŭi incident as the representative example of Koryŏ expansionism, we should perhaps understand it in the context of the rhetoric used.

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borders in order to check the threat from the Malgal peoples and from Parhae. See Cho I’ok 200. During the reign of Sŏndŏk (r. 780-785) several serious expeditions were launched to claim former Koguryŏ territory at Shilla’s northern borders in the P’ae River region. See SGSG 9: 113.

<sup>37</sup> This general appears in Koryŏ sources under his style Xunning 遜寧. His proper name was Xiao Hengde 蕭恒德.

<sup>38</sup> KS 94: 4b-5a. I borrow the translation from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 300. For the sake of consistency, I have changed the transliteration of the Chinese names to pinyin.

<sup>39</sup> See the article by Michael Rogers; Rogers, “The Chinese world order in its transmural extension: The case of Chin and Koryŏ,” *Korean Studies Forum* 4 (1978): pp. 1-22. The fact that no traces are recorded of this encounter in Liao sources is – understandably – troublesome to Rogers and he concluded that this encounter never took place. I think that goes too far, because the elements of the story can be verified, but it is probably safe to assume that things did not go quite as smoothly as they were recorded in the *Koryŏsa*.

<sup>40</sup> See chapter nine.

<sup>41</sup> An Pyŏnggu 안병우, “Koryŏ-wa Song-ŭi sangho inshik-kwa kyosŏp: 11segi huban-12segi chŏnban 고려와 송의 상호 인식과 교섭: 11세기 후반-12세기 전반,” *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnshil* 43 (2002): pp. 78-110.

<sup>42</sup> See chapter nine.

Interestingly, Sō Hūi did not refute the Liao general's assertion that Koryō is successor to Shilla and the Liao to Koguryō, but merely asserted that Koryō was also successor to Koguryō. But such rhetoric was bound to strike a note with a general of the still expanding and conquering Liao dynasty. The contents of the rhetoric used and the purpose its use should realize are different. And in this sense, it is doubtful whether Sō Hūi would have used the same rhetoric towards a Song general. After all, the Liao-Koryō border was an area of dispute, whereas the Song and Koryō did not share borders. Another reason why the rhetoric of Sō Hūi should not be taken to express a desire to recover the Koguryō territories is the fact that despite Koryō's fierce opposition every time the Liao tried to establish fortifications and bridges along the Amnok river in what was considered to be Koryō territory, Koryō never tried to expand its own territory at the cost of the Liao. In this, Koryō's attitude was directly informed by security concerns, and not by expansionist ambitions. When the protests against Liao incursion were at their peak during Munjong's reign, the country enjoyed an unprecedented stability and was not engaged in expansionist policies. The fierce protests in the preceding and succeeding reigns of Chōngjong and Sōnjong are similar; incursions on Koryō territory were not tolerated, but Koryō did not invade Liao territory.<sup>43</sup> These protests were accompanied by the realization that although the east of the Amnok river was undoubtedly Koryō territory, the land west of it was not. Both Sukchong and Yejong thus complied with Liao or Jin requests not to station garrisons at the Amnok at places that would threaten to make incursions on Liao or Jin territory.<sup>44</sup>

The rhetorical identification with Koguryō in Koryō's diplomatic contacts was continued. The writings, for instance, of Pak Illyang 朴寅良 (?-1096), a distinguished scholar-official during Munjong's reign, illustrate this attitude clearly. In a request to the Liao emperor to abolish the outposts established on Koryō territory, Pak argues that it is Koryō's duty to its own "outer satellite states" (*oebōn* 外藩), namely the Jurchen, since they recognize the suzerainty of the Koryō court.<sup>45</sup> Besides, Xiao Hengde and Sō Hūi had reached an agreement that should be honoured; Pak does not explicitly mention the contents of the dialogue between these two, but taken together with his reference to Koryō's overlordship of the Jurchen, it is clear what he means. A request resting on similar arguments is Pak's request to restore Koryō's old borders, on the basis of Puyō's old borders.<sup>46</sup> Within the boundaries of tributary etiquette, Pak simultaneously recognizes the superiority of the Liao emperor and claims an inherently independent status for Koryō by emphasising Koryō's rights to its own vassals, to territorial integrity and to Koryō's succession of Puyō (which was commonly identified with Koguryō in Chinese histories).

While Koguryō identification continued mainly in diplomatic contacts, it was replaced by identification with Shilla in a domestic context. Domestic identification with Shilla is evident in Pak Illyang's eulogy for Munjong 文宗. In it, he praises the many virtues of the deceased monarch, most notably the civilizing influence he exerted on barbarians and his

<sup>43</sup> *KS* 6: 16b; *KS* 10:8b; *KS* 10: 15a.

<sup>44</sup> *KS* 11: 30a-b; *KS* 13: 19b-20b.

<sup>45</sup> *TMS* 48: 2a-3b, *Ip Yo kōlp'a kakchang* 入遼乞罷榷場狀; *KS* 95: 18a.

<sup>46</sup> *TMS* 39: 5a-6b, *Sang Taeyo hwangje koju p'yo* 上大遼皇帝告奏表..



attentiveness towards the court of the Son of Heaven that was exemplary and without fail. His reputation was brilliant, culture under his reign blossomed to such an extent that Koryŏ was called “Little China” (*So-Junghwa* 小中華)<sup>47</sup>, rivalling China in accomplishments.<sup>48</sup> Pak further traces Koryŏ’s ancestry to Pak Hyökkose 朴赫居世 (Shilla’s founding father, whom he conveniently left out when he tried to convince the Liao to restore the ancient borders) and Chumong, and he calls T’aejo a divine recipient of the mandate of Heaven. In this eulogy, the notion of dual succession to Koguryŏ and Shilla is confirmed. Koryŏ descends both from Pak Hyökkose and from Chumong. Perhaps even, the descent is triple, since Chumong was also considered to be the founding ancestor of Paekche.<sup>49</sup> Another instance of domestic identification with Shilla can be found in III7 during Yejong’s reign; in a memorial congratulating the ruler with the preservation of Ŭiju in Koryŏ territory, it is assured that Koryŏ succeeded Shilla, which had territory that included the Amnok region.<sup>50</sup> Whether dual or triple, Koryŏ’s descent was, as we have seen, not easily reduced to one predeceasing state. Pak Illyang’s statements tie in with the idea that Koryŏ was foremost the embodiment of the Samhan, and only as such the state that had been chartered by Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla.

Yet another point that reinforces this interpretation is the manner in which Koryŏ literati and statesmen made use of the historical legacies at their disposal. Above, we already noticed the bifurcation between outward identification with Koguryŏ and inward identification with Shilla. Another differentiation is noticeable in the way Shilla and Koguryŏ were referred to. Literary works like the *P’abanjip* or the *Pobanjip* never refer to Koguryŏ or Paekche, but only to Shilla.<sup>51</sup> If allusions are made to other figures than Koryŏ literati or Chinese poets, literates, rulers or historical figures, they are invariably of Shilla stock. This might very well be because already during Koryŏ, no writings of Paekche and Koguryŏ literati of the stature of Shillan Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn were extant. On the other hand, the close ties between T’aejo and literati of Shilla ancestry such as Ch’oe Sŭngno 崔承老 presumably had a hand in shaping the notion of a Shilla literary heritage.<sup>52</sup> Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn himself was honoured as one of the major scholarly figures of the Koryŏ; his tablet was enshrined in the shrine for Confucius and he repeatedly received posthumous titles.<sup>53</sup> Another Shilla scholar, Sŏl Ch’ong, also received the honour of being enshrined in Confucius’ shrine and of posthumously receiving titles.<sup>54</sup> This institutional way of honouring Shilla literati was complemented by the way Koryŏ

<sup>47</sup> Pak’s biography in the *Koryŏsa* mentions that Song officials were so impressed with his writings and those of his fellow envoy Kim Kŭn 金覲, that they collected and published these in a book called *Collection of writings from little China* 小中華集. The epigraph for Pak Kyŏngsan 朴景山, one of Pak Illyang’s sons, mentions the same fact together with the comment that some of Pak Illyang’s writings had been included in Song anthologies. See *KS* 95: 18a; *KMC* 164: 28-29.

<sup>48</sup> *TMS* 28: 5a-6b.

<sup>49</sup> No Myŏnggho, “Paekche-ŭi Tongmyŏng shinhwa-wa Tongmyŏngmyo”.

<sup>50</sup> *KS* 14: 21a-b.

<sup>51</sup> See for instance *PHJ* 1: 2-3; *PHJ* 2: 30-31; *PHJ* 2: 31-32; *PHJ* 3: 34-35; *POHJ* 1:77.

<sup>52</sup> For Ch’oe Sŭngno, see Yi Kibaek 李基白 (ed.), *Ch’oe Sŭngno sangsŏmun yŏn’gu* 崔承老上書文研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1982).

<sup>53</sup> It was enshrined in 1020; see *KS* 4: 34a. Almost a century later, it was again enshrined; see *KS* 62: 42b.

<sup>54</sup> *KS* 4: 37b.

literati made literary allusions to Shilla.<sup>55</sup>

Koguryŏ, on the other hand, figures in a decidedly different context. Its legacy made itself mainly felt in a historico-religious manner. That is, Koguryŏ was remembered through the national sages it had produced – Tongmyŏng, Kija – and through P’yŏngyang, the Western Capital. As discussed above, Tongmyŏng and Kija worship was both important and widespread and the position of the Western Capital, though perhaps not as unique as is sometimes claimed, was of the utmost significance. P’yŏngyang was frequently visited by the Koryŏ rulers, as had been stipulated in the *Ten injunctions* ascribed to T’aejo.<sup>56</sup> When they did, they also visited King Tongmyŏng’s palace, Kuje-gung 九梯宮 (Nine-Step Ladder Palace). The scanty records from the early Koryŏ do not allow us to find any visits before the end of the eleventh century, but it has been recorded that Sŏnjong visited in 1087, Sukchong in 1102, Yejong in 1109 and 1116, Injong in 1127 and 1132 and Ŭijong in 1169.<sup>57</sup> The Yŏngmyŏng-sa temple 永明寺 had been built on the terrains of the original Kuje-gung palace and the fact that it had functioned as the temporary burial place of T’aejo and that it was still used to perform rites in honour of greatly enhanced its prestige.<sup>58</sup>

During the middle Koryŏ, a differentiation took place with regard to the roles of the historical legacies of Koguryŏ and Shilla. Shilla was firmly associated with Koryŏ’s administrative and literary traditions and the old Shilla territory formed the backbone of Koryŏ’s territory. Shilla was firmly entrenched in the historical imagination as Koryŏ’s charter state with regard to administration, literary culture and territory. Koguryŏ, on the other hand, was associated with its sages and their worship and played an important role in the legitimation of the royal family. Although this differentiation persisted throughout the dynasty, it was by no means absolute. The Koryŏ royal family also traced its ancestry back to Shilla’s royal Kim lineage.<sup>59</sup> The boundaries between the different notions of succession were fluid, in other words, and this makes absolute identification of Shilla and Koguryŏ successionism an exercise in futility. What has been shown is that Koryŏ freely used the possibilities it had with clear reference to its contemporary context. When identification with Shilla was opportune, Shilla was referred to and when identification with Koguryŏ was obvious, Koguryŏ was

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<sup>55</sup> Cho Tongil 趙東一, *Han’guk munhak t’ongsa* 韓國文學通史, volume two (Seoul: Chishik sanŏpsa 智識産業社, 1992, second edition), pp. 38-55.

<sup>56</sup> See chapter thirteen for a discussion of the injunctions.

<sup>57</sup> See *KS* 10:13b; *KS* 11: 35b; *KS* 14: 11a; *KS* 15: 22a; *KS* 19:2b; *KS* 4: 9a; *KS* 4: 14a; *KS* 7: 7b; *KS* 9: 1a; *KS* 9: 16b; *KS* 9: 35a; *KS* 10:13b; *KS* 11: 28b; *KS* 11: 35b; *KS* 13: 3b; *KS* 14: 11a; *KS* 14: 12b-13a; *KS* 15: 22a; *KS* 28: 44a; *KS* 30: 39b; *KSC* 3: 55a; *KSC* 5: 40b; *KSC* 5: 41a-b; *KSC* 7:16a-b; *KSC* 7: 21a; *KSC* 8:30a; *KSC* 10: 14b-15a; *KSC* 11: 20a; *KSC* 11:46a-b; *TMS* 43: 10b-12b; *TMS* 104: 8b-10a. T’aejo had visited the Western Capital at least ten times: in 921 (*KS* 1: 16a), 922 (*KS* 1: 16b; *KSC* 1: 18b), 925 (*KS* 1: 17b; *KSC* 1:19b), 926 (*KS* 1: 19b; *KSC* 1: 21a), 929 (*KS* 1: 26a; *KSC* 1: 27b), twice in 930 (*KS* 1: 27a; *KSC* 1: 29b; *KSC* 1: 30a), 931 (*KSC* 1: 30b), 932 (*KS* 2: 2a), 934 (*KS* 2: 6a; *KSC* 1: 34a) and 935 (*KS* 2: 8b; *KSC* 1: 37a).

<sup>58</sup> There is very little information to be found in the sources, but it seems that the Kuje-gung palace was rebuilt or at least extensively renovated during the reign of Yejong, because in the same month Yejong visited Kuje-gung palace, he ordered an investigation of the Building Supervisory Committee that had been involved in the building of “new palaces”, among which Kuje-gung. See *KS* 19: 2b. Also see Yi Tohak, “P’yŏngyang Kuje-gung-ŭi Sŏngkyŏk-kwa kŭ inshik,” pp. 229-234.

<sup>59</sup> T’aejo had formally succeeded to the last of the Shilla rulers, King Kyŏngsun, which made his successors the legitimate heirs to the heritage of the Shilla throne.

referred to. Koryŏ's notion of descent was plural in the sense that Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla could furnish precedents; it was singular in the sense that the Samhan – which, paradoxically, were plural – was the entity that Koryŏ ultimately had succeeded to. The preservation of its plural yet singular history is also shown by the decrees of Koryŏ rulers to protect the tombs of the kings of Shilla, Paekche and Koguryŏ:

In this month [Hyŏnjong] decreed: “The tombs of the kings of Koguryŏ, Paekche and Shilla shall be repaired by the concerned prefectures or counties. We forbid dry grass [for fuel] to be gathered [around the tombs]. Passers-by shall dismount from their horses when they pass a tomb.”<sup>60</sup>

In the eleventh year, [Munjong] decreed the following: “[...] We forbid the ploughing of fields in the neighbourhood of the tombs of the kings of Shilla, Koguryŏ and Paekche and of the ancestral shrines of the sages of old, as well as their invasion or destruction.”<sup>61</sup>

The royal tombs of all three predeceasing states needed to be protected against neglect, disrespect and grave robbery, because their owners had all been predecessors of the Koryŏ rulers. As such, they possessed the qualities to be revered and maintained as a part of the ritual landscape of Koryŏ. No tomb is singled out for special treatment, with the exception of the tomb of Tongmyŏng, who after all was the only one among the kings of the Three Kingdoms to attain a special status as founding ancestor.

Koryŏ succeeded to the Three Kingdoms in a physical, territorial manner that was elevated or abstracted by attaching religious significance to it. A prime example of this is the way Koryŏ incorporated the sacred sites of its predecessors, the so-called ‘famous places’ (*myŏngso* 名所), consisting of the sacred famous mountains and great streams (*myŏngsan taech'ŏn* 名山大川) mentioned in the *Ten injunctions*. These places have been included in the *Koryŏsa* in a much abridged way, often obscuring the relationships between these places and the ritual shrines attached to it, which were not mentioned at all. Cross-comparison with similar but more detailed lists in the *Samguk sagi* and the Geography Section of the *Veritable records of Sejong* [*Sejong shillok* 世宗實錄] however has recently shed light on the importance and high grade of spread of shrines devoted to local deities of all sorts in Koryŏ.<sup>62</sup> Many of the shrines recorded in the *Samguk sagi* can still be found in the *Koryŏsa* or in the list of local shrines recorded in the *Veritable records of Sejong*, suggesting that the local shrines of Shilla were for a significant part maintained throughout the Koryŏ period.<sup>63</sup> Not only shrines of Shilla, but also shrines of Paekche and Koguryŏ that had been absorbed into the religious landscape of unified Shilla

<sup>60</sup> *KS* 4: 24b.

<sup>61</sup> *KS* 84: 19a-b.

<sup>62</sup> Hŏ Hŏngshik 許興植, “‘Koryŏsa’ chiriji-e shillin myŏngso-wa sanch'ŏn tanmyo-wa-ŭi kwan'gye ‘高麗史’ 志理志에 실린 名所와 山川壇廟와의 關係,” *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 117 (2002): pp. 63-90. Interestingly, among the enshrined local deities there were relatively few mountain gods and many island gods, as well as such unexpected figures as the Tang general Xue Rengui 薛仁貴 who destroyed Paekche and fought Shilla. Hŏ Hŏngshik, “Koryŏsa” chiriji-e shillin myŏngso-wa sanch'ŏn tanmyo-wa-ŭi kwan'gye”, p. 73.

<sup>63</sup> Hŏ Hŏngshik, “Koryŏsa” chiriji-e shillin myŏngso-wa sanch'ŏn tanmyo-wa-ŭi kwan'gye”, p. 74.

survived into Koryŏ and even Chosŏn. These shrines were local, maintained by local authorities and visited by local people.<sup>64</sup> At the same time, the state took an active interest in them by rewarding those sacred places that were located in prefectures or counties with merit – such as the oppression of a rebellion or the repulsion of hostile armies – and demoting those in those prefectures and counties that had failed their duty to the state.<sup>65</sup> These shrines may well have been more important on a local level than Buddhist temples, mainly because they were widespread and had deep historical roots.<sup>66</sup> These roots were mixed and not unequivocally from either Shilla, Koguryŏ or Paekche. The following excerpt from the Geography Section of the *Koryŏsa* shows how diverse Koryŏ descent was. It is by no means an exception, but rather a typical instance:

Ubong-gun 牛峰郡 was originally Koguryŏ's Ujam-gun 牛岑郡 (some also say Uryŏng 牛嶺, others say Sujiŭi 首知衣). Shilla King Kyŏngdŏk 景德王 renamed it [Ubong-gun]. In the ninth year of Hyŏnjong [1018] it became a subsidiary county of P'yŏngju 平州 and in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Munjong [1062] it was appended to the Kaesŏng-bu 開城府. In the first year of Yejong [1106] a lesser county magistrate was stationed here. It has Nine Dragon Mountain 九龍山 [where the shrine for national ancestor Holybone General is; because of this it is alternatively called Holy Dwelling Mountain 聖居山] and the Pak Yŏn falls 朴淵 [the falls have two ponds, one above and one below, the depths of which are immeasurable. If a rain-praying ceremony is held here during a drought, rain will fall. In the middle of the pond above there is a rock that can be climbed and that offers a grand view. Once when Munjong climbed this rock suddenly the wind started to blow, rain poured down and the rock shook. Munjong was startled and afraid. At that moment, Yi Yŏnggan 李靈幹 who was attending to the king, wrote down the transgression of the dragon on a piece of paper that he threw into the pond. The dragon immediately showed his back above the water and [Yi Yŏnggan] directly started to pummel it with a stick. The water turned completely red].<sup>67</sup>

In this representative description of the history of a prefecture, both traces of Shilla and Koguryŏ-successionism can be discovered. The prefecture used to be Koguryŏ territory, but then became part of Shilla. Holybone General's title may refer to Shilla, he himself came from Koguryŏ. The dragon motive, finally, is a well-known Shilla motive.<sup>68</sup> If anything, this descriptive history of Ubong-gun that mixes institutional fact with well-known legend, shows how impossible it was for Koryŏ to embrace a singular, clearly definable identity. Koryŏ was founded on the territories of Paekche, Shilla and Koguryŏ, three kingdoms that were widely considered to belong together, but that, despite their points of correspondence, had divergent

<sup>64</sup> Hŏ Hŭngshik, "Koryŏsa' chiriji-e shillin myŏngso", pp. 63-90.

<sup>65</sup> Promotion or demotion of a prefecture or county was one of the effective ways of keeping the provinces under control during the Koryŏ dynasty. For a detailed analysis of the practical implementation of this system, see Yun Kyŏngjin 尹京鎭, "Koryŏ-shidae kunhyŏnje-ŭi unyŏng wŏlli-wa chuhyŏn-sokhyŏn yŏngsok kwan'gye-ŭi sŏngkyŏk 高麗 郡縣制의 운영원리와 州縣-屬縣 領屬關係의 성격," *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 한국중세사연구 10 (2001): pp. 77-114.

<sup>66</sup> Hŏ Hŭngshik, "Koryŏsa' chiriji-e shillin myŏngso-wa sanch'ŏn tanmyo-wa-ŭi kwan'gye", p. 80.

<sup>67</sup> *KS* 56: 5a-b.

<sup>68</sup> Even before the introduction of Buddhism, in which the dragon is an important symbol, in Shilla, the dragon was a well-known motive. See Robert E. Buswell, *The formation of Ch'an ideology in China and Korea: The Vajrasamadhi-Sutra, a Buddhist apocryphon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

cultures, traditions, histories and languages.

The tracing of legitimation in Koryŏ ultimately led to the Three Han. At times, there certainly existed an ambition to reconquer Koguryŏ lands, but this was not as fundamental to Koryŏ identity as has often been claimed. On the other hand, a Shilla-derived identity also existed at the same time and even expressed by the same persons. The contradiction involved is only apparent. From the perspective of either Koguryŏ - or Shilla-successionism, an insurmountable contradiction would be involved, but from the perspective of Samhan-successionism, the contradiction loses its fundamental quality. It is still a contradiction on the surface – the level at which the notions of successionism are propagated by individuals and groups. On a deeper level, however, or in other words, against its historical background over a long period, the contradiction ceases to exist and gives way to what was the fundamental element of Koryŏ identity: succession to and embodiment of the Samhan. The Samhan needed to be protected, whether by invoking Shilla or Koguryŏ. The Three Han were established as Koryŏ's charter polity, while Shilla and Koguryŏ – and to a lesser extent Paekche – functioned as its charter states.<sup>69</sup> The notion of Samhan-successionism is also supported by the ubiquitous use of the geonym 'Samhan' and the existence of the notion that the land of the Samhan should be inhabited by the people of the Samhan. The identification of the Three Kingdoms with the Three Han was complete during the Koryŏ, for as "Shilla's Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn said, Mahan became Ko[gu]ryŏ, Pyŏnhan became Paekche, Chinhan became Shilla and all other hypotheses are indeed derived from this one."<sup>70</sup> The *Samguk yusa* echoes this in the story of Shillan monk Wŏn'gwang's journey to China by ascertaining that "Wŏn'gwang [...] originally lived in the Three Han, Pyŏnhan, Chinhan and Mahan. [Wŏn]gwang was from Chinhan."<sup>71</sup> In the words of Kwak Tongsun (fl. early twelfth century), "our T'aejo [...] unified Chin[han], Pyŏn[han] and Ma[han] in one state."<sup>72</sup> The heart of Koryŏ's identity was located in the sense that historically it had succeeded the Three Han and that "Koryŏ was founded on the territory of the Three Han."<sup>73</sup> Koryŏ at times presented an idealised picture of itself, both to the outside and to the inside that reduced the incompatible elements inherent in its history, society, culture and mythology to an readily understood and relatively easily manageable image. Underneath this image, that was changeable and flexible, Koryŏ identity was more ambiguous, plural, fragmented and multi-faceted than the image it presented suggested.

## INSTANCES OF IMPERIAL APPROPRIATION

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<sup>69</sup> In particular in early Koryŏ, Shilla functioned as an administrative model, while its literary culture was celebrated by Koryŏ literati as the culture of their ancestors. Koguryŏ culture was perceived as continuous in the fields of astronomical and astrological knowledge. I shall return to this theme in chapters seven and ten, but Koguryŏ also functioned as a model with regard to its defensive strength. The continued importance of Koguryŏ's old capital of P'yŏngyang as Koryŏ's Western Capital also suggests the importance of Koguryŏ as a charter state for Koryŏ.

<sup>70</sup> *SGSG* 34: 337.

<sup>71</sup> *SGYS* 4: 29-33.

<sup>72</sup> *TMS* 31: 21b-23a.

<sup>73</sup> *CKSR* 1: 497.

Thus, Koryŏ saw itself as the successor to and the embodiment of the Samhan. Heir to the legacies of Chosŏn, Kaya, Chinhan, Pyŏnhan, Mahan, the Three Kingdoms and the Later Three Kingdoms, it possessed a diverse past and present. One of the essential elements in Koryŏ's identity that has not been discussed yet, is its self-perception as a realm.<sup>74</sup> Descending from this long past, a sense that there was an entity between more or less fixed borders had come into being. In the context of East Asian interstate relations, it is important to find out how Koryŏ positioned itself in the international world. What status did it accord itself? How did its rulers look at themselves? In most of the sources pertaining to Koryŏ, but edited during the Chosŏn period, the rulers of Koryŏ appear as kings and Koryŏ appears as a kingdom. Concurrent with this, Koryŏ is usually placed inside the tributary system, where it participated in the international order with a noticeable preference for Han Chinese dynasties and a sense of realism with regard to the northern dynasties. Recent research has done much to qualify this picture, but the basic assumptions are still intact.<sup>75</sup> Koryŏ was a kingdom that, as a principle, acknowledged the ontological – if not always the actual – superiority of its suzerain Chinese dynasty.

Nonetheless, there are various indications that the ruling elite of Koryŏ considered Koryŏ as an independent realm and as such as a possible centre of the world. A strong ambiguity between an imperial and a royal system was prominently present during long periods. At times, Koryŏ presented itself as an realm (*ch'ŏnha* 天下), ruled by a Son of Heaven 天子. It goes without saying that Koryŏ's positioning as an empire was an important element in its identity, especially since in East Asia, dominant political philosophy in theory only recognized a realm ruled by a Son of Heaven to be a legitimate entity that need not refer to other entities to enjoy an absolute right to exist.<sup>76</sup> As such, determining whether Koryŏ made a claim to be an absolute entity in terms of existence goes to the heart of the question whether Koryŏ was a legitimate community.

In traditional East Asia, only the Son of Heaven was entitled to wear the imperial yellow. In this context it is surprising to find an entry in the *Koryŏsa* that mentions that imperial yellow was worn at the beginning of the dynasty. In the twelfth year of the reign of Munjong, the Ministry of Rites, responding to an inquiry by the monarch if it would be possible for him to wear other colours than yellow and red, compiled the relevant passages of Chinese works and reported its answer back to the monarch. The Ministry of Rites concluded that a monarch could not wear any colours except for the three official colours of yellow, dark red and deep red, because of their connectedness with the state rituals.<sup>77</sup> The contents of the ministry's

<sup>74</sup> I use the term 'realm' as the translation of 'ch'ŏnha' 天下. 'Ch'ŏnha' or 'realm' denotes an independent state, which is not reliant upon other higher powers, formally and ontologically. 'Realm' in this sense corresponds to medieval European kingdoms, which were independent entities (even if in practice this was not always the case), but also with states in North-East Asia which did not need to recognize other states as their suzerain. The Chinese and Manchurian empires are the best known examples of such states.

<sup>75</sup> See for instance Peter Yun, *Rethinking the tribute system: Korean states and Northeast Asian interstate relations, 600-1600* (PhD diss., UCLA, 1998). Yun argues – correctly in my view – that the international world order in East Asia had several centres during the Koryŏ, but his insistence that Koryŏ diplomacy was pure Realpolitik and the intimation that Koryŏ served the northern dynasties of the Liao and Jin with more reluctance than they had the Song, I cannot agree with.

<sup>76</sup> Julia Ching, *Mysticism and kingship in China: The heart of Chinese wisdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>77</sup> The colour deep red was for instance the colour of the robes the Son of Heaven wore when he performed the ritual of heaven-worship. See Remco E. Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm: The emperor's clothes?" *Korean Studies* 27 (2003): pp. 48-84.

answer directly equated the monarch (who is referred to as emperor – *hwangje* 皇帝 – in this passage) with the Son of Heaven, the officiant of all essential state ceremonies. Note that this directive comes from the Ministry of Rites, an assembly of pre-eminent Confucian experts, hardly a favourite gathering place for confirmed nativists.<sup>78</sup>

According to the principal source on Koryŏ, the *Koryŏsa*, Koryŏ rulers were kings. Nevertheless, Koryŏ rulers from T'aejo to Wŏnjong have the suffix *chong* 宗 or *cho* 祖 attached to their posthumous name, which is an imperial usage.<sup>79</sup> Koryŏ's heirs apparent bore the imperial title of *t'aeja* 太子 or even *hwangt'aeja* 皇太子 (also common was the hybrid title of *wangt'aeja* 王太子).<sup>80</sup> As if to underscore the imperial titles he received, the Koryŏ heir apparent resided in the Eastern Palace (*Tonggung* 東宮), a place normally reserved for the imperial heir apparent.<sup>81</sup> The Koryŏ ruler enacted not just laws, but also promulgated imperial edicts, such as *cho* 詔 and *che* 制.<sup>82</sup> He was addressed with the imperial *p'yeba* 陛下.<sup>83</sup> The capital was at times referred to as the Imperial Capital (Hwangsŏng 皇城 or Hwanggyŏng 皇京).<sup>84</sup> The structural duality of a royal and an imperial system caused heated debates among the compilers of the *Koryŏsa*, but in the end the party that wanted to adhere to the classic Confucian adagio that advocated “recording [the facts] and not fabricating [them]” 不作而述 won the day.<sup>85</sup> As a result, some instances referring to Koryŏ as a realm (*ch'ŏnba*) can still be

<sup>78</sup> *KS* 72: 4a-5b.

<sup>79</sup> It is no coincidence that this practice came to an end with Wŏnjong 元宗. The Mongols ended this practice. From Wŏnjong's son Ch'ungnyŏl on, not only did the Koryŏ rulers lose their imperial suffix, but they also had to accept the character for loyalty, *ch'ung*, as the first character of their posthumous name. In 1275 King Ch'ungnyŏl received an edict from the Yuan imperial court that stated in no uncertain terms that the rulers of Koryŏ were kings and that the names of their edicts, the titles of their heirs apparent and so forth must be forthwith adapted to reflect this. *KS* 28: 10b-11b

<sup>80</sup> The *Koryŏsa* offers hundreds of instances of the use of *t'aeja*, *hwangt'aeja* and *wangt'aeja*.

<sup>81</sup> The Eastern Palace has also been the official residence of the empress during the Chinese Han dynasty, but has predominantly been associated with the imperial heir apparent. The Eastern Palace as the heir apparent's residence on the Korean peninsula is known as early as Unified Shilla (*Samguk Sagi* 39: *chikkwanji* 17). The Eastern Palace derived its name from the association of the east with spring, and spring with life and vigour, in other words the emperor-to-be. An alternative theory supposes the east to correspond to the association of the east with *zhen* according to the *Diagrams* of the *Book of Changes* and to the subsequent correspondence of *zhen* with the eldest son.

<sup>82</sup> The *Koryŏsa* records literally hundreds of instances of the use of *cho(sŏ)* and *che(sŏ)*. Other sources also contain similar examples of imperial edicts promulgated by the Koryŏ ruler. See for example *P'abanjip* 1: 5 for an example of *cheryun* 帝綸 (imperial decree). Also see the epitaph for Yun Ŏni; see *Yun Ŏni Myojimyŏng* in *Koryŏ myojimyŏng chipsŏng* (hereafter *KMC*) 110: 3. At times, the use of the imperial style could have repercussions, such as when in 1079 an angry Japanese court denied Munjong's request for medicine because he had used the imperial *sŏngji* 聖旨 instead of the royal *ch'ŏbun* 處分 to express his wishes towards the Japanese ruler. See the extant diplomatic document in *HKCKY* 445-447.

<sup>83</sup> Again, the *Koryŏsa* contains over a hundred instances of *p'yeba*; epitaphs are another source. See for example *Ch'oe Sajŏn myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 70: 13.

<sup>84</sup> See for example *KS* 5:31a; *KS* 7:21b; also see *P'abanjip* 1: 4. Hŏgyŏng 鎬京, another imperial designation for the capital, was only used for the Western Capital Sŏgyŏng, when its name was officially changed into Hŏgyŏng during the reign of Mokchong 穆宗 in 1008. It was renamed Sŏgyŏng in 1062, although after this time it was from time to time referred to as Hŏgyŏng, especially in poetry. See *KS* 3:36b; *KS* 11: 36a. Sŏgyŏng was sometimes also referred to as Hwangsŏng; see *KS* 4: 10b. Other imperial designations for the capital include *Kyŏnghwa* 京華 (Capital Brilliance), *Chebyang* 帝鄉 (Imperial Home) and *Ch'ŏn'gu* 天衢 (Heavenly Streets). See *Mun'gyŏng Pongamsa Chŏngjin taesa wŏnot'ap pimun* 聞慶鳳巖寺靜眞大師圓悟塔碑文 in *YKP* 1: 440-61; *Koksŏng Taeansa Kwangja taesa pimun* 谷城大安寺廣慈大師碑文 in *YKP* 1: 336-42.

<sup>85</sup> *KS pŏmnye*: 1a-b. For a detailed discussion of this debate, see Pyŏn T'aesŏp, *Koryŏsa-ŭi yŏn'gu* pp. 146-149.

found in the *Koryōsa*,<sup>86</sup> but it can be surmised that many original references to Koryō's ambiguous system have been erased. Crosschecking of the extant sources confirms this.<sup>87</sup> Some of the epithets and structure mentioned above were also present during the Chosŏn dynasty. Most notable among these were the use of the suffices *chong* and *cho* in the posthumous names of rulers, the continued performance of the *wŏn'gu* 圓邱 ritual<sup>88</sup> and imperial Daoist rituals well into the first half of the dynasty and the use of the Eastern Palace for the heir apparent. To anticipate the obvious refutation that the evidential value of these examples suffers on account of their continued use in the royal Chosŏn dynasty, let me make two assertions. Firstly, the very fact that these 'traditions' survived into the Chosŏn dynasty – and some until the end of Chosŏn – can just as easily be attributed to the total weight of the cultural and historical power accumulated during centuries of use. The enduring presence of the marital ritual which requires the bridegroom to go the bride's house is a case in point: it was contrary to neo-Confucian orthodoxy, but survived until this day on the strength of its tradition.<sup>89</sup> Secondly, the fact that these intrinsically contradictory elements survived into the Chosŏn dynasty should give cause to reconsider the precise nature of Chosŏn identity in relation to the issues mentioned above, instead of leading to a rejection of alternative interpretations of the circumstances during the Koryō period.

Even more diverse and colourful instances of imperial appropriations can be found on steles bearing epitaphs and eulogies. The imperial designations for edict, heir apparent, palace et cetera can all be found without difficulty. And so can a number of dragon-related epithets for the emperor.<sup>90</sup> Some steles explicitly mention the realm Koryō, the imperial touring of the

<sup>86</sup> See the *Koryōsa* for the following instances during the reign of Sŏngjong: *KS* 3: 25a (992); *KS* 3: 28a (995).

<sup>87</sup> As in the case of the letter King Kyōngsun 敬順王 sent to Wang Kŏn when he surrendered Shilla to him. The *Koryōsa* and the *Pobanjip* contain different versions of the same letter. The one included in the *Koryōsa* omits the imperial terms of address that the version in the *Pobanjip* has retained. See No Myōngho, "Koryō shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha'gwan-gwa haedong ch'ŏnja 高麗時代의 多元의 天下觀과 海東天子," *Han'guksa yŏngu* 105 (1999): pp. 3-40, esp. pp. 13-4. A similar occurrence can be inferred to have happened from the appearance of the term 'ch'ŏnjo' 天祚 in Buddhist steles for important monks and its omission or adaptation in the *Koryōsa*. 'Ch'ŏnjo' refers to a special ritual of ancestor worship that the Son of Heaven performs when he ascends the throne. In the early Koryō, the *ch'ŏnjo* ritual was mentioned in almost all epitaphs for National and Grand Preceptors. Although it is not exactly clear in what way, there seems to have been a connection with the presence of a high Buddhist priest. Later, during the middle Koryō, the original meaning of the word 'ch'ŏnjo' seems to have eroded; at this time it occurs as a synonym for 'chūgwi 卽位', ascendance to the throne. Its occurrence can be verified for the reigns of Hyejong 惠宗, Chŏngjong 定宗, Kyōngjong 景宗, Sŏnjong, Munjong, Sukchong, Injong, Myōngjong 明宗, Shinjong 神宗 and Kojŏng 高宗. From the reign of Injong on, 'ch'ŏnjo' seems to have lost its original meaning. See *Yōju Kodahwŏn Wŏnjong taesa baejint'ap pimun* 驪州高達院元宗大師惠眞塔碑文 (975); *Haemi Powŏnsa Pŏp'in kuksa postung'ap pimun* 海美善原寺法印國師寶乘塔碑文 (978); *Wŏnju Kodonsa Wŏn'gong kuksa sŏngmyot'ap pimun* 原州居頓寺圓空國師勝妙塔碑文 (1025); *Ch'uksan Ch'iljangsa Hyeso kuksat'ap pimun* 竹山七長寺惠昭國師塔碑文 (1068); *Sanch'ŏng Tansoksa Taegam kuksat'ap pimun* 山淸斷俗寺大鑑國師塔碑文 (1172); *Yŏngdong Nyŏngguksa Wŏn'gak kuksa pimun* 永同寧國寺圓覺國師碑文 (1180); *Yongin Sŏbongsa Hyŏno kuksa pimun* 龍仁瑞峯寺玄悟國師碑文 (1185); *Ch'ŏngha Po'gyŏng Wŏn'jin kuksa pimun* 淸河寶鏡寺圓眞國師碑文 (1224); *Sŏngju Pulsaesa Hyejin wŏno kuksa chŏngjot'ap pimun* 昇州佛臺寺惠眞圓悟國師靜照塔碑文 (1286); these epitaphs can be found in *Yŏktae kosŏng pimun*.

<sup>88</sup> Most kings of the Chosŏn desisted going in person due to the controversial nature of this ritual in a Korean context, but this reluctance in fact underlines my argument. See Son Pokee, *Social history of the early Chosŏn dynasty: The functional aspects of governmental structure (1392-1592)* (Seoul: Jisik-sanup Publications, 2000), pp. 10-12, 21.

<sup>89</sup> Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A study of society and ideology* (Harvard-Yenching Institute monograph series 36. Cambridge: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies.), pp. 82, 162.

<sup>90</sup> Such as *yongan* 龍顏 ("dragon-face"), *yongp'ae* 龍佩 ("dragon-banner") or *yongji* 龍埤 ("dragon-field"). See the steles of grand preceptors Taegyŏng (939), Yoo (937) and Chinch'ŏl (939): 砥平菩提寺大鏡大師玄機塔碑文 *Chip'yŏng Pojesa Taegyŏng taesa byŏngit'ap pimun* in *YKP* 1: 76-81; *Kaep'ung Sŏnsa Yoo hwasang chimwŏnt'ap pimun* 開豐瑞



country, the existence of three thousand vassal countries (an accepted substitution for the whole world) and T'aejo's receiving the mandate of Heaven.<sup>91</sup> Two aspects should be mentioned here. One is that a large number of these examples comes from the steles dedicated to distinguished monks or to temples. Despite the considerable political activities of monks and the important politico-economic role of large temples and monasteries, this would still suggest that the use of imperial nomenclature was not purely political, but a widespread phenomenon. This is also supported by its common use on steles for the wives of important bureaucrats, scholars and noblemen.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, these practices started before and continued through and after the reign of Kwangjong. Kwangjong instituted a full-blown imperial system, but this did not survive him.<sup>93</sup> The continuous use of imperial nomenclature on steles suggests that it should be viewed independently from Kwangjong's imperial movement.<sup>94</sup>

The traces that the aspirations to imperial stature have left hold valuable clues as to how Koryŏ rulers perceived themselves, not only in terms of nomenclature, but, more importantly, in terms of status, position, culture and ontology. Previous research has explored the duality of the Koryŏ system in some detail, but its conclusions have not left the confines of the idea of *naeje oewang*, emperor at home and king abroad.<sup>95</sup> Koryŏ's identity has, in other words, been analyzed through a predominantly political framework. The attention that the political dimensions have received has been at the expense of other, equally important, dimensions. Major inconsistencies in the Koryŏ administrative structure, in the use of titles and in its dominant systems of belief cannot be explained away by appealing to such an essentially opportunistic attitude. Even if supported by the maintenance of a separate tributary system<sup>96</sup>,

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雲寺了悟和尚眞原塔碑文 in YKP I: 54-58; *Haeju Kwangjosa Chinch'ol taesa powŏl sŏnggong pimun* 海州廣照寺眞撤大師寶月乘空碑文 in YKP I: 18-21. And for T'aejo's Mandate of Heaven see, for instance, grand preceptor Kwangja's stele (950): *Koksŏng T'aesasa Kwangja taesa pimun* in YKP I: 336-342. The description of the unification of the Three Han mentions the transition of the Mandate of Heaven from Shilla to Koryŏ. In a dialogue with Kwanghye recorded some lines down, Wang Kŏn tells him that he "received the help of Heaven" in unifying the country. This fits perfectly with the name of the reign period that Wang Kŏn chose, namely *ch'ŏnsu*, "Bestowed by Heaven".

<sup>91</sup> For Koryŏ as a realm and the imperial tours of the country (*sŏngban* 省方), see *Haeju Kwangjosa Chinch'ol taesa powŏl sŏnggong pimun* in YKP I: 18-21; *Kangnŏng Chijang sŏmwŏn Nangwŏn taesa ogakt'ap pimun* 江陵地藏禪院朗圓大師悟眞塔碑文 in YKP I: 130-5. For Koryŏ's three thousand vassals, see *Kaep'ung Sŏmsa Yŏo hwasang chinwŏnt'ap pimun* in YKP I: 54-8.

<sup>92</sup> See for example the epitaph for the wife of Ch'oe Nubaek 崔婁伯; *Ch'oe Nubaek ch'ŏ Yŏm Kyŏngae myojimyŏng* 崔婁伯妻廉瓊愛墓誌銘 in *KMC* 94: 22. Note incidentally that the habit of regarding the Koryŏ ruler as a king is so ingrained that even the distinguished translators of this epitaph rendered the "Son of Heaven" (*ch'ŏnja*) of the original text as "king" in English. See Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p.: 322.

<sup>93</sup> For a detailed discussion of Kwangjong's reign, see Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Koryŏ Kwangjong yŏn'gu* 高麗光宗研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1981), pp. 93-112; Hwang Sŏnyŏng 황선영, *Koryŏ chŏn'gi wanggwŏn yŏn'gu* 高麗前期王權研究 (Seoul: Tonga taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu 東亞大學敎出版部, 1988), pp. 188-205.

<sup>94</sup> Kwangjong's movement did not go unnoticed, of course. It is for instance mentioned in the stele for grand preceptor Chŏngjin: "[Kwangjong] achieved the supreme and realized the August Extreme [i.e. imperial stature]." See *Mun'gyŏng Pongamsa Chŏngjin taesa wŏnot'ap pimun* in YKP I: 440-61. Nonetheless, there seems to be little difference with earlier or later steles.

<sup>95</sup> Kim Kidŏk 金基德, "Koryŏ-ŭi chewangje-wa hwangjeguk ch'eje 고려표諸王制와皇帝國體制," *Kuksagwan nonch'ŏng* 78 (1997): pp. 159-172; No Myŏngho, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha' gwan-gwa haedong ch'ŏnja"; Shim Chaesŏk 沈載錫, *Koryŏ kug'wang ch'aekpong yŏn'gu* 高麗國王冊封研究 (Seoul: Hean 혜안, 2002). Kim and in particular No developed innovative theses about Koryŏ identity, but Shim, despite impressive detail, remains wedded to a one-dimensional view of Koryŏ in the context of the tributary system.

<sup>96</sup> Koryŏ had maintained its own tributary states from early on. These states (or tribes) were expected to pay tribute

this would only express limited imperial ambitions—limited to the peninsula and for domestic consumption only, that is. The concept of *naeje oewang* implies that despite the structural duality of the system, its respective expressions were to be kept strictly separated for the concept to retain its integrity. This was definitely not the case. In fact, public manifestations of the ambiguity of the Koryŏ system are still extant, such as for instance the inscription accompanying a sculpture of Bhaisajyaguru bodhisattva that utters a wish for the long life of the present Koryŏ emperor (*kŭmsang hwangje*), while using the Song emperor's reign period.<sup>97</sup>

The above-mentioned evidence is the proverbial tip of the iceberg. There are more structural and institutional characteristics of Koryŏ society that borrow the charisma of the dragon throne. These structures were counterbalanced by the simultaneous presence of royal structures. The result was a dual administrative structure that included among other things the investiture of members of the royal family as kings<sup>98</sup>, the organization of five armies instead of the customary three that were allowed to a king<sup>99</sup>, the adoption of the Tang imperial administrative structure<sup>100</sup>, the use of its own reign names<sup>101</sup>, and the bestowal of fiefs worthy

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and to recognize the Koryŏ ruler as their suzerain. The reason that the Jurchen referred to Koryŏ as their “father and mother” country when they founded the Jin dynasty, finds its origin in this practice. The *Koryŏsa* mentions that the Wan-yen clan considered Koryŏ (referred to as *taebang* 大邦 or ‘great country’) their place of origin and that the founding ancestors of the Wan-yen clan recognized the fact that they had belonged to Koryŏ and had owed it their allegiance. See *KS* 13: 7b-8a; Okamura Shūji 岡村周司, “Kōrai no gaikōshisei to kokka’ishiki 高麗の外交姿勢と國家意識,” *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歴史學研究 Special edition (1982): pp. 67-77; Okamura Shūji, “Kōrai no enkyū shitenrei to sekaikan 高麗の園丘祀天禮と世界觀,” in *Chōsen shakai no shiteki bakken to Tō-Ajia* 朝鮮社會の史的發展と東アジア (Tokyo: Yamagawa shuppankai 山川出版會, 1997), edited by Takeda Yukio 竹田幸男, pp. 305-334, pp. 310-316; Ch’u Myōngyōp, “Koryŏ chōn’gi ‘pōn’ inshik-kwa ‘tong-sobōn’-ūi hyōngsōng,” pp. 39-40.

<sup>97</sup> An obvious alternative explanation would be that the designation *kŭmsang hwangje* refers to the Song emperor, but judging from the contents of the inscription, this is not the case. See *Han’guk kŭmsok chōnmun* 韓國金石全文 [hereafter *HKC*], *Chungse sang* 中世上: 411: 8-10.

<sup>98</sup> See for example the document in which Wang Kōn invests Kim Pu as king of Nangnang. See No Myōnggho (ed.), *Han’guk kodae chungse komunsō yōn’gu* 韓國古代中世古文書研究 [hereafter *HKCKY*] (2 vols., Seoul: Sōul taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu, 2000), pp. 49-52. It was common practice to invest members of the royal family as *wang*. The resulting structure was virtually identical to that of the Tang dynasty, which had served as the model for Koryŏ. Also see Kim Kidōk, “Koryŏ-ūi chewangje-wa hwangjeguk ch’ėje” pp. 161-164 for a detailed account of this practice.

<sup>99</sup> This was only reversed during the reign of Ūijong, when a memorial reached the throne requesting to organize three instead of five armies. The justification for this reorganization was that Ūijong was a king, not an emperor. In other words, until well into the reign of Ūijong, Koryŏ had a military organization that belonged to an emperor. After the reorganization of the army during Ūijong’s reign, this was reversed, but only in name. The military organization still relied upon its division in five armies. See Yi Kibaek, *Koryŏ pongjesa yōn’gu* 高麗兵制史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1968), pp. 136-138; Kim Kidōk “Koryŏ-ūi chewangje-wa hwangjeguk ch’ėje”, p. 169; *KS* 81: 3a.

<sup>100</sup> Koryŏ adopted the Tang imperial administrative structure that consisted of three ministries and six departments; taking the size of Koryŏ in account, this was not necessary at all. In fact, despite being nominally present, not all administrative organs were active. See *KS* 76: 1a-b; for the adoption of the Tang imperial administrative structure, see Shūtō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之, “Kōrai shōki no kanri teido: toku ni ryōfu no zaisō ni tsuite 高麗初期の官吏制度—特に兩部の宰相について,” reprint in *Kōraichō kanryōsei no kenkyū* 高麗朝官僚制の研究 (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppanyoku 法政大學出版局, 1980), pp. 95-123.

<sup>101</sup> There are examples from the reign of T’aejo and of Kwangjong. When T’aejo became king, he adopted the reign name of Ch’ōnsu 天授 (‘Bestowed by Heaven’) and Kwangjong adopted the reign name of Kwangdōk 光德 (‘Radiant virtue’). After the demise of the Later Zhou 後周 in 960, Kwangjong adopted the reign name of Chunp’ung 俊豊 (‘Lofty abundance’). This last reign name is only attested in Buddhist inscriptions on steles that were erected during Kwangjong’s reign. See *NYKSM* 1: 331-2.

of kings.<sup>102</sup> Confucian scholars and bureaucrats were not opposed to this kind of inappropriate behaviour. In fact, this institutional dualism was supported by Confucian ideology and by leading Confucian scholar-bureaucrats.

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<sup>102</sup> Ha Hyön'gang, "Koryŏ shigüp ko 高麗食邑考," *Yŏksa hakpo* 歷史學報 26 (1965): pp. 107-40, esp. 110-111.

## CONCLUSION

In this part, I have attempted to determine what the name ‘Koryŏ’ referred to. I have tried to do so in the broadest sense in which the term ‘Koryŏ’ can be applied. Naming and political and ideological identification, status elevation and foreign politics; these seemingly disconnected issues are united by their convergence in the processes of identity formation, of making a community in Koryŏ.

The use of names during the Koryŏ for the land, the state and the people has perhaps surprisingly devalued the designation ‘Koryŏ’. Except in those instances where it was unavoidable, Koryŏ did not refer to itself as ‘Koryŏ’. All extant Koryŏ documents for instance mention ‘Samhan’ rather than ‘Koryŏ’. It is in fact only to be found in official correspondence, titlature and official inscriptions. It was only when after Koryŏ’s demise such important source materials as the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* were being compiled, that Koryŏ came to be referred to as Koryŏ. This preference for non-state designations for the peninsula and its people firmly enthroned the ubiquitous ‘Samhan’ or Three Han as the most important naming notion. Although from foreign extraction, it was adopted by the peninsular literati during the period of the Three Kingdoms. During the Koryŏ period, it united several distinctly differing meanings. In the twelfth century this resulted in a supradynastical notion of the ‘Samhan’ that separated it from the historical actuality on the peninsula. In this sense, ‘Samhan’ became different from the contemporary state of Koryŏ, while still embodying it – or being embodied by it – in its historical senses. Perhaps the most important consequence of this historically occasioned semantic separation was that ‘Samhan’ represented the past of Koryŏ in its obviously historical quality; its present through an identification of ‘Samhan’ with the people of Koryŏ and its future through dissociation with Koryŏ when Koryŏ was declining. The separation of the notions of ‘Samhan’ and ‘Koryŏ’ enabled the identification of ‘Samhan’ with Koryŏ’s past, present and future. The historical example of the Three Han became Koryŏ’s charter for the unification and integration of the peninsula.

The plurality of Koryŏ’s pasts that was intimated by the primacy of the notion of ‘Samhan’ is confirmed in the structure of its myths of descent and in the way Koryŏ identified with its pasts. Koryŏ possessed different myths of origin; all of them, though different in contents, freely drew on all material available, which practically speaking means that it is impossible to distinguish meaningfully between Shilla, Paekche and Koguryŏ references without obscuring the main point of the identifications. The identifications in the origin stories are also included in the many references made to the peninsular pasts in literature, religion and politics, but the most important aspect of Koryŏ’s myths of descent was the connection it presented, implicitly rationalized and ingrained between the contents of the myths and contemporary political notions. According to these notions, the ruler was the link between heaven and earth and projected the cosmological order on earth which made the state a cosmologically ordained community. State and people were concepts that despite considerable overlap were separate; a community of common descent existed under the state, while narratives that explained and promoted this common descent were powerful tools in the

forging of a sense of solidarity and unity. Such shared ideas of descent were reinforced by the regular association of common descent with religion, law and territory as exemplified in the case of Tongmyōng/Chumong who figured both as a founding ancestor and as an ancestral spirit, of Kija as the promulgator of the Eight Prohibitions and by the symbolical and tangible territorial delimitations of Tongmyōng and Kija which further helped to create a sense of territorial boundedness. The presence of a royal narrative of origin that explained who should rule this territory as defined by common descent, religion and law increased common identification, despite the fact that royal narratives of origin only reflected the standpoint of the rulers. According to the political ideas that held sway during the Koryŏ, a state often was its ruler. The ruler represented Heaven and as such was the natural and necessary head of the community. The dual system of royal and imperial status was a direct result of the notion that the state constituted a reflection of heavenly principles. Koryŏ was such a state and felt evinced by its long history and mythical repository. Koryŏ's assertive foreign policy again confirmed its own beliefs with regard to its status.

The complicated historical genesis of the Koryŏ state that gave it plural lines of descent also conditioned the usability of its narratives of origin. The state of Koryŏ had to deal with several competing narratives of origin, which meant that any claim to the past could be thwarted by an equally strong counterclaim departing from another historical perspective. This is of course precisely what happened when competing forces collided, but at the same time it has become clear that the tracing of legitimation in Koryŏ ultimately led to the Three Han, securely enshrined as Koryŏ's charter polity. It is certainly true that at times there existed an ambition to reconquer Koguryŏ lands, but at the same time it has become clear this was not as fundamental to Koryŏ identity as has often been claimed. Besides, expansion to the north cannot be simply equated with Koguryŏ. On the other hand, a Shilla-derived identity also existed at the same time and was even expressed by the same persons. The contradiction involved is only apparent, because the background against which these claims to the past were made was not Koguryŏ-successionism or Shilla-successionism, but Samhan-successionism. It is still a contradiction on the surface – the level at which the notions of successionism are propagated by individuals and groups. On a deeper level, however, or in other words, against its historical background over a long period, the contradiction between Koguryŏ and Shilla ceases to exist and gives way to what was the fundamental element of Koryŏ identity: succession to and embodiment of the Samhan. The complicated notion of Samhan was not without contradictions itself, but these were not caused by politically motivated competing claims to Koguryŏ and Shilla. The state of Koryŏ functioned adequately, while referring to its one charter polity and two (and a half) charter states.

The Samhan constituted the background of Koryŏ's historical identity. The Three Han needed to be protected, whether by invoking Shilla or Koguryŏ. Koryŏ at times presented an idealised picture of itself, both to the outside and to the inside that reduced the incompatible elements inherent in its history, society, culture and mythology to a readily understood and relatively easily manageable image, depending on the situation. These images should however not be taken at face value, for they were completely context-dependent. If we look at the circumstances that conditioned the production of such an image, we find that

underneath Koryō identity was more ambiguous, plural, fragmented and multi-faceted than the image it presented to the outer world suggested.



**PART TWO**

**PERPETUATION OF A PLURALIST PAST IN SHARED MEMORIES AND HISTORIES**



## PART TWO

### INTRODUCTION

The repository of myths, stories, legends and histories a people has access to is arguably the most important tool in the forging of a historical community or an *ethnie*. Its formation and consolidation for a large part depend on the availability of common myths of origin and descent, common memories and common history. The importance of history in this respect is hardly to be overestimated; far from being dead and gone, historical remembrance in stories, myths, texts, rituals and the physical remains of the past shape a community's identity:

[...B]esides our own recalled past experiences (and, of course, those of other living persons whom we may consult) our practical present contains an ever-increasing deposit of what are reputed to be fragments of a past which have survived, not as a wound survives in a scar but on account of their never having perished, which are now available to be listened to and consulted and which may be related to our current conduct. They may be artefacts (perhaps recognized as models to be copied), recorded anecdotes or episodes of bygone human fortune, alleged reports of persons and their encounters with their own *Lebenswelten*, more elaborate stories of past human circumstance, exemplars of human character and images of human conduct. [...] We may attribute authority to them or merely sagacity. They may be listened to, consulted, used, neglected or ignored. Since what they mean to us is whatever they may be made to mean, we are not concerned to determine their provenance in the past. Indeed, whether or not these survivals are scenes from mythology, products of poetic imagination or alleged bygone exploits is often a matter of indifference. Their virtue is their familiarity and usefulness. In short, they are *legenda*, what is "read" and what may be read with advantage to ourselves in our current engagements. These survivals, then, are constituents of a present, and here where it is a present of practical engagements, they are objects (like all others) accepted, understood in terms of their qualities and attended to in terms of their meaning and worth (if any) to ourselves in pursuing our current purposes, distinguished only in purporting to be voices from the past. They may have been lost and later recovered, but they become available to us in procedure, not of critical enquiry, but of recall to mind from where they lie scattered in our present or perhaps already assembled in the archive of a common vocabulary of practical discourse. Every society has an inheritance, rich or exiguous, of such survivals from the past and to know one's way about it is a condition of articulate practical activity<sup>1</sup>

The importance of the past for the present is that it is present and allows itself to be read. The present of a community is constructed in never-ending dialogues between the past and the present, while notions of what part of the past is worth 'reading' and reconstructing in the present constantly change. The processes in which is established what is common history and what is not, from whom a community is descended or what lies ahead in the future for the community are governed by the pressures exerted upon them from the inside and the outside. Such processes of determination constitute an important part of a community's culture. What

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<sup>1</sup> Oakeshott, *On history and other essays*, pp. 18-19.

defines a community are its boundaries that are ever-changing or as Fredrik Barth put it:

The cultural features that signal the boundary may change, and the cultural characteristics of the members may likewise be transformed [...] – yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content.<sup>2</sup>

The maintenance of boundaries is the yardstick according to which membership of the group is ‘measured’; so-called ‘objective’ differences between groups are not. The focus of investigation, then, becomes the ethnic boundary, rather than ‘the cultural stuff that it encloses’.<sup>3</sup> Barth’s approach, though in principle eminently suited for historical inquiry, was designed for anthropological investigation. John Armstrong more or less adapted it to fit historical research in his study *Nations before nationalism*. He adopted Barth’s boundary thesis without change, but he added – or rather made explicit – an analysis over long time spans, because “to an extraordinary degree ethnic symbolic communication is communication over the *longue durée*, between the dead and the living.”<sup>4</sup> Armstrong’s study explored the role of mythic structures – *mythomoteurs* (constitutive political myths) – in the formation and continuation of ethnic groups. More so than language or territory it is the belief in a common fate, a common destination that tells the individual that he is a member of the group. The carefully selected survivals of a communal past make a community, keep it together, perpetuate it and constitute a large part of the communal identity. The narratives that embody the idea of a common fate are tied to the specific polity the group members belong to and neither is thinkable without the other.

Such a complex of myths, narratives, ideas and histories articulated notions of the past, present and future of Koryŏ, most poignantly so in Koryŏ’s *mythomoteur*,<sup>5</sup> the constitutive myth of the Koryŏ polity. But Koryŏ possessed more than one *mythomoteur*. The constitutive myth of Koryŏ according to a scholar-official who had successfully passed the state examinations was different from the *mythomoteur* embraced by a Buddhist monk. Both were obviously different from the notions that were entertained by someone who placed Koryŏ at the absolute centre of world, a so-called nativist, for lack of a better term. Daoism, though probably never as influential an ideology as either Confucianism or Buddhism, also furnished elements to the constitutive myths of the Koryŏ polity.

Early to middle Koryŏ never presented an unambiguous front to its historians that did not collapse at closer inspection. Despite the rhetoric to the contrary, ideologically, politically, economically and socially, Koryŏ was not homogeneous. The heterogeneity of Koryŏ society does not necessarily imply that it was fundamentally divided. At some points it probably was, at other points it was not. The purpose of this chapter is to chart those convergences and divergences with regard to Koryŏ historiography. A discussion of Koryŏ historiography is

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<sup>2</sup> Barth, *Ethnic groups and boundaries*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Barth, *Ethnic groups and boundaries*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Armstrong, *Nations before nationalism*, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> I borrow this concept from John Armstrong. See Armstrong, *Nations before nationalism*, introduction.

indispensable for the investigation of the themes of the following chapters: the ruler as the focal point of Koryŏ society, the complicated ideological landscape of Koryŏ with its different *mythomoteurs* and the period of introduction of Song ritual Confucian music, which furnishes the historian of Koryŏ with a unsurpassed example of how Koryŏ dealt with complicated issues of ideological, political, ritual and diplomatic importance.

Concretely, I shall resume the story of the Three Han, but from a more historical point of view than the previous chapter. As discussed there, the Three Han form the focus of Koryŏ's pasts, a notion that is both singular and plural and that embodies Koryŏ's past, present and future. The memories of the past were sometimes codified and given more or less official status in histories. A discussion of Koryŏ historiography is called for then.

### THE THREE HAN IN A HISTORICAL AND A SUPRADYNASTICAL PERSPECTIVE

A historical analysis of the different designations that were used to refer to what we know as Koryŏ has revealed the ideological prevalence of the charter polity of the Three Han on the peninsula. Despite its prevalence, other designations with distinct associated pasts and contexts were also available to be used in circumstances that demanded alternative identifications. The plurality inherent in this, and even inherent in the notion of the Three Han itself, was revealed by the different myths, legends and notions of descent. Koryŏ possessed a rich repository of references to the pasts of Shilla, Paekche and Koguryŏ and drew freely on all material available. As has been shown in the preceding chapter, though, the most important aspect of Koryŏ's myths of descent was the ideal that they presented of a community of common descent that was heavenly ordained. Before going into the concepts that lie at the bottom of the conception of the Koryŏ state and the ideologies that formed it, I will first take a closer look at the articulation of Koryŏ's past, present and future in the notion of the Three Han.

The term 'Samhan' acted as an umbrella term for several distinctly differing meanings. Judging from the extant inscriptions, somewhere during the twelfth century this resulted in a supradynastical notion of the 'Samhan' that separated it from the historical actuality on the peninsula. This separation from the contemporary state of Koryŏ did not cancel out Samhan's fundamental embodiment of Koryŏ as a historical entity. As a result, the already plural concept of Samhan was 'extended'. In its obviously historical quality, it represented the pasts of Koryŏ. The consistent identification of 'Samhan' with the people of Koryŏ and its use as a synonym for the state of Koryŏ made it embody Koryŏ's present. Finally, through dissociation with the state of Koryŏ when Koryŏ was declining, it also came to exemplify its future. The Three Han were thus both convergent with and different from Koryŏ, depending on the temporal modes of past, present or future.

In addition to the analysis of the geonym 'Samhan' in the previous chapter, I shall further explore the historical significance of this term. In addition to possessing distinctly different temporal senses, 'Samhan' was well defined in a historical sense. It was clearly identified with a

long tradition of excellence and distinction, even, or perhaps especially, in comparison with China:

A map of the world takes up a few sheets of paper,  
The Three Han are just a little heap somewhere in a corner.  
But, oh people, do not look down upon it because of this!  
In my eyes it looks bigger still,  
For it has produced a string of talented and wise men from ancient times until now,  
And has nothing to be ashamed of, not even when compared to China.

If you say that it is no country, you might as well have none.  
The territory of the barbarians is large, but it is like a mustard plant.  
Have you not seen how the Chinese call us little China?  
Those words are truly worth taking to heart.<sup>6</sup>

This poem by Yi Kyubo 李奎報 (1168-1248) not only reveals the sense of pride Yi himself obviously took in what he considered his country, but also situates it in the larger community of the world, represented by a multi-page map on which Samhan only takes up a small corner. Size does not matter, Yi claims, it is the Three Han's continuous production of wise men on the strength of which it can claim to be a country that measures up to China. But, he also warns, you must take pride in it, or else it might as well not exist. According to Yi Kyubo, the Chinese admired Samhan for its cultural achievements to the extent that they called it 'Little China'. The congratulatory text that Ŭich'ŏn 義天 (1055-1101) wrote for his brother Sukchong when he ascended the throne clearly situates the Three Han as the next great dynasty after the Shang 商 and the Han. Ŭich'ŏn starts with mentioning that Sukchong received the mandate of Heaven and then proceeds to state that "the two dynasties [i.e. Shang and Han] reigned in antiquity. The Three Han succeeded them in the present".<sup>7</sup> This sentiment was echoed by the duty Koryŏ was perceived to have in the civilization of barbarians in another poem by Yi Kyubo:

Moving the capital has from ancient times on been as difficult as touching Heaven,  
But we moved it in one morning, as easy as rolling a ball.  
If the water of the Yellow River had not turned clear so hastily<sup>8</sup>,  
The Three Han would already have civilized the barbarians in a moment.

Walls of thirty meters or being surrounded by a single river,  
If you compare merits, which one is better?<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *TYSC* 17:12b.

<sup>7</sup> *Ha Sukchong shin chŭng'wi p'yo* 賀肅宗新即位表 in *Taegak kuksa munjip* 大覺國師文集 [hereafter *TKM*] 8: 9a. Ŭich'ŏn did not shy away from putting Koryŏ on a par with China and endowing it with Heaven's mandate. In his *Chujŏn non* 鑄錢論 [Exposition on the coinage of money] he reflected that "our country obeyed the mandate of Heaven, unified the Three Han and expanded and renewed the rituals and principles". See *TKM* 12: 8a.

<sup>8</sup> It was believed that when the water of the Yellow River turned clear, a sagely ruler had appeared.

<sup>9</sup> Here, Yi compares the defensive advantages of Kaegyŏng and Kangdo 江都. Kangdo was situated on the island of Kanghwa 江華島, which was at that time inaccessible to the Mongols because they lacked a good navy.

One hundred million barbarian horsemen may fly like birds,  
But they just could not cross the blue waves of the sea even over the shortest distance.

Between the river and the mountains lie tens of thousands of houses,  
How much better this is than the beauty of our old capital.  
If you know that a river is better than solid walls,  
Know also, then, that virtue is better than a river.<sup>10</sup>

The explicit association of Koryŏ's *mission civilisatrice* and the Samhan is a recurring theme in the writings of Koryŏ literati, which further solidifies Koryŏ's identification with the Samhan identity. Political writings are similar in this respect: the testaments of Sukchong, Yejong and Injong, for instance, also refer to the Samhan.<sup>11</sup> The appearance of the Three Han in these texts, which possessed supreme legitimative and political significance, underlines the status of Samhan as the embodiment of Koryŏ's past, present and future in more than one sense. These testaments encompassed more than one ideological aspect of the ruler's legacy and, as such, Samhan is presented as an historical and contemporary entity which did more than compete with China.

Another poem by Yi Kyubo reveals that there is more to the Samhan than achievements based upon the shared body of cultural Sinitic resources and the idea that it should cultivate the barbarians. Singing the praises of rituals honouring the Tripitaka and averting catastrophes, Yi represents the Koryŏ ruler as the ontological link between the Buddha and the Samhan, borrowing the imperial designation *irin* 一人 ("one man" or "the only man") and connecting the destiny of the Three Han with the propagation of Buddhism:

[....]  
The one that rules the country bows his head  
And every one of the thousand Buddhas who fill the void shine their light upon him.  
Transmitting the Dharma across the four borders and settling the worldly dust,  
He makes the Three Han as everlasting as the sun and the moon.

As soon as the ritual space is prepared, monks come flying along,  
The Dharma thunders among these assembled eminent monks.  
From today on the waves of the Dharma Sea roll unimpeded,  
The flowers of the meditation forest are more beautiful than last year's.  
As the wheel of Bodhisattva's vow turns alongside Heaven,  
Why should the mirror of enlightenment fear that the moon will not return?  
If you plant the root of good in the morning, you can harvest in the evening,  
And who could count the blessings of the Three Han?<sup>12</sup>  
[....]

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<sup>10</sup> TYSC 18: 11b-12a.

<sup>11</sup> *Sukwang yugyo* 肅王遺教 in TMS 23: 6a-7a; *Yewang yugyo* 肅王遺教 in TMS 23: 9b-10a; *Inwang yugyo* 肅王遺教 in TMS 23: 10a-10b.

<sup>12</sup> TYSC 18: 1a-31. Another example from Yi Kyubo reads as follows: "As I have seen, Buddhism was transmitted in the Three Han from the centre to the provinces. Buddhist temples [were close enough to] see each other and there was no temple or monastery without a statue of the Buddha." See *Wangnyunsa changnyuk kŭmsang yŏngbŏm susŏpki* 王輪寺丈六金像靈驗收拾記 [Record of the miracles performed by the five meter high golden Buddha statue in the Wangnyun-sa] in TMS 67: 9b-14a.

Here, as elsewhere, the destiny of the Three Han is explicitly associated with that of Buddhism. There exists a symbiotic relationship between the two: the power of the Buddha protects the Three Han, but Buddhism is also spread through the mediation of the Koryŏ ruler. This of course had been codified in the eleventh century in the *Ten injunctions* and was adhered to until the demise of Koryŏ. The idea that Buddhist monks protected the realm is frequently found, especially in times of trouble.<sup>13</sup>

The *Ten injunctions*, which revealed Samhan to be a place protected by the Buddha, also stress the importance of its geomantic qualities:

Fifth injunction: I relied on the mysterious help of the mountains and streams of the Three Han to bring the great enterprise to completion.<sup>14</sup>

The influence of the geographical and topographical characteristics of the Three Han was far-reaching. Steles and epitaphs frequently mention its importance and not merely concerning the choosing of an auspicious burial site. Rivers and mountains exercised a decisive influence upon the men who lived in or near them. The concept of the Three Han was inextricably bound up with its geographical attributes.

The concept prevalent in Koryŏ, then, during several different periods and across different ideological boundaries, was that of the Samhan as its charter polity with respect to its history and the various ideas that existed with regard to a shared destiny. In this part I shall investigate the practice and the contents of historiography in early to middle Koryŏ, in particular with regard to Three Han in its different aspects and related concepts.

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<sup>13</sup> See for instance an official letter of appointment of a monk as a Sŏn master written by Ch'oe Cha. In it he claims that Sŏn masters, and in particular the subject of the letter of appointment, aid the Samhan in times of trouble through their piety. See TMS 27: 20b for this particular example. See Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha: The ideological and institutional role of Buddhism in the Koryŏ dynasty* (Ph. D. diss., SOAS, 2001) for a thorough study of how Buddhism was thought to protect the realm.

<sup>14</sup> KS 2:15b.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WRITING HISTORY IN KORYŎ

Historiography during the Koryŏ period is to a certain extent characterized by a dearth of materials.<sup>15</sup> Although the oldest extant history of Korea dates from this period, this history, the *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 (the *Samguk sagi*), was not the first history written in Koryŏ. A history now usually known as the *Ku samguksa* 舊三國史 (*Old history of the Three Kingdoms*) was written probably somewhere during the early eleventh century and has only survived in scattered quotations. Since it is no longer extant, it has become the subject of extensive historiographical speculation, which, despite the plausible conjectures that are sometimes made, must remain what it is, namely speculation, due to the unavailability of primary sources.

Despite this rather unfortunate situation, the extant sources do disclose some information about the practice of historiography during early Koryŏ. Koryŏ historiography did not emerge out of a vacuum, but succeeded to a historiography that was heavily influenced by Chinese example. The works mentioned are not extant, but it is clear that at least two histories according to Chinese models were compiled in Koguryŏ. The first one, the *Yugi* (*Transmitted records*) 遺記 was compiled somewhere during the early part of Koguryŏ. The second history that the sources mention is known in slightly greater detail. The Confucian academician Yi Munjin 李文眞 (d.u.) compiled the *Shinjin* 新集 (*New collection*) in 600. Judging from the office that Yi Munjin held, scholar in the Confucian Academy (*t'aebak paksa* 太學博士), he was trained as a Confucian scholar and it stands to reason that his *Shinjin* was compiled according to the Chinese example of the *Records of the grand historian* 史記.<sup>16</sup> References to only one history from Paekche have survived. The *Sŏgi* 書記 (*Documents and records*) was written by *paksa* Ko Hŭng 高興 in 375.<sup>17</sup> It probably served as the model for the Japanese *Nihon shoki* 日本書記 (720).<sup>18</sup> Shilla, finally, left a number of historical writings, some of which have survived until this day. State histories and similar works have, however, all been lost. The *Kuksa* 國史 (*State*

<sup>15</sup> The representative studies on Koryŏ historiography are Ko Pyŏngik, "Samguk sagi-e issŏsŏ-ŭi yŏksa sŏsul"; Yi Usŏng, "Samguk sagi-ŭi kusŏng-gwa Koryŏ wangjo-ŭi chŏngt'ong ŭishik", pp. 2-3-207; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Koryŏ chunggi-ŭi munhwa ŭishik-kwa sahak-ŭi sŏngkyŏk"; Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏksa kyesŏngŭishik"; Shin Hyŏngshik, *Samguk sagi yŏn'gu*; Shin Hyŏngshik, "Koryŏ ch'on'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik"; Shin Hyŏngshik, *Han'guk sabaksa*, pp. 84-120; Cho Tonggŏl, Han Yŏngu and Pak Ch'ansŏng (ed.), *Han'guk yŏksaga-wa yŏksabak*, vol. I; Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*; Chŏng Kubok, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*; Chŏng Kubok, "Kim Pushig-ŭi (1075-1151) saengae-wa ŏpchŏk"; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ-ŭi Koguryŏ kyesŏngŭishik"; Cho Insŏng, "Koryŏ ch'o-chunggi-ŭi yŏksa kyesŏngŭishik-kwa Parhaesa inshik"; Ch'oe Kyusŏng, "Koryŏ ch'ogi-ŭi yŏjin kwan'gye-wa pukpang chŏngch'aek"; Yi Usŏng, *Han'guk-ŭi yŏksasang*; Kim Ŭigyū, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi-ŭi yŏksa inshik"; Chŏng Kubok, "Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi yŏksa ŭishik".

<sup>16</sup> SGSG 20: 198. Also see Yi Pyŏngdo, *Han'guk yubaksaryak* 韓國儒學史略 (Seoul: Asea munhwasa 亞細亞文化社, 1986). According to Yi Usŏng, it is plausible that Yi Munjin was Chinese. See Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Uri yŏksa-rŭil ottŏk'ae pol kosh-inga* 우리 歷史를 어떻게 볼 것인가 (Seoul: Samsŏng munhwago 三星文化文庫, 1976), pp. 13-15.

<sup>17</sup> Yi Kidong 李基東, "Kodae kukka-yŏksa inshik 古代國家의 歷史認識," in *Han'guksaron* 6(1981): pp. 1-21; Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Uri yŏksa-rŭil ottŏk'ae pol kosh-inga*, pp. 11-31.

<sup>18</sup> Yi Kidong, "Kodae kukka-yŏksa inshik", p. 10.

history) by *taeach'ang* 大阿漭 Kōch'ilbu 居柒夫 (?-579) only survives in references to it.<sup>19</sup> An important similarity between the historical works of the Three Kingdoms is that, apart from the unfortunate fact that they have all been lost, they were without exception compiled by single scholars. This method, which was adopted by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145-86 B.C.E.) was used in China until the Tang established the method of “partial editing” (分纂). Partly owing to the enormous amounts of materials a historian had to deal with, the Tang historiographers divided the materials in portions which were then assigned to several scholars. The state historian would supervise the editorial work and write the all-important historical comments. This method is *mutatis mutandis* still used in the editing of state histories, both in China and Korea and in the West.

Historiography on the Korean peninsula used the method of the single ‘grand historian’ working alone until the Koryŏ dynasty. Probably under influence of the new historiographical system of the Tang, Koryŏ adopted the system of partial editing. Koryŏ’s form of government and its institutions were for a large part derived from Tang and Song models. The way Koryŏ institutions functioned was significantly different from what their nominal similarity with Tang and Song institutions would suggest, but nonetheless Koryŏ looked towards these two dynastic examples when it created, adapted and streamlined its own bureaucracy from the beginning of the dynasty until the reign of Sŏngjong.<sup>20</sup> Koryŏ’s historiographical institutions reflect this. The earliest reference to a state-appointed historian (supervising editor of state history or *kamsu kuksa* 監修國師) according to the Tang model is found in the stele for Buddhist master Wŏnjong: according to this inscription, the text of the inscription was composed by Kim Chŏngŏn 金廷彦 whose titles and offices are listed as secretary (*taesŭng* 大丞), royal academician (*Hallim baksa* 翰林學士), presiding minister of the Department of Ministries (*naebongnyŏng* 內奉令), assistant executive in political affairs (*ch'amji chŏngsa* 參知政事) and supervising editor of state history (*kamsu kuksa*).<sup>21</sup> An inscription in honour of Buddhist master Pŏbin 法印 from 978 confirms the content of the 975 inscription.<sup>22</sup> The first official mention of an appointment as state historian appears in 988. Yi Yang 李陽 is then mentioned as a junior reparationer and assistant-royal recording editor (of the royal diary) (*Ubogwŏl kyŏm chi'gigŏju* 左補闕兼知起居注) in a memorial by himself.<sup>23</sup> In the Tang system, the editors and court diarists were historians concerned with the recording of the actions and speech of the ruler and with the remonstrance of his actions based on historical precedents.<sup>24</sup> The first full mention of the appointment of historians is from 1013, almost a full century after

<sup>19</sup> Yi Kidong, “Kodae kukka-yŏksa inshik”, p. 7-9.

<sup>20</sup> Shūtō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之, “Kōrai shōki no kanri teido: toku ni ryōfu no zaisō ni tsuite 高麗初期の官吏制度—特に兩部の宰相について,” reprinted in *Kōraichō kanryōsei no kenkyū* 高麗朝官僚制の研究 (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppanyoku 法政大學出版局, 1980), pp. 95-123.

<sup>21</sup> *Yŏju Kodakwŏn Wŏnjong taesa haejint'ap pimun* 驪州高達院元宗大師惠眞塔碑文 in YKP 2: 18.

<sup>22</sup> *Haemi Powŏnsa Pŏp'in kuksa posŭngt'ap pimun* 海美普原寺法印國師寶乘塔碑文 in YKP 2: 74.

<sup>23</sup> KS 3: 13a.

<sup>24</sup> Denis Twitchett, *The writing of official history under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 8-10. Omissioner was a position from which court diarists often were recruited. These officials “were expected to exercise criticism and a sort of moral censorship over the emperor’s pronouncements and actions. They were allowed considerable freedom of speech to exercise this function and had influence far greater than their relatively low ranks would suggest.”



the founding of the dynasty. It shows the initial orientation towards the Tang dynastic historiographical office and the influence of the Song institutions that was later added to the existing structure.<sup>25</sup> The initial Koryŏ system seems to have been roughly similar to its Tang model, although many times smaller in size.<sup>26</sup> The practical duty of Koryŏ historians was the same as that of their Tang colleagues: they were “to record the administrative affairs of the day”.<sup>27</sup> One court diarist recorded the deeds of the ruler (royal recording secretary *kigŏrang* 起居郎) and the other one recorded the ruler’s words (royal recorder or *kigŏsain* 起居舍人). The court diary was then edited by the editor of the court diary (royal recording editor or *kigŏju* 起居注). Scattered surviving references to the practice of historiography during the Koryŏ indicate that daily notes were made and recorded in temporary historical records. According to a reference from Ūijong’s reign, these records were called *yŏktae illok* 歷代日錄 (*Successive daily records*) and perhaps also as *hwangbaek tŭngmul* 黃白等物 (translation uncertain)<sup>28</sup>; a reference from the reign of King Ch’ungsuk 忠肅王 (1294-1330-1332-1339) reveals that these records were known as the *haenggung illok* 行宮日錄 (Palace daily records) during the later part of the Koryŏ.<sup>29</sup> The supervising editor of state history then compiled the state histories based upon the notes of the court diarists and these temporary records. Things could go wrong, however: during the early Koryŏ at least no copies were kept of the record. The notes were sent directly to the historians, as were notes from other government institutions.<sup>30</sup> In the case of a fire or war, historical records were often lost. The Khitan destruction of Kaegyŏng in 1011 meant the loss of virtually all historical records; the *Veritable records* (*shillok* 實錄) for the reigns of T’aejo, Hyejong, Chŏngjong, Kwangjong, Kyŏngjong,

<sup>25</sup> In the ninth month of 1013 the *Koryŏsa* for the first time records the appointment of state historians. Minister of personnel and assistant executive in political affairs Ch’oe Hang 崔沆 (*ibu sangsŏ ch’amji chŏngsa* 吏部尚書參知政事) is appointed as supervising editor of state history (*kamsu kuksa*), minister of rites Kim Shimŏn 金審言 (*yebu sangsŏ* 禮部尚書) as editor of state history (*su kuksa* 修國史), executive of the Ministry of Rites Chu Chŏ 周佇 (*yebu sbirang* 禮部侍郎), drafting advisor of the Department of the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery Yun Chingo 尹徵古 (*naesa sain* 內史舍人), general censor Hwang Churyang (*shŏsa* 侍御使), and junior policy monitor Ch’oe Ch’ung (*usŏp’yu* 右拾遺) as editors (*such’an’gwan* 修撰官). The history that was edited is not extant, nor is its title known. *KS* 4: 15a.

<sup>26</sup> According to the *Koryŏsa* the following appointments for official historians existed: supervising editor of state history (*kamsu kuksa*) (Tang system), editor of state history (*su kuksa*) (Song system), co-editor of state history (*tongsu kuksa* 同修國史) (Song system), compiler of history (*such’angwan* 修撰官) (Tang system), intendant of the Office for Historiography (*chiksa’gwan* 直史館) (Tang system). The positions of editor of state history and co-editor of state history did not exist under the Tang, but were positions created by the Song bureaucratic apparatus. These were later added to the Koryŏ historiographical offices. Apart from these offices that were concerned with the editing of histories, there were the court positions of the historians that took notes, the royal recorder and the royal recording secretary (*kigŏrang* and *kigŏsain*) and the royal recording editor (*kigŏju*). These offices were instituted after the example of the Tang. See *KS* 76: 26a-b.

<sup>27</sup> *KS* 76: 26a-b.

<sup>28</sup> *Pak Insŏk myojim’yŏng* 朴仁碩 墓誌銘 in *KMC* 158: 13. It is not completely clear whether ‘hwangbaek tŭngmul’ should be interpreted as historical records of some kind. Although the context clearly seems to suggest that such an interpretation is correct (the successive daily records are also mentioned), Kim Yongsŏn 金龍善 translates it as “artefacts of yellow gold and white silver.” The translation makes more sense with regard to the meanings of the characters, but does not seem to fit well in this context. See Kim Yongsŏn 金龍善, *Yŏkchu Koryŏ myojim’yŏng chipsŏng* 역주 고려묘지명집성 (Kangnŭng 강릉: Hallimdae Ashia munhwa yŏn’guso 한림대 아시아문화연구소, 2001), vol. 2, p. III.

<sup>29</sup> *Han Chongyu myojim’yŏng* 韓宗愈墓誌銘 in *KMC* 271: 3.

<sup>30</sup> Shutŏ Yoshiyuki, *Kōraichō kanryōsei no kenkyū*, p. 380.

Sŏngjong, and Mokchong were destroyed when the capital was ransacked. The loss of the *shillok* was the reason behind Hyŏnjong's directive of 1013 that appointed historians and instructed them to try and compensate for the loss of the historical records by talking to old people who might remember things from the beginning of the dynasty. The 1013 appointment of historians had a clear purpose in the recreation of the historical record. The fact that this is the first appointment on record is also in all probability due to the perishing of all previous records. It does not seem plausible that after the disruptive Khitan invasions and the burning of Kaegyŏng in 1011, Hyŏnjong would have been able to create a complete historiographical office *ex nihilo*. It stands to reason that between Kim Chŏngŏn and Ch'oe Hang there will have been other supervising state historians, if only for the reason that there apparently had been complete records for the reigns of the first seven Koryŏ rulers which had been edited into *shillok*. It takes manpower, raw materials and professional skills to edit a veritable record, all of which were apparently available to the Koryŏ bureaucracy. Later in the dynasty, the supervising state historian was not necessarily the person who edited the veritable records. When Injong ascended the throne, Han Anin 韓安仁 (?-1122) requested him to appoint a historian to edit the veritable records of his predecessor and father Yejong. Judging from the fact that during this time the historiographical bureau was functioning, the position of editor of the veritable records was subject to the politics of the day, more so, at least, than that of the historians who recorded the day-to-day events from which eventually the veritable records would be compiled.<sup>31</sup>

The duty of the court and state historians consisted of two different but related tasks. One was the recording of historical fact and the other was the compilation of and the commenting upon these recorded facts. A memorial from the waning days of the dynasty clearly illustrates what this meant:

The duty of the historian consists of the immediate recording of the words and actions of the ruler and of the rights and wrongs and successes and failures of the officials. They immediately write it down so it can be shown to future generations and serve to edify them. That is why from times immemorial there has never been a state that did not consider the duty of the historians important. [...] The historian should prepare two copies of his historical draft. When his period in office has expired, he should send one set to the bureau of history and keep the other set in his house for future reference. Officials below the level of general compilers of history (*kŭk such'an'gwan* 克修纂官) should draft reports on everything they hear and see and send this to the Office of Historiography. Furthermore, all important and minor officials from the capital and from the provinces should report each of their actions to the bureau of history and make sure that these records are reliable. Please give instructions to the extent that this will be implemented as an everlasting rule.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *KS* 97: 14b. "After Injong had ascended the throne, Han Anin was promoted from executive assistant of the Chancellery to assistant chancellor to the Secretariat. He told Injong: "Yejong was on the throne for seventeen years. It is proper to record his achievements during that time for posterity. I request that you follow the ancient example of the Song and appoint an editor for the veritable records".

<sup>32</sup> The memorial was written by historian Ch'oe Kyŏn 崔麟 who wrote it together with unnamed other scholars during the first year of the reign of Kongyang 恭讓王 (1389). *KS* 76: 27a-b.

Ch'oe Kyön's 崔鑄 memorial of 1389 refers to the traditional notion of state history and suggests a practical and time-tested way of making sure that the historian would have enough raw materials to work with. Ch'oe's memorial is from a period long after the establishment of the dynasty, but the perception of what state history is and how it should function had not changed fundamentally. Ch'oe Sŭngno's reasons for drafting his *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns* (*Ojo chŏngjŏk p'yŏng* 五朝政績評) at the end of the tenth century were identical; the essence of historiography was "the immediate recording of the words and actions of the ruler and of the rights and wrongs and successes and failures of the officials".<sup>33</sup> The above-mentioned inscription for Kim Chŏngŏn from 978 also explains the duty of the state historian along the same vein and, interestingly, also describes Kim Chŏngŏn as a historian of long standing. Part of it reads as follows:

The ruler instructed Chŏngŏn as follows: "In the past you were appointed as state historian and as such you have read the records and the imperial edicts yourself. You have sung the praises of the virtue of our ruler. Remembering that the previous king increased the [number of] royal academicians and treated them generously, you should repay his kindness by composing the inscription for the national preceptor. So take up a large brush, compose the text, engrave it on a stele and record his virtues."<sup>34</sup>

The cited part of the text is of interest not only because it clearly and unambiguously establishes Kim Chŏngŏn as the first Koryŏ state historian on record – and perhaps Koryŏ's first state historian ever. The intimation of the classical Chinese text that Kim Chŏngŏn had already been state historian for a considerable period by the time he was ordered to write this inscription should also not pass unnoticed. Apart from these two institutionally significant facts, the description of the duties of the state historian is worthy of note. The stele inscription records the duties of the state historian as being acquainted with all records, books and court edicts, as well as having to "sing the praises of the virtue" of the ruler. The crucial concept in this expression is not so much the "singing of praises" but rather the celebration of the "virtue of the ruler". The first and foremost duty of the state historian – of any historian, indeed – was the pronouncement of a judgment on the virtue of the ruler, based upon a critical inspection of the documents that had recorded his speech and actions. The historiographical tradition that Koryŏ had succeeded to proceed from classical Confucian principles, which effectively meant that the historiographers of court affairs were not answerable to the ruler and his ministers when they recorded his actions and speeches. A ruler was never allowed to see – and edit – the notes from which the veritable records of his own rule would be compiled after his

<sup>33</sup> Ch'oe Sŭngno's *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns* starts as follows: "[...] I have pledged to work for the country. I humbly think of the historian Wu Jing 吳兢 [670-749] of the Kaiyuan 開元 period [713-742], who compiled and presented his work, *Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要 (Essentials of Government of the Zhenguan Period) to encourage Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 to emulate the policies of Emperor Taizong 太宗. [...] Since King T'aejo's founding of the dynasty, all that I have come to know I still know by heart. I therefore wish to record all the policies of the last five reigns, tracing the marks left, good and bad, and that can guide Your Majesty's conduct of government through this presentation." *KS* 93 93:2b. Translation borrowed from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 273-274. Transcription of Chinese names adapted to pinyin.

<sup>34</sup> *Powŏnnsa Pŏpin kuksa posŭngt' ap pimun* in *YKP* 2: 74-80

death. Only the veritable records of the previous reigns were available to him, so that they might serve him as a mirror for his own policies.

The strong taboo that made it impossible for the ruler to edit the historiographical judgment of his reign naturally meant that objective historiography was within reach, but it should be noted that although an overwhelming majority of rulers indeed did not dare to tamper with the notes for the veritable records for their own reign, the scholars that took those notes, were by no means the ideal impartial observer. Nor were they meant to be so.

But it is important to remember, in the context of the didactic preoccupations of traditional Chinese historiography, that the basic material for the historical record, the Court Diary, was written not by mechanical reporters of what occurred, but by officials holding posts with serious political and moral responsibilities, who saw themselves and were perceived by others as active participants in, and commentators on, state affairs.<sup>35</sup>

The above citation refers to the early Tang practice of historiography, but also applies to early Koryŏ historiography. The historian was meant to “sing the praises of the virtue” of the ruler, but only if there were virtues to be praised. If not, he was supposed to remonstrate with the ruler and argue his case on the basis of his extensive knowledge of historical precedents. The ideal of Confucian historiography as practised in both Tang China and Koryŏ was to record historical events consisting of the actions and speech of the ruler and his ministers and the consequences of these actions – little, though, of a *Kausalnexus* they might seem to possess in the eyes of a modern beholder – with explicit reference to the concrete and contemporary situation.<sup>36</sup> Objective historiography in the sense it has been abused ever since Leopold von Ranke’s successors took the reins of the historiographical discipline would have meant little to a Confucian historiographer. Without its own context to function in, historical contemplation was worthless.

The historical context of Confucian historiography evidently did not stop at the direct historical situation, contemporary with the time during which it was written. Indeed, in order to be able to function as a mirror for the use of rulers and statesmen, the context in which a history functioned was understood to be much wider than that. It was technically supposed to encompass the whole of Sinitic civilisation, in both its temporal and spatial dimensions. A certain amount of objectification or limited decontextualisation did, then, take place in the process of producing Confucian-oriented historiography. To a certain extent, perhaps, this objectification was more implied than explicitly incorporated. One of the cardinal functions of Confucian historiography was its function to serve as a mirror for proper conduct and benign rule. More often than not, this is explicitly stated in the history itself or in the foreword or dedication to it. The fact that this function was considered to be of the utmost importance obviously implied the applicability of lessons learned from the past, which presupposed the

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<sup>35</sup> Twitchett, *The writing of official history under the Tang*, p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> I will come to speak of the idea that the ruler’s actions cause Heaven’s reactions in a later chapter. Suffice it to say for now that both “natural” phenomena such as the occurrence of rain, the birth of animals and the success of harvest and “human” affairs such as invasions, policies, and rebellions were seen as being indissolubly tied to the ruler’s behaviour in terms of virtue.

possibility of abstracting somewhat more widely applicable principles from particular situations.

This feature is not unique to Confucian historiography. It is also not unique to Confucian ideology, but it is an important constituent element of it. Formal arguments as expressed by, for instance, memorials to the throne take a similar shape. Typically, the contents of a formal argument concerned with the present of practical engagement are preceded and introduced by direct references to historical precedents, both positively and negatively applicable to the case in question. In most instances, the precedents come from Chinese history or myth, although there are exceptions in which the historical background of the argument is restricted to peninsular history. Against this supplied historical background, then, the argument unfolds. Memorials were often meant to remonstrate, criticise or to start a discussion. In this sense the arguments memorials contain are different from the legitimating explanations attached to important edicts and proclamations. Nonetheless, the style of argument in such edicts and proclamations is identical to that of memorials. The same kind of reasoning based upon precedent is furthermore found in epitaphs and commemorative inscriptions, where it is customarily used to embed personal histories in a larger historical context. Michael Oakeshott has characterised this use of history as follows:

The question asked is not, What did this object or utterance mean in the circumstances in which it was made or uttered? or, What may it be made to report indirectly, about a past which has not survived? but, What use or meaning has it in a current present-future of practical engagement? Indeed, with our attention fixed upon a puzzling present-future and upon the value here and now of whatever has been said or done in the past, it is often a matter of indifference to us where or when it may have been said or done, whether it stems from a legendary or so-called "historic" situation, or whether it was the voice of Zeus or Confucius or Shakespeare, the Duke of Wellington or Rip van Winkle which spoke. All that matters is that its utterance shall be unmistakable and usable.<sup>37</sup>

A very concrete purpose of having historiography at hand was located precisely in the way of reasoning that proceeded from a historical precedent as described in this quotation. At the risk of being overly obvious, it should be mentioned that the composition of texts that referred to the historical or mythical past was only possible if the authors had access to a corpus of references. Corpora of Chinese references had been available to Koryŏ literati from the beginning of the dynasty, but as Kim Pushik lamented in his dedication of the *Samguk sagi*, Koryŏ literati had little to refer to in terms of their own history. References to Koryŏ and peninsular history only became available with the editing of peninsular histories and other writings and, as the *P'ahanjip* and *Pohanjip* show, once a Koryŏ corpus of references had been established, referring to Koryŏ or earlier peninsular events became popular. This was not to the exclusion of the much older practice of referring to Chinese examples, but instead created a sort of joined corpus of Sino-Korean references.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Oakeshott, *On history and other essays*, p. 40.

<sup>38</sup> This is also evinced by the Chinese poetry practised by Koryŏ literati. In a linguistic sense, they were more Catholic than the pope, for not having the advantage of being native writers of the language, Koryŏ poets allowed

In order for an argument to unfold convincingly, then, a firm historical context was deemed indispensable for the argument to have practical relevance. If the prevalent style of formal argument and debate was dependent upon the immediate accessibility of historical references, it should need little further explanation that historiography was not just about the past in Koryŏ, but also possessed a generally recognized administrative and managerial dimension. The concern for the present of practical engagement did not cancel out interest in the past, but did condition it at the very least to the extent that the format of considerations on and interpretations of the past was specifically intended to serve as a guide to dealing with the present.

In the light of the significant practical value attached to works of historiography, it is to be expected that the authors of historiographical works were fully aware of it. Moreover, as “active participants in, and commentators on, state affairs”, these authors and compilers of historiographical works were almost without exception active as officials. These men not only recorded the past and shaped the way it was referred to; they also played leading roles in the present of practical engagement for the benefit of which historiographical works were produced. And to add one more dimension to their “conflict of interest”, the absolute majority of the well-known and respected historiographers also doubled as royal lecturers in the palace. The royal lecture was an institution that came to enjoy enormous popularity and influence under Yejong. It institutionalised lectures on Chinese classics to the ruler, which were given by famous scholars. Apart from the ruler, other scholars and officials were present in large numbers and the ruler usually had one or more prominent scholars question and react to the appointed lecturer.<sup>39</sup>

The list of royal lecturers reads as a list of state historians. In fact, all recorded royal lecturers can without exception be shown to have held a historiographical office at or around the time of lecturing. It has long been unclear whether the forty-nine times royal lectures were recorded in the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* constituted in fact the total number of royal lectures during the Koryŏ. The epitaph of Yun Ŏni 尹彦頤 (?-1149), who was a popular royal lecturer in his day, implies that the total number of royal lectures was in reality more than forty-nine. It mentions that he first wrote and then lectured on the *Wŏllyŏng kuŏi* 月令口義 (*Oral explication of the monthly directives*). The inscription then states that he gave royal lectures every year during Injong’s reign, for which “he received a jewel-studded belt more than once”. The epitaph concludes with the assertion that Yun was known as the “Confucius of Haedong” 海東孔子 (an honour he had to share with Ch’oe Ch’ung 崔沖 and Yi Kyubo) and was well-

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themselves little or no poetic license with rhyme. Chinese poets, on the other hand, were much freer in using rhyme. But Koryŏ poets clearly distinguished themselves from their Chinese examples and counterparts by incorporating “typical” Koryŏ or peninsular themes and references in their poetry. They expanded their linguistically perhaps somewhat limited corpus of references, as it were, by adding Koryŏ and peninsular history to it. See Martin, François., “Expression chinoise et spécificité coréenne,” in *Cahiers d’études coréennes* 5: (1989): pp. 147-167 (edited by Daniel Bouchez, Robert C. Provine and Roderick Whitfield. *Twenty papers on Korean studies offered to professor W.E. Skilled.* Paris: Centre d’études coréennes).

<sup>39</sup> Judging from the fact that more often than not scholars critical towards each other found themselves formally opposing each other during the royal lectures, the lectures also seem to have served as some sort of modest arena in which ideological battles were fought. The fact that not only the royal lecturer himself, but also his opponent was mentioned in the sources as a matter of principle, attests to the importance attached to the debates.

versed in the six classics and the histories. The epitaph alerts us once again to the explicit connection between Chinese learning, historiography and the royal lectures, but also strongly suggests that the royal lectures were held more often than the extant sources specify.<sup>40</sup> Neither the *Koryŏsa* nor the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* record Yun Ŏni's writing of, and lecturing on the *Wŏllyŏng kuŏi*, or his yearly lectures for Injong or even a frequency that justifies the expression used in his epitaph.<sup>41</sup> This suggests that Yun gave royal lectures more frequently than has been recorded. If this holds true for Yun Ŏni, it would most probably be true for the other royal lecturers as well, raising the frequency and consequently the significance of the royal lecture. The piece of information that settles this question is from the epitaph for Yi Inyŏng 李仁榮, a civilian official, who is not mentioned in the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* as a royal lecturer, but whose epitaph explicitly mentions his having read the royal lecture.<sup>42</sup> The only time Yi Inyŏng is mentioned in the *Koryŏsa* is as a historian who fails a particularly ingenious poetry contest thought out by Ŭijong.<sup>43</sup> It does seem to be the case, then, that more royal lectures were held than have been recorded, which underlines both the ideological and the political significance of the royal lecture.

What exactly was the significance of the royal lecture with regard to the practice of historiography in Koryŏ? This is partly illustrated by a text written by Kim Yŏn 金緣 (also known as Kim Injon 金仁存, ?-1127) about the Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak 清燕閣 (Pavilion of Bright Debate), the *Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak ki* 清燕閣記 (Record of the Pavilion of Bright Debate). The *Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak ki* was highly valued to the extent that Yejong ordered it to be engraved in stone and exhibited.<sup>44</sup> The inscription of texts in stone was a rare honour bestowed only upon the most respected and honoured texts. The compilers of the *Koryŏsa* obviously felt the same way, because they decided to record it in its entirety in Kim Yŏn's biography, where the *Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak ki* takes up the lion's share of the description of Kim's life. Kim Yŏn explained the creation and development of this pavilion, which doubled as royal library (edicts from the Song and Liao emperors were also kept here) and lecture hall for the royal lectures.<sup>45</sup> It was established early in the reign of Yejong. Due to its location within the inner palace, the scholars who were institutionally part of the Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak, in actual practice lived and worked in the nearby Pomun'gak 寶文閣 (Pavilion of Precious Learning) which was located outside the inner palace; this made it easier for the scholars to walk in and out of the building without being bothered by the strict palace regulations. The royal lectures and institutions such as Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak and Pomun'gak were adopted from Song example; Kim Yŏn emphasized in

<sup>40</sup> *Yun Ŏni myojimjŏng* 尹彦頤 墓誌銘 in *KMC* 115: 89, 97, 100.

<sup>41</sup> The *Koryŏsa* mentions that Yun Ŏni lectured for Injong in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth years of his reign. One year later, Yun fell from grace and was banished, not to return to court for some years. It seems probable, then, that Yun has given royal lectures mainly before his banishment in 1136 and perhaps again after his return to the court.

<sup>42</sup> *Yi Inyŏng myojimjŏng* 李仁榮 墓誌銘 in *KMC* 222:11.

<sup>43</sup> *KS* 17: 24a.

<sup>44</sup> *KS* 96: 9b.

<sup>45</sup> Out of a total number of 25 lectures during the reign of Yejong, only the first lecture – when the pavilion had not yet been build – and the twenty-fourth lecture for unknown reasons were held elsewhere, respectively in the Mundŏkjŏn hall 文德殿 and the Changnyŏngjŏn hall 長寧殿. See Kwŏn Yŏnung 權연웅, "Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi kyŏngyŏn 高麗時代의 經筵," *Kyŏngbuk sabak* 慶北史學 6 (1983): pp. 1-32, esp. p. 8.

his text that “the pavilions of learning and the entertaining of wise scholars have taken the institutions of Xuanhe 宣和 [reign name of Song emperor Huizong 徽宗] as their example [...]. Although there are differences in scale, there are certainly no differences in the intention of treating wise and able scholars with special courtesy”.<sup>46</sup> In a manner characteristic for this period, Kim Yŏn has Yejong state that “now that the warfare and fighting at the three borders has ceased [Koryŏ] has achieved a unified culture that is equal to that of China.” In this manner, both the establishment of the pavilions and the creation of the royal lectures functioned on the one hand as important emblems of Sinitic culture and of Koryŏ’s cultural achievements based upon Sinitic culture. The other significant aspect was the opportunity the royal lectures (and other assemblies in one of the two pavilions) afforded for ruler and ministers and scholars to gather and discuss the affairs of state in a broader perspective than during regular cabinet meetings. Yejong habitually invited scholars to discuss the affairs of state with him. In the document that announced the posthumous name of Yejong, Pak Sŭngjung 朴昇中 (fl. middle twelfth century) writes that “[Yejong] often received the scholars who attended him. He took pleasure in always having them lecture, providing a structure to govern the country and giving it a firm basis.”<sup>47</sup> This mention in the text that conferred his posthumous title upon him reveals what Yejong thought important in the governing of the country and how he set about achieving it. It also shows that scholars, of whom Pak Sŭngjung was a prominent example, appreciated this and acknowledged that the lectures that Yejong had them give, performed an important function in providing Koryŏ with a sound intellectual foundation for its government.

The royal lecture functioned as a meeting that was both political and intellectual and in this way was little different from the writing of history. The same concern for the present of practical engagement underlay both activities. The list of subjects lectured upon illustrates this: it is composed entirely of chapters from the Chinese classics that were deemed to be of eminent practical value.<sup>48</sup> The royal lecturers were also known to lecture the heir apparent.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> KS 96: 9b.

<sup>47</sup> *Yewang shich’aek mun* 睿王諡冊文 in TMS 28: 18a-19a.

<sup>48</sup> Kwŏn Yŏnung, “Koryŏ-shidae-ŭi kyŏngyŏn”. Another example of the practical aspect of the royal lecture is the book Yun Oni compiled on the months of the year and the lecture he held about it.

<sup>49</sup> Kim Yŏn is recorded as having lectured the heir apparent. Other lecturers include Kim Puŭi. Given the fact that both of these scholars were also popular lecturers for the royal lectures, it stands to reason to surmise that the lectures for the ruler and those for the heir apparent were given by the same persons. The following persons can be verified as having lectured once or more: in 1106, Yun Kwan lectured on *Against luxurious ease* 無逸篇 and O Yŏnch’ong 吳延寵 lectured on the *Book of rites* 禮記 (KS 14: 26b-27a). In 1116, Pak Kyŏngin 朴景仁 lectured on the *Book of documents* 尚書 (KS 14: 17b). In the following years, Ko Sŏnyu 高先柔 gave a lecture on three chapters in the *Book of documents* (大禹謨 皋陶, 益稷) and Yang Ollyŏng and Chi Ch’anghŭp 池昌洽 on the *Doctrine of the mean* 中庸 and the *Game of pitch-pot* 投壺 (KS 14: 18a). Pak Sŭngjung 朴昇中 lectured many times during the reign of Yejong: on the Qian trigram 乾卦 in the *Book of changes* 周易 (KS 14: 19a); the *Great plan* 洪範 in the *Book of documents* (KS 14: 31b-32a); on the *Doctrine of the mean* (KS 14: 32b); again on the *Great plan* (KS 14: 33a); on the *Monthly directives* 月令 in the *Book of rites* (KS 14: 37a); again on the *Great plan* (KS 14: 36a); and again on the *Monthly directives* (KS 14: 36a). Kim Yŏn is recorded once; he lectured on the *Great plan* (KS 14: 25a). Hong Kwan 洪灌 held a royal lecture on the *Book of documents* (KS 14: 26a). Kim Puil 金富侁, the eldest of four Kim brothers to pass the state examinations and hold high office, gave lectures on the *Book of odes* 詩經 (KS 14: 26a); again on the same book (KS 14: 35b); and on the *Great plan* (KS 15: 22a-b). Kim Pushik, the third of the four brothers also lectured on the *Book of documents* (KS 14:



Kim Puüi had the chance to lecture Injong when Injong still resided in the Eastern Palace, the traditional residence of the heir apparent:

The king asked [Puüi] about the border defence policy and he answered him as follows: When Du Mu 杜牧 of the Tang answered an inquiry about current affairs, he wrote that there is no better policy than self-government and when emperor Zhenzong of the Song discussed the border defence policy with Wen Yanfu 文彦博, [Wen] answered that the first priority is to govern oneself, not to invade other countries and not to help distant countries. Wang Anshi 王安石 evaluated this opinion as proper and further said that if one governs oneself well, even in a small country of only seventy *li* one can be ruler of a realm 天下. Mencius said that a country of thousand *li* does not have to be afraid of other countries, but the reason that we, while our realm covers a thousand *li*, are afraid of others, is because we do not govern ourselves. At present, Koryö occupies the old territories of the Three Han and how could that be no more than seventy *li*? Nonetheless, we fear other countries and this must be undoubtedly so because we do not make it our priority to govern ourselves. [...] Using one's strong points and observing the changes in the situation of the enemy is precisely what Liang Shang 梁商 suggested and this is extremely appropriate for our present situation. We should have the walls of the capital and of the garrisons of each province made higher and the moats dug deeper. We should keep in stock powerful arrows, poisoned arrows, cannon and flare rockets and we should dispatch people to supervise and manage this by meting out appropriate rewards and punishments.<sup>59</sup>

Since there are no notes left from the royal lectures, an educated guess about their contents is the best that can be done. Judging from the recorded subjects of the royal lectures and assuming that since the same scholars and historians who gave the royal lectures also lectured the heir apparent it may be surmised that the contents of these two kinds of lectures were similar – although the status greatly differed. Kim Puüi's answer to then heir apparent Injong perfectly illustrates the style of reasoning that needs history as its raw material. Kim argues his case – the self-sufficiency of Koryö in both ideological and military respect – by referring to poets, rulers, philosophers and statesmen of Chinese history and related their experiences – or at least the historical condensation of these experiences – to Koryö's present of practical engagement.

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37a); on the Qian trigram of the *Book of changes* (KS 14: 39a); on the Book of changes and the *Book of documents* (KS 16: 29b); again on the Qian trigram and on the Peace hexagram (KS 16: 27a); and the last time he appeared as royal lecturer, he talked about The Great Taming Force hexagram 大畜卦 and the Returning hexagram 卦 (KS 16: 45a). The youngest brother Kim Puch'öl 金富轍 (later known as Kim Puüi 金富儀) lectured on *Against luxurious ease* (KS 16: 2a); *The Great plan* (KS 16: 26b); and the *Book of documents* (KS 16: 31a). Han Anin held royal lectures on the Peace hexagram (KS 14: 26a) and Lao-tzu (KS 14: 30a). Yi Yöng 李永 spoke about the *Book of documents* (KS 14: 27b), while Chöng Küg'yöng 鄭克永 lectured about the *Monthly directives* (KS 14: 33b). Chöng Chisang 鄭知常 is on record as lecturing on *Against luxurious ease* (KS 15: 22b). The subject of Yi Inyöng's lecture is not recorded (KMC 106: 11). Im Chon discussed the *Book of documents* (KS 14: 36a). Chöng Hang talked about the *Book of odes* (KS 15: 22b), the Doctrine of the mean (KS 16: 19a) and again on the *Book of odes* (KS 16: 30b). Yun Öni 尹彦頤 held lectures about the Qian trigram (KS 16: 19a), the *Doctrine of the mean* (KS 16: 26a) and the *Monthly directives* (KS 16: 30a). Chöng Sümmyöng talked about the *Book of documents* (KS 17: 15a) and Ch'oe Yuch'öng 崔惟清, finally, held a lecture on the *Book of documents* (KS 17: 21b). Interestingly, there is also an entry in the sources on a Buddhist monk delivering a lecture in the palace on the *Flower garland sutra*, apparently as a royal lecture and not as a dharma talk (KS 16: 31a).

<sup>59</sup> KS 97: 3b-4b.

The institute of the royal lecture influenced and was influenced by the practice of historiography. It was influenced by historiography since it relied upon historical precedent to explain, legitimate or refute policies, ideas and interpretations of the classics. It influenced it because those same scholars that prepared and held the royal lectures occupied the historiographical positions at court. An epitaph for a high official from 1146 describes in what respect the royal lectures were of immediate practical use during Yejong's reign. It mentions how a scholar of good repute was customarily ordered to record the royal lectures and the discussion afterwards. His notes were then distributed among the *chaesang* 宰相, the highest ranking and most influential officials.<sup>51</sup> The royal lecture was an expression of how history was perceived and how history was used in dealing with the present; this aspect ensured that the relationship between historiography and the royal lecture worked both ways. Considering the inextricable relations between the practice of historiography, historiographers, royal lecturers and the royal lecture, it is justified and necessary to treat them in the same context. The way the royal lectures functioned both as emblems of Sinitic and Koryŏ culture and as a debating space for ideological and political issues clearly illustrates how intertwined with the present of practical engagement history—or historiography—was perceived to be. Extant Koryŏ period historiographical materials all point to this characteristic. Historical studies that were pursued out of antiquarian interest, for example, have not survived, if they were composed at all. Even those historiographical works that to a present-day observer may seem obscure, antiquarian and possessing little practical relevance, were composed with the present of practical engagement in mind. The difficulties an observer encounters when trying to separate the practice of historiography from its practitioners and their other activities are instructive. Historiography in Koryŏ was never supposed to function independently; it was supposed to be an integral part of society and especially of the political world. The way a text like the *Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak ki* signals both admiration for the achievements of Sinitic culture and esteem for Koryŏ's own accomplishments alerts us to a similar phenomenon; the separation inflicted upon the different elements in the text is artificial and not original to the text.

History was alive in Koryŏ in a very literal sense; it fulfilled an indispensable function in dealing with the present. Historians were important, both ideologically and politically. It is no coincidence that a large number of Koryŏ's most influential statesmen were also capable historians in their own right. The separation of Koryŏ politics and Koryŏ historiography is largely a modern construct. Using the recorded past to cope with the present was as much a part of politics as using the present to compile the past was a part of historiography. And both were entirely legitimate actions.

After this brief examination of the purpose with which history was written and how it used in early to mid-Koryŏ, it is now necessary to take a concrete look at extant Koryŏ historiographical works.

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<sup>51</sup> *Ch'oe Shiyun myojimyŏng* 崔時允 墓誌銘 in *KMC* 84: 7-9.

## CHAPTER SIX

### EARLY KORYŎ HISTORICAL WORKS

The earliest extant Koryŏ historical work is the *Samguk sagi* which was completed in 1146, more than 200 years after the establishment of the dynasty.<sup>1</sup> During that time, histories and veritable records were compiled, but none of these has survived in its complete form. Only scattered quotations of earlier works have survived. According to these scraps and bits, the earliest Koryŏ history was the *Samguksa* 三國史, the *History of the Three Kingdoms*. Its first mention appears in the collected writings of Ŭich'ŏn 義天, Koryŏ's famous scholar-monk of royal blood. In the *Taegak kuksa munjip* 大覺國師文集 (*Collected writings of national master Taegak*), Ŭich'ŏn recounts the legend of the famous Koguryŏ monk Podök 普德. The entire entry is as follows:

Prostrating before the portrait of Sage Podök in the room that he flew into of Kyöngboksa temple in Kodaesan 孤大山景福寺飛來方丈禮普德聖師影 [*Kodaesan Kyöngbok-sa Piraepangjang ye Podök söngsa yöng*]

The equal teachings of the Nirvana sutra [yölbangyöng 涅槃經]  
Have been transmitted by our teacher. When the two sages Wönhyo 元曉 and Ŭisang 義湘  
clasped the sutra's and went in search of a master  
Our teacher was an unrivalled Buddhist monk.  
Following his karma, he travelled south and north  
The Way knows no receptions and followings.  
How sad! After he flew out of his room  
Tongmyöng's old country was in danger.

The eminent Koguryŏ monk Podök Hwasang was a monk of Pallyong-sa temple 盤龍山.  
When King Chang was led astray by Daoism and abolished Buddhism [as the state religion],  
the master immediately flew away from his room to Kodaesan in Wönsan Province in  
Paekche. Afterwards, a transcendent appeared in Maryöng 馬嶺 and said to a certain  
person: "The day your country will perish is at hand." This is how it is written in the *Haedong  
samguksa* 海東三國史.<sup>2</sup>

The source mentioned in Ŭich'ŏn's recording of the legend of Podök is the *Haedong samguksa*. As shown in the first chapter, 'Haedong' was a geonym that referred to the peninsula and that was particularly used in contrast with China and Sinitic civilization. It occurs in

<sup>1</sup> The traditional date is 1145, but according to the *Koryŏsa*, the *Samguk sagi* was completed in the twelfth month of the twenty-third year of the reign of Injong according to the lunar calendar. Converted to the solar calendar, this corresponds to February 1146.

<sup>2</sup> *TKM* 17: 8a-b.

numerous book titles from the Koryŏ dynasty and is often omitted.<sup>3</sup> Its use here may be because it was originally part of the title or perhaps to accentuate the indigenous nature of the work. Be that as it may, despite its first mention as the *Haedong samguksa*, this history of the Three Kingdoms has subsequently become known simply as the *Samguksa*. Chŏng Kubok suggests that Ŭich'ŏn used the epithet 'Haedong' to distinguish the *Samguksa* from the Chinese historical work *Samguozhi* 三國志 (*Tales of the Three Kingdoms*), but this seems to have been unnecessary.<sup>4</sup> Those who were able to read Ŭich'ŏn's writings would have been trained in the Chinese classics to such an extent that they would not have mixed up the Chinese *Samguozhi* and the Koryŏ *Samguksa*, despite the identical first two characters. Moreover, the passage quoted by Ŭich'ŏn unambiguously refers to matters relating to the peninsula. It is therefore more plausible that Ŭich'ŏn used the epithet 'Haedong' to emphasize its native provenance, in accordance with the contemporary use of 'Haedong'.

Another mention of the *Samguksa* comes two centuries later, in Yi Kyubo's famous epical poem about King Tongmyŏng. In the poem, Yi not only points out that the *Samguksa* had become difficult to obtain in the thirteenth century, but he also refers to it as the *Ku samguksa*, the *Old history of the Three Kingdoms*. The prefix 'old' had become necessary since the dominant historical work of the middle and later Koryŏ was the *Samguk sagi* of 1146. In contrast with the relatively small chance that the *Samguksa* would be confused with the *Samguozhi*, it was easy to mistake *Samguksa* for a shortened version of *Samguk sagi*, hence the use of the prefix 'old'.<sup>5</sup>

The loss of many early Koryŏ records makes it impossible to ascertain the exact date of the compilation of the *Samguksa*, but an educated guess is possible. It was probably composed before the reign of Sŏngjong because the records after Sŏngjong are detailed to the extent that the compilation of the *Samguksa* would have been mentioned. It is hard to imagine that such an epochal event as the presentation of an official history would not have found its way into the annals of the Koryŏ dynasty. A good possibility, then, for the time period in which the *Samguksa* was composed, is the period before Sŏngjong. In 1011, the invading Liao army destroyed most of Kaegyŏng and, as mentioned before, the lost historical records were reconstructed among other techniques by interviewing old people in the bureaucracy and at court. The reign of Sŏngjong, which had started in 983 and ended in 999, would have been close enough in the past to allow people to have memories of it that would have roughly matched the lost historical records. The reigns of Kwangjong and Kyŏngjong, however, would be a different matter; Kwangjong had ascended the throne in 950 and Kyŏngjong in 975, which would ask significantly more of human memory (and hearsay) than the reign of

<sup>3</sup> See for example the *Haedong pirok* 海東秘錄 from 1106, the *Haedong kobyŏn ch'amgi* 海東古賢識記 mentioned in 1151 or the *Haedong mun'gam* 海東文鑑 written during the waning years of the dynasty. *KS* 12: 21a; *KS* 54: 2b; *TS* 127:10a.

<sup>4</sup> Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han'guk chungse sahaksa*, pp. 189-226, esp. 221 2000; Pak Hannam 朴漢男, "P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok-gwa kit'a sasŏ-ŭi p'yŏnch'an 評年通略과 기타 사서의 편찬," in *Han'guksa* 17, pp. 175-187; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Yi Kyubo Tongmyŏngwang p'yŏn ŭi sahakchŏk koch'al: Kusamguksagi charyo-ŭi punsŏg-ŭl chungshim-ŭro 李奎報「東明王篇」의 史學史的 考察; 舊三國史記 資料의 分析을 중심으로," *Tongbang hakchi* 東方學志 46-47-48 (1985): pp. 55-73.

<sup>5</sup> Even the *Koryŏsa* records the *Samguk sagi* as the *Samguksa* in the entry that mentions its completion and its dedication to Injong. See *KS* 17: 14b.

Söngjong. In 1013 (the time when Hyönjong instructed his historians to compile a new history), it would not be easy to find persons with knowledge of the early days of Kwangjong's reign, more than 60 years before. There are several circumstances which make it plausible that Kwangjong's reign (925-949-975) furnished the background to the *Samguksa's* compilation.<sup>6</sup> Firstly, Kwangjong's reign predates that of Söngjong and his was a lengthy one. The 26 years Kwangjong was in power afforded him sufficient time to undertake such a time-consuming, costly and demanding work as the compilation of a state history. In fact, only T'aejo had enjoyed a comparable period on the throne, but owing to the political, institutional and other difficulties the founder of the Koryö faced during his years in power, the assumption that the *Samguksa* was compiled during his reign is at the very least implausible. Further indirect evidence strengthening the case for Kwangjong is constituted by the fact that the very first records of state historians receiving official appointments and assignments are from this period; that many records during his reign have been lost, presumably including the record mentioning the compilation of the *Samguksa*; that Kwangjong's interest in history is well-attested to.<sup>7</sup> A final clue is provided by the surviving fragments of the *Samguksa* itself; these fragments reveal that it used the *kijönch'e* 紀傳體, a format that betrays strong Chinese influence.<sup>8</sup> Kwangjong's preferential treatment of Chinese literati is well-known and the influx of Chinese scholars into Koryö during his reign was considerable.<sup>9</sup> Their influence was huge. It was during this period that the Chinese-style state examinations were introduced in Koryö, an achievement that can be largely attributed to Kwangjong's close adviser of Chinese descent Shuang Ji 雙冀.<sup>10</sup> The very fact that Ch'oe Süngno, an avid admirer of Sinitic culture, took it upon himself to criticize Kwangjong for his excessive appreciation of Chinese literati reveals much about the influence these Chinese scholars enjoyed during the reign of Kwangjong.

Apart from these external arguments, there is also an internal argument that points to the reign of Kwangjong as the likely period of compilation. As mentioned above, the *Samguksa* was written according to the *kijönch'e* format that arranged the historical narrative around historical persons. It did so by using *pon'gi* 本紀 (basic annals), a format meant for the exclusive use of the Son of Heaven, the *sega* 世家 (hereditary houses) which was meant for his vassals, kings in other words, and the *yölbön* 列傳 (biographies) for the biographies of men, sometimes

<sup>6</sup> There seems to be scholarly agreement on this dating. See Chöng Kubök, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 189-226; Pak Hannam, "P'yön nyönt'ongnok-gwa kit'a sasö-üi p'yönch'an," p. 185.

<sup>7</sup> Ch'oe laments Kwangjong's indiscriminate veneration of Chinese literati and their activities. See later in this chapter, when I discuss Ch'oe Süngno.

<sup>8</sup> This is ascertained by the existence of the reference in the Tongmyöngwang p'yön to the *pon'gi* and the existence of *yölbön*. Both are characteristic for this manner of arranging historical events and group them around historical persons. The *pon'gi* 本紀 ('basic annals') was meant for the Son of Heaven, the *sega* 世家 ('hereditary houses') for his vassals and the *yölbön* 列傳 ('biographies') for the biographies of individual men and sometimes women. See Chöng Kubök, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 211-212, p. 215.

<sup>9</sup> Kim Kaptong 金甲東, "Kwangjong-gwa Kyöngjong-üi wanggwön kanghai chöngch'æk 光宗과 경종의 왕권강화 정책," *Han'guksa*, volume twelve, pp. 99-124.

<sup>10</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Süngno sangsömun yön'gu* 崔承老上書文研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1992), pp. 162-174; Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Koryö Kwangjong yön'gu* 高麗光宗研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1981); Ch'ae Hüisuk 蔡熙淑, "Koryö Kwangjong-üi kwagöje shilshi-wa Ch'oe Süngno 高麗光宗의 科擧制 실시와 崔承老," in *Yöksa hakpo* 歷史學報 164 (1999): pp. 67-97; Hö Hüngshik, *Koryö kwagö chedosa yön'gu* 高麗科擧制度史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1981), pp. 2-19.

virtuous women and overviews of international relations, in which every state with which ties were maintained had its own chapter. The very fact that the *Samguksa* had a *pon'gi*, which was normally only used by the Chinese Son of Heaven, again points at the reign of Kwangjong as a likely candidate for its composition.<sup>11</sup> Kwangjong, after all, stands out for his unabashed embracing of imperial titles and prerogatives. Strangely, this fact is overlooked in all *Samguksa* research up to date. Kwangjong's reign was characterized to an important extent by an imperial tradition that stressed Koryŏ's independence vis-à-vis China<sup>12</sup> and by the simultaneous existence of a strong sinification movement.<sup>13</sup> The composition of the *Samguksa* in this climate makes sense; the *Samguksa* also combined the two identity-defining elements of autonomy and thorough sinification.

The most important fact about the *Samguksa*, however, which is often overlooked, is the fact that it is a Confucian history. Despite assertions to the contrary, the very few extant fragments point in this direction and so does the compilation background of this first Koryŏ history. According to Chŏng Kubok, the *Samguksa* shows signs of an immature digestion of Confucian historiography: the overall structure of the work was Confucian, but the recorded stories were reproduced in their original form.<sup>14</sup> Apart from the questionable teleological thinking involved in this statement (it proceeds from an understanding that Confucian historiography was to be digested by Koryŏ historians in the future and that this is a progressive process), it is doubtful whether this is a true hallmark of the immaturity of Confucian historiography. It rather is an admission that the *Samguksa* is always thought of in contrast with the *Samguk sagi*, Kim Pushik's twelfth-century history of the Three Kingdoms and the earliest extant history of the peninsula. One of the main reasons for the idea that the *Samguksa*, even though it has not survived, should still be researched and possesses "immense" significance<sup>15</sup> is revisionist; it is used to "topple" the unrivalled significance of the *Samguk sagi*. The debate surrounding the historiographical merits and demerits of the *Samguk sagi* is over a century old and still not decided. I will deal with the debate on the *Samguk sagi* later in this chapter, but its essence is about the alleged tributary and non-autonomous nature of Kim Pushik's history. Historians are quite enthusiastic over the prospect of having a history that is the anti-thesis to the dominant perception of the *Samguk sagi* as a sinophile and non-autonomous work, while in fact all remaining clues point to the *Samguksa* as a history that was compiled according to Confucian guidelines. After all, it should not pass unnoticed that at the time of the establishment of the Koryŏ dynasty, a more or less Confucian tradition of

<sup>11</sup> The *Koryŏsa* for instance has no *pon'gi*, but instead *sega*. The same goes for all other histories edited in the Chosŏn period (with the exception of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Basic annals were associated with Sons of Heaven, 'hereditary houses' with vassal states. Deviation from this principle instantly signalled deviation from the formal order of things.

<sup>12</sup> Kim Ch'anghyŏn has devoted a book to Kwangjong's imperial movement. See Kim Ch'anghyŏn 김창현, *Kwangjong-ŭi ch'eguk* 광종의 제국 (Seoul: P'urŏn yŏksa 푸른역사, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŏngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, pp. 162-174; Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Koryŏ Kwangjong yŏn'gu*, esp. pp. 31-46; Ch'ae Hŭisuk, "Koryŏ Kwangjong-ŭi kwagŏje shilshi-wa Ch'oe Sŏngno", pp. 67-97; Hŏ Hŭngshik, *Koryŏ kwagŏ chedosa yŏn'gu*, pp. 2-15.

<sup>14</sup> Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han'guk chungse sahaksa*, pp. 189-226.

<sup>15</sup> Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han'guk chungse sahaksa*, pp. 189.

historiography had existed on the peninsula for more than 500 years.<sup>16</sup> It is hard to imagine that the *Samguksa* was written in an intellectual vacuum that ignored this tradition. Besides, the underlying assumption of this debate is that Confucianism and autonomy are mutually exclusive opposites. As I will attempt to show later in another chapter, there is no such thing as “Confucianism” as an exclusive ideology and the Confucianism of Kim Pushik is certainly not inherently hostile to autonomy, on the contrary. The debate on the nature of the *Samguksa* is predominantly informed by its presupposed differences from the *Samguk sagi* and in particular by concerns with regard to the debate of autonomy versus sinophilia. Given the fact that a very limited number of extant scraps from the *Samguksa*, there are comparatively few internal reasons for continuing research into the *Samguksa*. One important internal reason to look at the *Samguksa* is the fact that Kim Pushik in all probability heavily relied upon it when he compiled the *Samguk sagi*.<sup>17</sup>

Little is known about Koryŏ’s oldest history. Due to a lack of sources, educated guesswork is the most that can be aspired to, but a few characteristics can fortunately be established on the basis of known facts. First, the repeated assertion of most historians that the *Samguksa* was Koguryŏ-oriented can be easily dismissed as counterfactual historiography.<sup>18</sup> The very title of the *Samguksa* suggests that it is a history of the Three Kingdoms, not a mere history of Koguryŏ and Koryŏ (although it also does not preclude a possible emphasis on Koguryŏ history). If the idea of Koguryŏ-successionism were indeed the driving force behind the compilation, a different title would have been a *sine qua non*. Why call it *History of the Three Kingdoms*, while it mainly deals with Koguryŏ and Koryŏ? The fact that it clearly refers to the Three Kingdoms in its title is a manifestation of Samhan-successionism, regardless of the relative weight these three states carried within the historical narrative. The dominant interpretation of the *Samguksa* supposes an official ratification of Koryŏ’s Koguryŏ-successionism to have been the motive for the compilation of the *Samguksa*, but based upon the available evidence it is hard to escape the conclusion that it was rather compiled as a justification of Koryŏ’s unification of the Three Kingdoms and as confirmation of Koryŏ’s installation of the Three Kingdoms and the Three Han as its charter states.<sup>19</sup> The compilation of the *History of the Three Kingdoms* directly referred to the understanding that the Three Kingdoms belonged together, just as the Three Han had. Only focusing on Koguryŏ (or Shilla or Paekche,

<sup>16</sup> As mentioned before, state histories based on the principles of Confucian historiography had been compiled in Paekche, Shilla and Koguryŏ.

<sup>17</sup> Tanaka Toshiaki 田中俊明, “Sankokushiki zanshin to kŭ sankokushi 三國史記撰進と旧三國史,” *Chōsen gakubō* 朝鮮學報 83 (1977): pp. 1-58, esp. pp. 6-7; Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn’goron*, pp. 206-256.

<sup>18</sup> The fact that it was not compiled by Kim Pushik is given much weight; as such, it must have been less Confucian, rationalist and sinophile. The second-most important argument is the idea that since the *Samguksa* incorporated more mythical elements without fitting them into a preconceived (and foreign) Confucian framework, it was generically much closer to Koguryŏ, portrayed as nativist and non-rational, than Shilla, described as sinocentric and rationalist. The suggestion that the *Samguksa* possessed more mythical contents than the *Samguk sagi*, is quite possibly correct, but there are not enough sources to allow a conclusion. Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han’guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 189-226; Kim Ch’ŏlchun, “Yi Kyubo Tongmyŏngwang p’yŏn ūi sahakchŏk koch’al: Kusamguksagi charyo-ŭi punsŏg-ŭl chungshim-ŭro” pp. 55-73; Pak Hannam, “P’yŏn nyŏnt’ongnok-gwa kit’a sasŏ-ŭi p’yŏnch’an,” p. 185.

<sup>19</sup> It will be remembered that during this period ‘Samguk 三國’ (Three Kingdoms) and ‘Samhan’ 三韓 (Three Han) were often used interchangeably. See chapter one.

for that matter) is missing an obvious point.

Secondly, the mythical nature of the *Samguksa* cannot be taken for granted. Apart from an often-encountered conflation of nativism, autonomy, independence, myth and Koguryŏ on the one side and Confucianism, tributary relations, dependence, rationalism and Shilla on the other side, the surviving fragments of the *Samguksa* clearly reveal its structure. It was written according to Confucian guidelines, as is clear from its format, and within that format tried to encompass Koryŏ's mythology and history. This is not a view on history that can be rightly characterized as 'mythical'. Perhaps it included more 'mythical' stories than the twelfth-century *Samguk sagi*, but even so, the *Samguksa* was an early manifestation of a Confucian view on history, adapted to the circumstances on the peninsula. This in itself is an extraordinarily important fact that is too often sacrificed to unsubstantiated essentialist debates on Koryŏ identity.<sup>20</sup> Such an assumption is supported by the fact that when Hyŏnjong in 1013 ordered Hwang Churyang, Ch'oe Chung, Yun Chinggo 尹徵古 and Chu Chŏ 周佇 to try and recompile the lost records by prying loose as many facts as possible from elderly people, the persons appointed were all Confucian scholars.<sup>21</sup> That the official state records were compiled by the state historian and his assistants is telling; it shows how influential Confucianism had become in these matters. It also forms a historiographical bridge between the *Samguksa* and the *Samguk sagi*, suggesting, again, that both works were part of the same tradition. The motivations behind the compilation of the *Samguksa* must perhaps be located in an attempt to justify the Koryŏ state (which was at the time of compilation still younger than fifty years) and to emphasize why the Three Kingdoms or the Three Han belonged together. Hence its name, which stresses the presence of the Three Kingdoms in Koryŏ's history. It stands to reason that the contents of the *Samguksa* were very different from those of the *Samguk sagi*; after all, two centuries separate them. Nonetheless, both are products from very similar historiographical traditions and much closer to each other than is normally supposed. A closer inspection of the *Samguk sagi* later in this part will bear out this assertion.

## CH'OE SŪNGNO

As seen above, during the early Koryŏ period state historiography (or at the very least official historiography and private historiography by state servants) was Confucian in character to the extent that history was thought to serve the state and facilitate proper government. One example of this approach to past and present is Ch'oe Sŭngno 崔承老 (927-989) who evaluated the achievements of the first five kings in his famous *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns* (*Ojo chŏngjŏk p'yŏng* 五朝政績評) and who stated his policy suggestions in *On current affairs* (*sbimuch'aek* 時務策). These memorials have usually been presented as political philosophical writings, which is certainly a correct characterization, but

<sup>20</sup> See the aforementioned studies on Koryŏ's Koguryŏ-successionism.

<sup>21</sup> At the same time, other renowned scholars of Confucianism were appointed as historians; Ch'oe Hang as supervising state historian, Kim Shimŏn as editing state historian. See *KS* 4: 15a.



not an exhaustive one.<sup>22</sup> They are as much historiographical. Ch'oe's lengthy commentaries can be considered as pieces of historical writing, since they exhibit the same characteristics as other pieces of historical writing from this period.<sup>23</sup> They reflect upon the past, refer to historical sources and past examples and try to distil a significance which is relevant to the present of practical engagement.<sup>24</sup> By the same token, historical writings from the early Koryŏ can be characterized as politically motivated documents, and indeed have been interpreted in such a manner.<sup>25</sup> Interpreting political philosophical writings in a historiographical context, though, seems to be decidedly less popular.

Ch'oe Sŭngno descended from the three famous Confucian scholars, known as the Three Ch'oe's (*sam Ch'oe* 三崔); Ch'oe Ch'iwon 崔致遠 (857-?), Ch'oe Ōnwi 崔彦擣 (868-944) and Ch'oe Sŭngu 崔承祐 (?-936). Ch'oe Sŭngno first met T'aejo when Ch'oe was only twelve years old. He was a child prodigy taken along by his father to see the new strong man on the peninsula to whom they had surrendered three years earlier, in the retinue of Shilla King Kyŏngsun 敬順王. Ch'oe received T'aejo's special attention when he proved capable of reciting the *Analects* 論語 by heart. He subsequently received an academic appointment and eventually was given charge of the preservation of the state's documents (a position previously held by Ch'oe Ōnwi). He also drafted the diplomatic correspondence that was sent abroad. During the turbulent early years of the dynasty, Ch'oe became one of the most respected statesmen, untouched even by Kwangjong's purges.<sup>26</sup> When he wrote his memorials at

<sup>22</sup> Kim Ilhwan 金日煥, for instance presents a analysis of Ch'oe's thought as 'realist Confucianism' 實踐儒學, which was eminently suited to react to contemporary circumstances. Kim uses this argument to construct a political and contemporary interpretation of Ch'oe as an example of progressive and modern (sic) Confucianism. Kim Ilhwan, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi yugyo chŏngch'i sasang yŏn'gu 崔承老의 儒教政治思想 研究," *Yugyo sasang yŏn'gu* 儒教思想研究 4-5 (1992): pp. 129-160.

<sup>23</sup> Hong Sŭnggi's 洪承基 monograph is the only study to discuss Ch'oe's views on history. He does this in a very sophisticated and abstract way, concluding that Ch'oe's ideas on history were classically Confucian. See Hong Sŭnggi, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi Yugyojuŭi sahangnon 崔承老의 儒教主義史學論," *Chindan hakpo* 92 (2001): pp. 369-384. There are a number of monographs on Ch'oe Sŭngno, all of which interpret his writings as pieces of political philosophy, with the exception of Hong Sŭnggi's study; Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi chŏngch'i sasang yŏn'gu 高麗初期 崔承老의 政治思想 研究," in *Ihwa sawŏn* 梨大史苑 12 (1975): pp. 1-28; O Yŏngbyŏn 吳瑛燮, "Ch'oe Sŭngno sangsŏmun-ŭi sasangjŏk kiban-gwa yŏksajŏk ŭiŭi 崔承老 上書文의 思想的 基盤과 歷史的 意義," *T'aedong kojŏn yŏn'gu* 泰東古典研究 10 (1993): pp. 231-264; Yi Cheun 李在云, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi chŏngch'i sasang 崔承老의 政治思想," *Sanun sabak* 汕耘史學 3 (1989): pp. 163-186; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayŏ 崔承老의 時務二十八條에 對하여," in *Yŏsŏng Cho Myŏnggi paksu hwagap kinyŏm pulgyosahak nonch'ong* 曉城趙明基博士華甲記念 佛教史學論叢 (Seoul: Yŏsŏng Cho Myŏnggi paksu hwagap kinyŏm pulgyosahak nonch'ong kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe 曉城趙明基博士華甲記念佛教史學論叢刊行委員會, 1965), edited by Yŏsŏng Cho Myŏnggi paksu hwagap kinyŏm pulgyosahak nonch'ong kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe, pp. 227-256. Reprinted in *Han'guk sabaksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史學史研究 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1990), edited by Ilgye Kim Ch'ŏlchun chŏnjip kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe 一溪金哲俊全集刊行委員會, pp. 185-226.

<sup>24</sup> I have relied on the corrected and crosschecked versions of Ch'oe memorials in Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŭngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu* 崔承老上書文研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1992). The memorials have been recorded in the *Koryŏsa*, but also (partly) in the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*, *Tŏng munsŏn* and some literary collections. Yi Kibaek compared all extant versions and chose the most plausible ones. I shall refer to the pages of this study when I refer to Ch'oe's memorials instead of their locus classicus in the *Koryŏsa*.

<sup>25</sup> The debate on the political motivations that underlie the *Samguk sagi* for instance is a good example. See later in this chapter

<sup>26</sup> Kim Ch'ŏlchun argued that Ch'oe's memorials to Sŏngjong emerged out of Ch'oe's experiences during that time. The ideal Ch'oe presented to Sŏngjong was that of a harmonious relationship between a wise ruler and his wise(r)

Sōngjong's behest and presented them to him in 981, he had already served five kings.<sup>27</sup> According to the dominant Confucian historiography of the day, Ch'oe was an ideal historian, in the senses that he both knew the circumstances first hand and through the documents and that he understood the value of the past in relation to the present. His memorials are testimonies to this well-accepted double role of the Confucian official and scholar-historian.

Ch'oe Sūngno was one of the most prominent Confucian statesmen of the Koryō dynasty. The excellence of his lineage played an important role in his career; it would not have been conceivable for so gifted a person with that background to pursue a different kind of career. One thing, however, distinguishes him from his three famous forebears. They all went to Tang China, passed the state examinations and served a number of years in the Tang bureaucracy before returning to the peninsula. Ch'oe Sūngno, on the other hand, finished his education on the peninsula. It is not known why he never went to China to pursue his studies, although it is easily imagined that both the tumultuous situation in his home country and uncertain political circumstances in China after the fall of the Tang kept him from going abroad. His peninsular education is more than just a testimony to the level of education available at the peninsula at this time. It also thoroughly influenced his outlook on the world. Although usually portrayed as a traditional Confucian scholar and statesman whose heart was with China, Ch'oe displayed a very peninsular perspective in his judgments. His habit to address Sōngjong and other rulers as *sōngsang* 聖上, his mention of T'aejo's mandate of Heaven and his references to the sons of T'aejo as "offspring of the Imperial House" 皇家之支葉 portray the peninsular habit of appropriating the imperial status of the Chinese Son of Heaven, both ontologically and symbolically.<sup>28</sup> A closer look at Ch'oe's memorials will tell us more about his decidedly peninsular political outlook.

The *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns* is a document that can perhaps be best characterized as a king's mirror. Ch'oe explicitly stated and repeated that the purpose of his appraisals was to have the ruler reflect upon the deeds of his predecessors and if good, repeat them, if bad, avoid them. Ch'oe's appraisal of the five rulers was meant to be used by the present ruler, Sōngjong. The manner in which he tried to extract significance from the past relevant to the present was historical. Looking back and holding up what had happened to Chinese history and Confucian philosophical dogma, Ch'oe constructed an implicit image of the ideal ruler of Koryō.<sup>29</sup> His explicit example was without doubt T'aejo, whose monumental achievement of unifying the peninsula and establishing the dynasty was "the merit of the founding ancestor" 始祖之德.<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, Ch'oe acknowledged T'aejo's possession of the

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ministers. Kim also pointed out the historical contradiction or perhaps irony involved: for Songjōng to be able to be a strong monarch, the ruthless purges under Kwangjong had been necessary preconditions. Ch'oe Sūngno was unequivocal in his condemnation of Kwangjong's purges, though. Kim Ch'ōlchun, "Ch'oe Sūngno-ūi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayō", pp. 221-222.

<sup>27</sup> T'aejo, Hyejong, Chōngjong, Kyōngjong and Kwangjong. Sōngjong was the sixth monarch he served. For a detailed description of Ch'oe's life and an analysis of his political philosophy, see Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, pp. 163-174.

<sup>28</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, pp. 7, 10, 67-68.

<sup>29</sup> Kim Ch'ōlchun, "Ch'oe Sūngno-ūi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayō", p. 221.

<sup>30</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 2.

mandate of Heaven and apparently also attached value to the prophecy that Wang Kōn would become king of Koryō.<sup>31</sup> In Ch'oe's estimation, Wang Kōn was the *telos* of peninsular history; even Wang Kōn's erstwhile lord and later enemy Kungye, who gets the worst possible treatment in the *Koryōsa*,<sup>32</sup> was mobilized in such a manner as to prop up Wang Kōn as the heavenly preordained ruler of the peninsula. Heaven had "borrowed the hands" of Kungye to establish a measure of order on the peninsula and made him ruler of Koryō, so that Wang Kōn could succeed him.<sup>33</sup> Wang Kōn then became T'aejo, the founding ancestor of Koryō, when "he unified the realm", compared to which "no achievement is loftier and no virtue is greater".<sup>34</sup> Ch'oe heaps praise upon T'aejo as the dynasty's founder, upon his frugality, his knowledge of diplomacy, his courteousness towards inferiors, his veneration of both Confucianism and Buddhism and his ability to make people come from afar and serve him.<sup>35</sup> Ch'oe's criticism with regard to T'aejo is limited to the extent that Koryō still lacked the achievements of a civilized state during his reign.<sup>36</sup> It is immediately followed by the qualification that this is to be expected in a state that has just been founded. By praising T'aejo in this manner, he made him the yardstick for all other Koryō rulers. Admonishing Sōngjong, Ch'oe states confidently that if he (Sōngjong) only adheres to T'aejo's policies, there is no reason why Koryō could not rival the Tang.<sup>37</sup>

Ch'oe's adoption of T'aejo as the standard against which all other rulers are to be measured is in a sense surprising, since he had the impressive examples of the Tang dynasty at this disposal. Although emperor Taizu 太祖 of the Tang does figure once as an example, Chinese dynasties are used as material for comparison rather than direct imitation. The first eight years of Kwangjong's reign, for instance, rivalled the Three Dynasties (of Xia, Shang and Zhou).<sup>38</sup> It was not Kwangjong's unconditional love for Chinese culture that made Ch'oe say this. Indeed, Ch'oe condemned Kwangjong's undiluted sinophilia of his later years and his blind preference for all things and persons Chinese.<sup>39</sup> In the eleventh proposal of his *On current affairs* Ch'oe adopts a similar tone with regard to the fourth of the *Ten injunctions*, which emphasizes the differences between Koryō and China:

<sup>31</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 7. Ch'oe connected the prophecy with the possession of the mandate of Heaven; as in Chinese history, it was foretold when a future ruler was about to receive the Mandate. For a detailed analysis of this prophecy, which had been engraved on a Chinese bronze mirror, see Yi Pyōngdo, *Koryō shidae-ŭi yōn'gu*, pp. 37-39.

<sup>32</sup> G. Cameron Hurst III, "The good, the bad and the ugly: Personalities in the founding of the Koryō dynasty," *Korean Studies Forum* 7 (1981): pp. 1-27.

<sup>33</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 7. Ch'oe also refers to Kungye as "the previous king", as does the *Koryōsa*. See chapter one.

<sup>34</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 7. Kim Ch'ōlchun stresses the contrast Ch'oe wanted to show to Sōngjong between T'aejo and Kwangjong during Kwangjong's most violent periods. Kim Ch'ōlchun, "Ch'oe Sūngno-ŭi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayō", p. 185-226.

<sup>35</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 11, 14, 32

<sup>36</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 32.

<sup>37</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 71.

<sup>38</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sūngno sangsōmun yōn'gu*, pp. 55, 60. Ha Hyōn'gang sees this as a result of Ch'oe's preoccupation to reform Shilla society, which had been dominated by the bone rank system 骨品制 into Koryō society, which should adhere to the tenets of a well-ordered, hierarchical society, as described in the Confucian classics. Ha Hyōn'gang, "Koryō ch'ogi Ch'oe Sūngno-ŭi chōngch'i sasang yōn'gu," pp. 1-28.

It is impossible not to adhere to the ways of China, but since the customs of all regions throughout the country each follow their own characteristics, it seems to be difficult to change them all. Our vulgar ways must be corrected according to Chinese rules with regard to the teachings of [proper] ceremony and music, poetry and literature and with regard to the moral principles between ruler and minister, father and son. But with regard to such things as transport and clothing, we can adhere to our local customs and reach a balance between luxury and thrift. There is no reason to strain ourselves unreasonably to be the same.<sup>40</sup>

In Ch'oe estimation, Kwangjong's sinophilia had unbalanced Koryŏ to such an extent that when Sŏngjong ascended the throne, his reign could be characterized as an opportunity for a "renaissance" of the still young dynasty.<sup>41</sup> The key to good government, that which was to be strived for, the goal of Ch'oe's Confucian political philosophy was not pure sinophilia, nor was it any kind of idealism usually associated with sinophile Confucians. Rather, it was that during a good reign "good deeds and bad deeds, as it were, are in balance".<sup>42</sup> This balanced realism, then, was what Ch'oe was after and what he wanted to instil in Sŏngjong. The same realism is prevalent in Ch'oe appraisal of T'aejo: T'aejo's realistic policies – frugality in spending, venerating both Buddhism and Confucianism, cautious but decisive diplomacy – attracted Ch'oe's praise. This is not to say that Ch'oe did not have a firm classically Confucian base from which he judged. On Kwangjong, for instance, he remarks that had cooperation and trust between the ruler and his ministers been better, Kwangjong would have lived longer and the country would have benefited. He faults both Kwangjong and his ministers for not making this happen.<sup>43</sup> This is a theme that later also surfaces in Kim Pushik's understanding of benevolent rule. Ch'oe also makes many references to the Chinese classics, in particular to the *Book of Rites* 禮記, the *Book of Documents* 書記, *Mencius* 孟子, the *Analects* 論語, the *I Ching* 易經 and the *Spring and autumn annals and the commentary of Zuo Qiuming* 春秋左傳, mobilizing their authority in determining what is a good ruler.<sup>44</sup> And if we read Ch'oe's memorials with these classical texts in mind, it becomes immediately clear that his implicit image of the ideal ruler is

<sup>40</sup> Compare the text of the fourth injunction: "Fourth injunction: Although our eastern country has long cherished the Tang traditions and followed all of its institutions with regard to writing, material culture, music and ritual, where geographical location is different and the soil also differs, the character of the people does as well. There is no reason to strain ourselves unreasonably to be the same. The Khitan are a state of birds and wild animals. Their customs are not like ours, their language is also different. We should take great care not to model our dress and ceremonies on theirs." See *KS* 2: 15b. This is the original text: 其四曰，惟我東方，舊慕唐風，文物禮樂，悉遵其制，殊方異土，人性各異，不必苟同，契丹，是禽獸之國，風俗不同，言語亦異，衣冠制度，慎勿效焉。 Again, I have referred to the translation of this injunction in Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 264. For a discussion of the forged nature of the *Ten injunctions* (which makes this fourth injunction actually later than Ch'oe's text), see Breuker, *Forging the truth*. See chapter thirteen for a discussion of the contents of the injunctions.

<sup>41</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŏngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, p. 71; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Ch'oe Sŏngno-ŭi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayŏ," pp. 185-226.

<sup>42</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŏngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, p. 71. Ch'oe returns to the first eight years of Kwangjong's reign as the realizable goal of good government in his concluding remarks to the *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns*, thus emphasizing its importance in his scheme of things.

<sup>43</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŏngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, p. 60; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Ch'oe Sŏngno-ŭi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayŏ," pp. 185-226.

<sup>44</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŏngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, pp. 20, 23, 26, 30, 32, 34, 64.

thoroughly Confucian: generous, broad-minded, courteous towards inferiors, cooperative towards his ministers, able to summon people from afar by relying on his civilizing virtue. Most studies of Ch'oe Sŭngno have emphasized this aspect of his political thought and not without reason.<sup>45</sup>

The peninsular aspect of Ch'oe's thought, however, must not be overlooked. His ideas about what constitutes an ideal ruler were tested and adapted by the rulers he had seen in person. On the one hand, he elevated T'aejo to a position of unassailable authority for his successors. T'aejo was both the *telos* of peninsular history and its new starting point. When Ch'oe appeared to give credence to the prophecy that foretold Wang Kŏn's rule, he was cementing Wang Kŏn's position as the necessary purpose of peninsular history. On the other hand, when he criticized Chŏngjong for wanting to move the capital on the bases of a similar prophecy, he was judging Chŏngjong according to the standard that was set by T'aejo and supported by Chinese precedents.<sup>46</sup> Ch'oe's appraisals, admonitions and suggestions are both rooted in ideology and suited to Koryŏ's practical circumstances. The surviving twenty-two points (of an original twenty-eight) of his *On current affairs* confirm this. In *On current affairs* he deals with the pressing border problems in the North (number one), the need to economize and restrict the economic influence of Buddhism (numbers two, four, eight, ten, thirteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen), the need to bring the provinces under Koryŏ's direct rule (number seven), the importance of maintaining (and re-establishing) distinctions between the classes (numbers nine, seventeen), the need to preserve Koryŏ's distinctiveness vis-à-vis China (number eleven), the importance for the ruler to do as little as possible in governing the country (number twenty) and the need to worship only one's own ancestral spirits (number twenty-one), as well as some other contemporary concerns. The argument in all above-mentioned cases is similarly constructed: it consists of an ideological part and a practical part. Let us take the excessive state spending on Buddhism as an example. The practical part of the argument states that too much money, resources and corvéé labour force are sacrificed to Buddhist festivals, temples, statues, monks et cetera. The ideological part states that:

The three teachings each have their own functions. Persons that adhere to these teachings should not confuse them and try to make them into one. Adhering to Buddhism is the principle of polishing one's mind. Adhering to Confucianism is the principle of governing the country. Polishing one's mind is of help in the afterlife, governing the country is a current affair.<sup>47</sup>

In other words, Buddhist faith is a personal affair that should not be paid for by the state. Another example is Ch'oe championing of stronger central control of the provinces. The Koryŏ-specific and practical part of the argument laments the inefficiency of the capital

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<sup>45</sup> Kim Ilhwan, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi yugyo chŏngch'i sasang yŏn'gu", pp. 129-160; Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi chŏngch'i sasang yŏn'gu," pp. 1-28; O Yŏngbyŏn, "Ch'oe Sŭngno sangsŏmun-ŭi sasangjŏk kibangwa yŏksajŏk ŭiŭi", pp. 231-264; Yi Cheun, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi chŏngch'i sasang," pp. 163-186; Kim Ch'ŏlchun, "Ch'oe Sŭngno-ŭi shimu ishipp'alcho-e taehayŏ", pp. 185-226. Kim Ch'ŏlchun's study is the only study that really situates this Confucian ideal with regard to Ch'oe's experience as a statesman.

<sup>46</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŭngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, p. 42.

<sup>47</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Ch'oe Sŭngno sangsŏmun yŏn'gu*, pp. 148.

administration and the loss in revenue this entails. The ideological part bemoans the fate of the farmers who are at the mercy of the unscrupulous local gentry, who by definition are not ideal rulers; only the ruler who makes continuous efforts is able to dispense righteousness to the people. Ch'oe's need for distinction in dress and dwelling places among the social classes again leans on an analogous construction. Quoting the *Book of Rites*, He argues that Heaven has laid down the height of the houses of the several social classes; this should not be tampered with. Referring to the abuses at the Koryŏ court, he decries the fact that high officials from poor families cannot wear the silk robes they are supposed to wear, while lower officials from rich families can. Finally, Ch'oe insistence that a ruler do as little as possible in governing the country rests on the assumption of having able ministers carrying out the tasks necessary for running the country; practically, it admonishes Sŏngjong not to be arrogant and to listen to his officials.

Both in his insistence that Koryŏ should preserve a clearly separate identity from China and in the way he structured his arguments, Ch'oe Sŏngno proved himself to be a Confucian scholar with strong peninsular roots. In itself, this is quite natural, though it often passes unnoticed. Some tension is present in Ch'oe's analyses and appraisals of the Koryŏ rulers and the standards according to which he judges them. This tension is inherent in the application of any presumed universal standard to particular situations.<sup>48</sup> It is furthermore intensified by the way he used T'aejo as an additional model for Koryŏ's rulers; although for a significant part Ch'oe's image of T'aejo had been constructed by relying on Confucian characteristics of the ideal ruler, it must not be forgotten that T'aejo's most evident virtue had been the founding of the Koryŏ dynasty. This very peninsular fact informed Ch'oe Sŏngno's perception of the political history of the first five Koryŏ reigns, which is perhaps best exemplified by his standards for judging Koryŏ's rulers. He refers both to Chinese precedent and to T'aejo's rule: both have been lifted out of their historical context to such an extent that they served as models for the present of practical engagement. Chinese precedent became the principle upon which the Koryŏ dynasty was to function, while the memory of T'aejo's reign became the guideline of all future rulers. I shall return to this crucial point in chapter eight.

## KARAKKUK KI

Such works as the *Samguksa* and Ch'oe Sŏngno's memorials aimed at describing and understanding the history of the state, but other works produced during the early Koryŏ focused on regional history. The *Karakuk ki* 駕洛國記 (*Chronicle of Karak*) was compiled in 1076 by Kim Yanggam 金良鑑 (fl. late eleventh century), who at that moment served as the governor of Kŭmgwan 金官 (Kŭmgwanju 金官州). The *Koryŏsa* did not record who compiled

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<sup>48</sup> To a certain extent, Ha Hyŏn'gang recognizes this, by stressing the fact that Ch'oe's policies were well-adapted to the circumstances on the Korean peninsula. Ha, however, does not analyze the relationship between Ch'oe's personal background and stage of activity and his appeals to Confucian philosophy. See Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Ch'oe Sŏngno-ŭi chŏngch'i sasang yŏn'gu," pp. 1-28.

the *Karakkuk ki*, just the fact that it had been incorporated in the *Samguk yusa*.<sup>49</sup> The *Samguk yusa* only divulges that its compiler was a “magistrate of Kümju and man of letters” (‘Kümguan chi ju sa munin’ 金官知奏事文人) and that the *Karakkuk ki* had been incorporated in abbreviated form.<sup>50</sup> The lineage records of the Kwangsan Kim lineage (*Kwangsan Kim-ssbi chokpo* 光山金氏族譜), however, mention that their lineage member Kim Yanggam compiled the *Karakkuk ki* when he served in Kümju somewhere between 1075 and 1084.<sup>51</sup> A stele with an inscription dating from 1884 mentions that Munjong ordered Kim Yanggam to repair the tomb of King Suro 首露王, the founder of Karak, and institute memorial services and write the *Karakkuk ki*.<sup>52</sup> This inscription is of course of a very late date, but the information recorded in it was based upon local records and does not conflict with extant sources. The stele records the history of the tomb from the burial of Suro until the erection of the stele and the restoration of the tomb in 1884. The exact year of the compilation of the *Karakkuk ki* is not mentioned, but the text in the *Samguk yusa* mentions a date of alternatively 1076 or 1077; the year of compilation is referred to as the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Munjong’s reign (1077) and the second year of the Liao reign name Taikang 太康, which corresponds to 1076. This corresponds to the period in which Kim Yanggam rapidly rose in the bureaucracy to become one of the most important officials during the late eleventh century<sup>53</sup>. According to the epitaphs for one of his granddaughters and that for his son, Kim Yanggam reached the office of chancellor in the Department of the Royal Secretariat-Chancellery (*munba shijung* 門下侍中), Koryŏ’s highest office.<sup>54</sup> He also fulfilled the highest historiographical office of supervising editor of state history (*kamsu kuksa*), which is a clear indication of his suitability to have written the *Karakkuk ki*.

The *Karakkuk ki* was locally compiled and based upon records from the region. Judging from the extant version in the *Samguk yusa*, it was an attempt to integrate Kaya history into Koryŏ’s past, as much as an effort to preserve Kaya’s history. The fact that an important central

<sup>49</sup> *KS* 57: 8a-b. The entry for Kümju 金州 contains a reference to the *Karakkuk ki*. According to this entry, the *Karakkuk ki* was incorporated in the *Samguk yusa* (SGYS 2: 243-255). Also see Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han’guk chungse sabaksa*, p. 66.

<sup>50</sup> SGYS 2: 243.

<sup>51</sup> Judging from the date of compilation mentioned in the text itself of either 1176 or 1177, it seems plausible that Kim Yanggam served in Kümju during the late 1070’s.

<sup>52</sup> *Karakkuk t’aejonüng sungsonjön pi* 駕洛國太祖陵崇善殿碑石 [Stele for the ancestral hall of venerating the good for the tomb of the founding ancestor of Karak] in *CKS* 2: 1326-30.

<sup>53</sup> In 1070, Kim Yanggam was appointed as junior assistant executive and policy critic of the Department of Ministries (*Sangsŏ usüng chwaganüidaebu* 尙書右丞左諫議大夫), after which he made steady promotion (*KS* 8: 24a). In 1073, he went to the Song as an envoy (*KS* 9: 10b). Kim apparently made some impression at the Song court, because he appears in many contemporary Song records. After he returned, Kim resumed his career and finally became chancellor. The Song documents in which Kim appears, are part of an annotated collection of Song documents that are of use to Koryŏ history. See *Ci quan Gaoliguo wangshi wangyi qiju huishu Songdaixbaolingji* 237 *zhengshi* 90 *shiyi* 10 *Gaoli* 賜權知高麗國王事王徽起居回書宋大詔令集 237 政事 90 四裔 10 高麗 in Chang Tongik 張東翼 (ed.), *Songdae Yŏsa charyo chimnok* 宋大麗史資料集錄 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu, 2000), pp. 206-212.

<sup>54</sup> *Ch’oe Yunüi ch’ŏ Kim-ssbi myojimyŏng* 崔允儀妻金氏墓誌銘 (1152) in *KMC* 123: 4. This epitaph mentions Kim Yanggam as paternal grandfather and his rank as imperial (!) executive of the chancellery (*munba shirang p’yŏngjangsa* 門下侍郎平章事). The epitaph for Kim Üiwŏn 金義元, Yanggam’s son, mentions his father’s highest office as custodial acting grand protector, chancellor and supervising editor of the state history (*sudaebu munba shijung kamsu kuksa* 守太保門下侍中監修國史) See *Kim Üiwŏn myojimyŏng* (1153) in *KMC* 133: 5.

official<sup>55</sup> wrote a regional history such as the *Karakuk ki* is significant. It shows the importance that was attached to the pre-Koryŏ history of the peninsula and the importance of regions in forming the historical descent of Koryŏ. The *Karakuk ki* describes how the country was established by King Suro, but does not stop at the demise of the Kaya kingdom. The *Karakuk ki* goes beyond the history of Kaya and describes the history of the region through Shilla and until Munjong's reign of Koryŏ, implying a certain kind of territorial belonging and continuity. The *Karakuk ki* quotes from a Kaya 伽倻 temple inscription, which – although it has a distinct apocryphal flavour and dates from Shilla at the very earliest, but probably from early Koryŏ – expresses the wish for a wise ruler to appear and remedy the situation in the Eastern Land (Tongguk) “where the capitals are divided”. It is hardly credible that this wish for unification existed in Kaya, but it is entirely plausible in the Koryŏ context. Even if this inscription is a later interpolation, it is from Munjong's reign at the latest and testifies to the notion of territorial belonging that had come into existence during the eleventh century. Kaya's history was considered part of Koryŏ's history by virtue of its territory and its ties with the Shilla ruling house. This notion is strengthened by the way Suro's descendants surrendered to newly risen Shilla, which is described in a manner reminiscent of how the last king of Shilla, Kyŏngsunwang, surrendered Shilla and his authority to rule to T'aejo. The attention paid to the absorption of Kaya into Shilla and the succession to the Shilla throne of the Kaya lineage via the general who unified the peninsula, Kim Yushin 金庾信, is remarkable.<sup>56</sup> It bespeaks the continuing importance of Kaya as a historical memory. The similarity of Kaya's peaceful absorption into Shilla to that of Shilla into Koryŏ further reinforces Kaya's place in Koryŏ's past.<sup>57</sup> The absorption of Kaya by Shilla into Koryŏ was not forgotten during the Koryŏ period. An effective symbol of Kaya's annexation was the custom of investing members of the royal family as Marquis of Kŭmgwan (Kŭmgwan hu 金官侯) and the presence of a palace called Kŭmgwan Palace.<sup>58</sup>

Kŭmgwan was an alternative name for Kaya or Karak.<sup>59</sup> The title was only awarded to princes of the blood.<sup>60</sup> Munjong, who fathered thirteen sons, invested them as dukes (*kong* 公) and marquises (*hu* 侯), unless they had entered the Buddhist clergy, in which case they were

<sup>55</sup> Even if Kim Yanggam did not write the *Karakuk ki*, the fact remains that another high official during Munjong's reign did. The internal evidence dating the text to 1076 or 1077 – explicit mention of the reign year of the ruler at the date of compilation, references to past events that mention the number of years since those events – is unambiguous and convincing and there is no external evidence that contradicts this. As for the status of the governor of Kŭmju, the local administrative unit of Kŭmju (or Kimhae) was important. Its port was important in the trade with Japan and strategically it was important since it proved to be a popular target of pirates to attack. An entry from 1292 in the *Koryŏsa* refers to the longstanding relations between Koryŏ and Japan in which Kimhae-guk 金海國 (Kaya 伽倻) had always played a crucial role. *KS* 30: 33a-b.

<sup>56</sup> The sister of Kim Yushin married King Muryŏl 武烈王 of Shilla and gave birth to this children.

<sup>57</sup> The absorptions of Kaya into Shilla and of Shilla into Koryŏ were not as peaceful as the official record portrays, but in this case that is not important. What matters here is the historiographical representation, rather than the historical truth of both events.

<sup>58</sup> Kim Ch'anghyŏn 金昌賢, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ inyŏm* 고려개경의 구조와 그 이념 (Seoul: Shinsŏwŏn 新書院, 2002), p. 35.

<sup>59</sup> *KS* 57: 8a.

<sup>60</sup> *KS* 9: 16b; *KS* 10: 7b; *KS* 10: 18a; *KS* 10: 27b; *KS* 88: 18b; *KS* 90: 17a-b. The relevant entries in the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* repeat the same information.



granted high clerical positions and titles. His lay sons were invested with the following titles: Chosŏn hu 朝鮮候, Kyerim hu 鷄林候, Pyŏnhan hu 弁韓候, Puyŏ hu 扶餘候, Chinhan hu 辰韓候, Sangan kong 常安公, Nangnang hu 樂浪候 and Kŭmgwan hu. Koryŏ claimed clear ancestral rights to the regions mentioned in these titles: Shilla (Kyerim), Pyŏnhan and Chinhan. Chosŏn and Sangan refer to regions under the control of the Liao dynasty at that time; Sangan (better known as Ch'ŏllyŏng-hyŏn 鐵嶺縣) was in particularly hotly contested territory.<sup>61</sup> Nangnang refers to P'yŏngyang and as such to uncontested Koryŏ territory, but the use of the geonym Nangnang here has connotations with a past when it was a Han commandery, suggesting a possible claim of that ancient history. It is plausible to assume, then, that the *Karakkek ki* also claimed Kŭmgwan or Kaya for Koryŏ. These particular titles were personal: they could not be transferred to heirs, but similar titles connected to these regions can be found throughout the Koryŏ dynasty.<sup>62</sup> This use of the title *Kŭmgwan hu* also puts in perspective the accepted beliefs about legitimation: apparently, there was more to historical succession than the Three Kingdoms. As has become clear in the preceding chapters, Koryŏ's main idea of historical succession was connected to the Samhan, which was in principle a more encompassing notion than either one of the Three Kingdoms. The realisation that Kaya was part of Koryŏ's history is also reflected in a eulogy for Kim Chinyang 金震陽, an important late Koryŏ official, written by Yi Sungin 李崇仁 (1349-1392). In it he describes a historical excursion undertaken by Kim Chinyang and a friend, with the explicit intention of reminiscing upon the peninsula's past, a tour of Koryŏ's *lieux de mémoire*.<sup>63</sup> They started at Kimhae, "the place where King Suro built his capital" and continued on to Hwangsan-gang 黃山江, the eastern border of Suro's state.<sup>64</sup> From there they went to Kyŏngju and visited the Half Moon Fortress (*Panwŏlsŏng* 半月城) to reminisce nostalgically about Shilla's thousand-year history. Further outings were to historically significant sites such as the Pulguk-sa temple 佛國寺, the Eastern Sea coast, famous peaks, the Kamŭn-sa temple 感恩寺, and Igyŏn-dae pavilion 利見臺.<sup>65</sup> Evidently, by this time Kaya's heritage had been given a solid place in Koryŏ's past, next to that of Shilla.

Kaya's history also constituted a source of pride for Koryŏ. The fact that the kings of Kaya, Shilla and Koryŏ had always taken good care of the tomb of Suro was in itself a commendable fact, according to the *Karakkek ki*. The fact, however, that the tomb of Suro had survived for close to nine centuries was something that was unequalled, even in China. Tang historian Xin Tifou 辛替否 had remarked that countries disappeared without leaving traces after a

<sup>61</sup> After having been designated by Wang Kŏn as one of Koryŏ's border points, Ch'ŏllyŏng-hyŏn 鐵嶺縣 was fought over by Koryŏ and the Liao and later the Jin. It was also the stake in a border dispute between Koryŏ and the Ming in the late fourteenth century. See *KS* 89: 27b.

<sup>62</sup> See for instance *KS* 61: 49b; *KS* 91: 1b-2a; *KS* 88:29b; *KMC* 126:8; *KMC* 214: 9-10; *KMC* 199: 33; *KMC* 477: 36; *KMC* 23: 42. Perhaps through a lack of sons that did not join the Buddhist clergy, Munjong did not invest one of his sons as Mahan hu 馬韓候. In fact, Mahan is decidedly underrepresented compared with the use of Chinhan and Pyŏnhan.

<sup>63</sup> Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984-1992), 3 vols.

<sup>64</sup> *KS* 57: 8b.

<sup>65</sup> *Ch'ookcha chŏn pyŏng ch'an* 草屋子傳并贊 [Biography and eulogy in honour of the master of the thatched hut] in *TMS* 51: 21a-22a.

sufficiently long period of time, but as Kim Yanggam proudly writes, in the case of Kaya and King Suro “his words are not to be believed”. It was not just the physical presence of the tomb that was important; Shilla King Munmu 文武王 (r. 661-681), who through his mother descended from the royal house of Kaya, was praised for making sure that the ancestor worship rituals for Suro and his successors continued to be celebrated by the Shilla rulers. The above-mentioned, probably interpolated, temple inscription, boasts an uninterrupted line of descent and an uninterrupted performance of ancestor worship rituals for Suro on the peninsula. While this has no base in historical fact, it certainly points at the significance attached to the idea of succession between the different states on the peninsula and the celebration of that succession. Through the continued celebration of memorial services at the tomb of King Suro in the Shilla and Koryŏ periods, it was publicly remembered that the Koryŏ ruler had succeeded to this ancient king of the southernmost part of the peninsula.<sup>66</sup> T’aejo had after all formally succeeded to the Shilla rulers, who, in their time, had literally mixed blood with the heirs of the last Kaya king, who had surrendered to Shilla.

The *Karakkuk ki* was a historical work written under clear Confucian influences. There are a few characteristics in the extant *Samguk yusa* text that alert us to this fact. The physical description of King Suro resembles that of the most famous Chinese emperors; heaven is called *hwangch’ŏn*; the traditional lull in tilling the land is used to build the royal palace, which was for that matter of modest proportions. Structurally, the *Karakkuk ki* may have been compiled along Confucian guidelines, but this did not entail a revision of the contents. One conspicuous characteristic of the text is the fact that it often uses imperial designations with regard to its royal protagonists. King Suro, for instance, refers to himself using the imperial personal pronoun *chim* 朕 and the demise of kings and queens is described as *pung* 崩. Both uses are strictly imperial and the compiler of the text maintained these uses. Buddhist elements are also maintained: Suro’s wife, for example, came from the ancient Indian kingdom of Ayodhyā, a place where King Asoka was said to have lived. Mythical elements are also recorded without further comment. The magical battle between the king of Kaya and T’arhae-wang 脫解王 is related without removing or downplaying the importance of magic.<sup>67</sup>

The maintenance of incongruent and perhaps implausible elements under a more or less Confucian structure was also typical of the *Samguksa* (the *Samguksa* is quoted on the last page of the *Karakkuk ki*).<sup>68</sup> As the *Samguksa*, the *Karakkuk ki* is not “mythical”; it merely recorded the available history and myths and did so in a Confucian and well-established historiographical format. The compilation of the *Karakkuk ki* is another expression of the strength of the Confucian historiographical tradition in Koryŏ. It also reinforces the idea of peninsular territorial belonging through a succession of ruling houses, the notion of peninsular interstate succession and the incorporation of regional histories and myth into the history of Koryŏ. It is

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<sup>66</sup> The state had awarded the tomb of Suro land in order to pay for the yearly memorial services. The *Karakkuk ki* records the gruesome death of one particularly deluded Koryŏ official who wanted to reduce the size of the land grant. His insensitivity with regard to the sanctity of Suro’s tomb was rewarded with exhausting dreams in which vengeful ghosts haunted him. He died not much later, still haunted by ghosts.

<sup>67</sup> *SGYS* 2: 243-255.

<sup>68</sup> *SGYS* 2: 255.

not coincidental that the *Karakuk ki* was compiled during the reign of Munjong. Under Munjong, Koryŏ was perhaps at the apex of cultural and diplomatic self-confidence; under Munjong, also, the unruly counties were forcibly drawn into the central bureaucracy. Attention to local history and myth and the absorption of local history and myth into that of the larger community, then, were both to be expected and necessary.

### P'YÖNNYŎN T'ONGJAE AND THE SOK P'YÖNNYŎN T'ONGJAE

Munjong's reign is often described as the golden age of Koryŏ, when it was at the peak of its power, both internationally and creatively. The reign of Yejong (1079-1105-1122) is, if not precisely equal to that of Munjong, at least an undisputed second in terms of cultural and intellectual achievements. Closely connected to the cultural and intellectual developments of this time was the compilation of a historical work which was, according to the *communis opinio* in Korean historiography, entitled *Sok p'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* 續編年通載 (*Further chronological annals*).<sup>69</sup> Judging from the title, it was considered to be the successor volume to the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* 編年通載, about which nothing is known, at least in Koryŏ. There is, however, a work from the Song dynasty with that title. Compiled by the Song scholar Zhang Heng 章衡, it recorded the genealogy of the Song imperial family and the history of the Song dynasty. According to leading interpretation by scholars of Korean historiography, Yejong is said to have been touched after reading the Koryŏ version of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* and ordered Hong Kwan 洪灌 (d.u., flourished late eleventh-early twelfth century) to compile a similar volume which would contain the history of the peninsula from the Samhan on.<sup>70</sup>

There are, however, some very compelling reasons to doubt whether there ever was a Koryŏ *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*. The original entry in the *Koryŏsa* does not mention that there was a book of that name in Koryŏ; it merely recorded that Yejong wanted Hong Kwan to compile a history of the peninsula after he had read the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*. This entry is found in the *Koryŏsa* biography of Hong Kwan. The entry in the *Koryŏsa chŏryo* that contains the same information speaks of a *sokpyŏn* 續編, a successor volume, which is probably the reason why it has been thought that a Koryŏ *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* had been compiled.<sup>71</sup>

There are basically three reasons to doubt the existence of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* in Koryŏ. The first one is the original entry in the *Koryŏsa*, which does not mention that Hong Kwan was supposed to compile a successor volume. The second reason is that apart from the entries mentioned above, none of the extant sources mention the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*. These reasons are,

<sup>69</sup> Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 67; Pak Hannam, "P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok-kwa kit'a sasŏ-ŭi p'yŏnch'an", p. 175-180.

<sup>70</sup> *KS* 121: 9b. According to Chŏng Kubok, Samhan here refers to the Three Kingdoms, but there is no reason to suppose that is indeed the case. As has been amply shown, Koryŏ ultimately traced its ancestry back to the Three Han, rather than the Three Kingdoms. A history book dealing with the history of the peninsula since the Three Han would make excellent sense then and any mention of it can be taken at face value. See Chŏng Kubŏk, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, p. 67.

<sup>71</sup> *KSC* 8: 18a.

nevertheless, not compelling enough to suppose that there was no Koryŏ *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*: The *Koryŏsa chŏryo* often does complement information in the *Koryŏsa* and the fragmentary nature of the extant sources on Koryŏ makes it impossible to exclude the possibility of entries on the compilation of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* having been lost. The third and most important reason is, however, that it is entirely implausible to suppose the existence of a Koryŏ historical work called the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*.

The background against which the compilation of the supposed successor volume of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* took place was characterized by a sudden and unprecedented influx of Song culture. Over a period of two years between 1114 and 1116, the Koryŏ court received the newly composed Song ritual music (*taesŏngak* 大晟樂) as a gift from the Song emperor. The scale of this gift was unmatched: over 600 musical instruments, dozens of scores and ritual books, ritual paraphernalia and implements and even trained musicians entered Koryŏ between 1114 and 1116.<sup>72</sup> Two Koryŏ diplomatic missions – the first one led by An Chik-sung 安稷崇 (1066-1135) in 1114 and the second one by Wang Chaji 王字之 (1066-1122) and Mun Kongmi 文公仁 (d.u., fl. late eleventh/early twelfth century) – had been sent to Song China with the explicit intent of obtaining the new ritual music of the Song. The introduction of *taesŏngak* in Koryŏ was of great cultural importance: by performing Song Confucian ritual music in the Koryŏ context, the initial Chinese orientation was first subverted and then mobilized to serve the Koryŏ state.<sup>73</sup> Precisely in this period, in 1116, Yejong ordered Hong Kwan to compile a history of the peninsula from the Three Han on. It is well known that culture in its diverse manifestations blossomed during Yejong's reign and as such it is entirely plausible that Yejong ordered a history to be compiled: after all, “now that the warfare and fighting at the three borders has ceased [Koryŏ] has achieved a unified culture that is equal to that of China”, as Yejong himself put it in a text written by Kim Injon 金仁存 and engraved in stone by none other than Hong Kwan, who was also famous for his calligraphy.<sup>74</sup> But with regard to the compilation of a successor volume to a Koryŏ history called *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*, doubt remains. It is not very plausible to suppose the compilation of a successor volume, when the successor volume had to start with the history of the Three Han. Koryŏ's historians credited Koryŏ with a long history, but not to such an extent that Koryŏ's history predated the Three Han. There are no internal reasons, then, to suppose the compilation of a Koryŏ version of the *Biannian tongzai* 編年通載 before Yejong's edict. Externally, the Song gift of *taesŏngak* suggests a motive, I would argue, for the compilation of the Koryŏ *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*.

The most important reason for the Song emperor to bestow such a dazzling gift upon Koryŏ, admittedly less than a loyal friend of the Song, lay in the fact that the ritual *taesŏngak* music effectively proclaimed the virtue of the Song as few other things could. I have dealt with

<sup>72</sup> KS 70: 5b-9a. Also see TMS 35: 19b-21a. Im Chon, *Sa hŏsŏp taesŏngak p'yo* 謝許習大晟樂表 [Letter of gratitude for granting permission to study ritual music]. The imperial gift of Song ritual music, instruments, scores, ritual books and so forth has never been surpassed in scale. See TMS 34: 18a-19b. Also see KS 70: 28a-b; KS 13: 33b; KS 70: 28a-b.

<sup>73</sup> See chapter twelve; also see Breuker, “Listening to the beat of different drums: Ideology, ritual and music in Koryŏ”. *Review of Korean Studies* 7.4 (2004): pp. 147-174.

<sup>74</sup> KS 96: 9b.

the introduction of Song ritual music elsewhere<sup>75</sup>, but suffice it to say here that *taesŏngak* sung the praises of the Song and as such was also attractive to Koryŏ, for it could be successfully adapted to extol Koryŏ. In this context and judging by the date of Yejong's instruction to Hong Kwan, it is very plausible that he ordered Hong Kwan to compile a Koryŏ history in the same vein as the Song *Biannian tongzai*, which recorded the genealogy of the Song imperial family. It is eminently plausible, even to be expected, that a copy of the Song imperial genealogy found its way to Koryŏ in one of the two embassies carrying the gifts of *taesŏngak*. The purposes of the gift of *taesŏngak* and of the *Biannian tongzai* were identical, after all: they both lauded the Song imperial house. Moreover, the book would have been read by Hong Kwan while he served as Koryŏ envoy to the Song.<sup>76</sup> Koryŏ scholars that served on embassies to the Song imperial court were famous for their hunger for Chinese books. Seen in this light, then, it is highly probable that the entry in the *Koryŏsa chŏryo* mistakenly refers to a successor volume. In fact, Hong Kwan was trying to compile a Koryŏ history along the lines of the Song *Biannian tongzai*.

The compilation of the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae* was headed by Hong Kwan. He had at his disposal some of the finest scholars of the period: Yi Kwe 李軌, Hŏ Chigi 許之奇, Pak Sŭngjung 朴昇中, Kim Puil 金富侁 and Yun Hae 尹諧. Hong Kwan was at that moment scholar at the Pavilion of Precious Learning (*Pomungak baksa* 寶文閣學士) and one of the most respected scholars of his day. Seven generations later, his descendants still took pride in his accomplishments and reputation.<sup>77</sup> He was famous both for his learning and his calligraphy. A student of the style of famous Shilla calligrapher Kim Saeng 金生 (711-799), Hong made the calligraphy on the plaques of Pomun'gak, Ch'ŏngyŏn'gak, Pojŏnhwa-ru 寶殿畫樓 (Treasure Hall Painted Pavilion) and the Chipsangjŏn 集祥殿 (Hall of the Assembled Auspicious Signs), the actual working space of the ruler.<sup>78</sup>

As mentioned above, the Song *Biannian tongzai* 編年通載 dealt with the genealogy of the Song imperial house. As such, it was closely connected to the imperial ancestor worship rituals. This is among other things borne out by the role its compiler Zhang Heng 章衡 had in the debates surrounding the proper ritual line of succession of the Song imperial line.<sup>79</sup> This connection is another clue to understanding Yejong's concern for the compilation for the Koryŏ's *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*. It is also connected to the introduction of the Song ritual music in the same years. In order to understand this not very obvious relation, it is necessary to look at the royal ancestral shrines in Koryŏ.

The royal ancestral shrines were a focal point of Koryŏ state and society. This is for

<sup>75</sup> Breuker, "Listening to the beat of different drums", pp. 147-174.

<sup>76</sup> *SGSG* 48: 458. In the short biography of Kim Saeng 金生 in the *Samguk sagi*, it is mentioned that Hong Kwan went as a member of an embassy to the Song capital somewhere between 1102 and 1106. He had taken with him an example of the calligraphy of Shilla master Kim Saeng, which elicited an enthusiastic response from Song scholars. The embassy with which Hong Kwan went to the Song was not an official embassy. During this period the relations with the Song were unilaterally unofficial. Although the Song court frequently sent official ambassadors to Koryŏ, Koryŏ responded by sending unofficial envoys.

<sup>77</sup> *Pak Chŏnji ch'ŏ Ch'oe-sŏbi myojimyŏng* 朴全之妻崔氏墓誌銘 in *KMC* 432: 8, *KMC* 434: 3.

<sup>78</sup> *KS* 11: 35b; *KS* 12: 2a.

<sup>79</sup> *SS* 106: 10b-11a; *SS* 107: 10a.

instance shown by the fact that the newly introduced Song ritual music was first performed at the royal ancestral shrines, which served as focal points of both the state and the royal family.<sup>80</sup> The former rulers were enshrined there together with their most trusted ministers, embodying their indispensable symbiosis.<sup>81</sup> The importance of the *chongmyo* increased during the reigns of Sukchong, Yejong and Injong due to the fact that patrilineal succession to the throne had become normal by this period.<sup>82</sup> The increasingly heated power struggle between the great lineages and the royal house also underlined the central position of the ancestral shrines in Koryŏ's state structure.<sup>83</sup> Although separate shrines for Koryŏ's deceased rulers had existed from the beginning of the dynasty, the Koryŏ ancestral shrines according to the Chinese model were only established during the reign of Sŏngjong in 992.<sup>84</sup>

The ancestral shrines were a sacred place, rivalled by few other locations. The *chongmyo* accommodated the tablets of former Koryŏ rulers, which gave it its sacred character, but politically it was also of paramount importance. Sŏngjong's establishment of the *chongmyo* had transformed the Wang lineage's ancestor worship from essentially a family affair into a state affair and the direct father-to-son succession after Sukchong cemented the status of *chongmyo*.<sup>85</sup> The *chongmyo* furnished a strong source of political legitimation, a visual and tangible representation of Koryŏ's past and, through the rituals, prayers and prophecies that took place there, also of its future.

The connection between *taesŏngak* and the royal family and ritual music is revealed in an anecdote recorded in Kim Pushik's biography in the *Koryŏsa*:

In 1124, when the king had posthumously invested the late grandfather of Yi Chagyŏm 李資謙, Pak Sŏngjung, in an attempt to curry favour with Yi, requested court music to be played when Yi would visit the tomb of his grandfather [to ceremonially inform him]. Kim Pushik reacted with the following words: "Music is played at the royal

<sup>80</sup> KS 70:5b-9a; KS 70: 28a-b; KS 13: 33b.

<sup>81</sup> Due to Koryŏ's complicated indigenous kinship system, many and frequent problems arose in the arrangement of the ancestral tablets. Chinese ritual regulations stipulated that the fathers should be put on the one side and their sons on the other side, and so on. In Koryŏ, where succession to the throne by a brother was quite common for a long period, this system could not be adopted as it was. For an excellent description and analysis of this issue and the debates it gave rise to, see Deuchler, *The Confucian transformation of Korea*, pp. 29-87.

<sup>82</sup> Ch'oe Sun'gwŏn 崔順權, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi omyoje-ŭi yŏn'gu 高麗前期 五廟制의 研究," reprinted in *Koryŏ T'aemyo ūirye yŏn'gu nonjip* 高麗 太廟 儀禮 研究 論集 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa 경인문화사, 2002), pp. 79-111, esp. pp. 80-85. The ancestral shrines prominently figured in the daily life of the Koryŏ royal family and state officials. The tablets belonging to the deceased rulers were ceremoniously kept informed of all important official events. Military campaigns, royal marriages, the investment of an heir apparent, the coronation of a king; all important events pertaining to the state and the royal house were officially passed on to the ancestral spirits. The Ritual Section of the *Koryŏsa* has detailed descriptions of the instances when the deceased rulers enshrined in the ancestral shrines had to be informed of what was about to happen. These are too numerous to include here. Moreover, the most important state rituals included an additional ceremony at the ancestral shrines. See KS 67: 35a-b; KS 68: 22a-23b.

<sup>83</sup> For a further exploration of this issue see the next chapter and chapter twelve on ritual music.

<sup>84</sup> "On the *kyŏngsin* day, the king promulgated the following edict: 'As for the basis of the country, the royal ancestral shrine comes first. For that reason, there has never been an emperor that has not added to the halls, built palaces for the tablets, arranged the tablets with the fathers on the right and the sons on the left and held three-yearly and five-yearly memorial services. It has been several generations since our dynasty responded to its destiny and was founded, but there have not yet been memorial services in the royal ancestral shrines. [...]'". See KS 3:24b-25a.

<sup>85</sup> Ch'oe Sun'gwŏn, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi o'myoje-ŭi yŏn'gu", pp. 79-111.

ancestral shrines, for it symbolizes life. But in the case of a tomb, how can music be performed when [the mourner] is wearing white clothes [of mourning], performs the rites and cries?”<sup>86</sup>

Kim Pushik’s antagonism towards Yi Chagyöm (who had in effect usurped the power of the ruler, Injong, who was both his son-in-law and grandson) is well-known, as are the ideological objections he voiced against the infringements on royal power made by Yi.<sup>87</sup> Here, Kim relies on the intrinsic sanctity of ritual music, as described by the Confucian classics and developed during the Tang and Song dynasties.<sup>88</sup> The way Kim phrased it here, suggests that court music could not be played at tombs, but in fact it could as long as the tombs were royal. What Kim protests against is the usurpation of royal music by Yi Chagyöm. Ritual music, then, was not something to be lightly regarded, especially not in connection with the royal ancestral shrines which symbolized royal power. With respect to its ritual importance, the performance of ritual music could become a formidable political weapon.<sup>89</sup> The gift of the emperor, his new Confucian ritual music, should first and foremost – though not exclusively – be performed at the royal ancestral shrines, an opinion that the Song emperor shared with Yejong. Royal power received prestigious support by accepting this imperial gift. The performances at the royal ancestral shrines were intended to further strengthen the royal house as the focal point of the Koryŏ state; *taesŏngak* was certainly not intended for use at the tombs of the powerful families – such as the Kyŏngwŏn Yi 慶源李 lineage to which Yi Chagyöm belonged.

The ideological aspects of the introduction of *taesŏngak* are revealed in their connection with the royal ancestral shrines. In this context, *taesŏngak* ceased to be about the celebration of the cultural achievements of the Song dynasty and became the celebration of Koryŏ, its ruler, its history and its people. Introducing the prestigious Song ritual music in this environment evidently harnessed Song music for this purpose, instead of the other way round. It may be argued that Koryŏ’s attempt at legitimation by seeking recognition from the Chinese Son of Heaven, while at the same constructing a (conceivably even more important) domestic counterpart and relying on indigenous (or indigenized) concepts and beliefs, is mirrored in the way it tried to use *taesŏngak*, indigenous music (*hyangak*) and Koryŏnized Chinese music (*tangak*) in its essential rituals.

The order to compile a Koryŏ version of the *Biannian tongzai* should be seen against this background of enhancing royal power, building Koryŏ prestige and affirming its

<sup>86</sup> KS 98: 3a.

<sup>87</sup> Shultz, “Kim Pushik-kwa *Samguk sagi*”, pp. 1-20.

<sup>88</sup> Keith L. Pratt, “Music as factor in Sung-Koryŏ diplomatic relations, 1069-1126,” *T’oung Pao* 62.4-5 (1976): pp.199-218; Pratt, “Sung Hui Tsung’s musical diplomacy and the Korean response,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 44.3 (1981): pp. 509-521.

<sup>89</sup> A letter of gratitude to the Song emperor by Kim Pushik’s older brother Puil in recognition of the extraordinarily generous gift of instruments, ritual paraphernalia and music confirms the enormous ritual significance of *taesŏngak* as follows: “Through the mysterious words of the music, you have illuminated the melodies of the sacrificial ceremony. Through the illustrations on the book covers, you have taught us how to play. Embarrassed by these extraordinary gifts, I know the difficulty of responding appropriately. How could [this music] only be used to comfort [the spirits of] our ancestors? It will influence later generations and extend to our grandchildren.” See *TMS* 34: 19a-b. Kim Pushik showed how ritual significance could be turned into a political weapon by chastising Yi Chagyöm, then the most powerful man in Koryŏ, with the ritual implications of *taesŏngak*.

ontological status, hunger for learning, maintaining unofficial contacts with the Song and an earnest desire for possessing ritual music, the efficacy of which – when properly performed – was not doubted. Histories of Koryŏ existed during this period, but none that dealt more or less exclusively with the ruling Wang house. The only extant Wang genealogy, the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok*, has been incorporated into the *Koryŏsa*, but is a rather late product of the late twelfth century and itself probably based upon the Koryŏ *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongjae*, hence the similarity in name. The need for a written genealogy that established and sanctified the descent of the Koryŏ rulers was both a domestically felt need because of the encroachments on royal power perpetrated by the great lineages and an internationally necessary symbolic act that reaffirmed the ontological position of the Koryŏ ruler vis-à-vis other rulers. Most importantly, however, is the fact that the compilation of this genealogy against this background signalled Koryŏ's complicated and ambiguous relationship with Song China. It was both a witness to Song China's cultural achievements and a statement of Koryŏ's equality. There was no reason why Koryŏ should not possess the same kind of genealogy that the Song imperial house possessed. At the same time, however, Song culture set the standards that Koryŏ scholars felt themselves to be equal to.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE OLDEST EXTANT HISTORY

The *Samguk sagi* is the oldest extant Korean history.<sup>90</sup> Despite this fact, it has a record of being criticized, and most virulently so at the beginning of the twentieth century, when it came under attack for being sinophile and essentially anti-Korean.<sup>91</sup> The *Samguk sagi* is usually seen as little more than an ideological tool of its compiler, Kim Pushik, for good or for worse. Kim, arguably the most influential scholar and statesman of middle Koryŏ, compiled the *Samguk sagi* at royal command. His advanced age at the time prohibited a continuous and hands-on participation in the compilation, but the commentaries, introductions, postscripts and the general outline were by his hand. Of course, overall supervision and responsibility also rested with him. The *Samguk sagi* was finished and dedicated to Injong in 1146. It consists of twenty-eight chapters (*kwŏn* 卷) of basic annals, three chapters with chronological tables, nine chapters of special sections and ten chapters containing biographies.

The modern condemnation of the *Samguk sagi* is ironic, if seen against the background of what earlier critics have had to say about it. Yi Kyubo's remark on the *Samguk sagi* is often

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<sup>90</sup> The *Samguk sagi* is usually mentioned in tandem with the *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事, which modern historiography credits with a more 'Korean' point of view than the *Samguk sagi*. I will not treat the *Samguk yusa* here; it dates from the late thirteenth century and as such falls without the scope of this study. It was moreover compiled during the period of Mongol domination in Koryŏ, which gives it a distinctly different identity as a historical work. The omission of the *Samguk yusa* here, then, is solely based on its period of compilation and not on its character as a historical work.

<sup>91</sup> This attack was led by Shin Ch'aeho and quickly taken up by the likes of Ch'oe Namsŏn 崔南善 and other nationalist intellectuals in colonial Korea. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the idea that Kim Pushik represented a conservative, pro-Chinese faction within Koryŏ became a paradigm in Koryŏ historiography that made it into text books for primary and secondary education. Although it is undeniably true that the most recent studies on Kim Pushik have distanced themselves somewhat from Shin Ch'aeho's outspoken criticism, denunciation even, of Kim Pushik, he is still seen as someone whose influence was not positive, even if Shin's extreme opinion is no longer fully supported. A meaningful distinction between Kim Pushik's actions and ideology on the one hand and his history on the other hand is not made. This is in itself understandable, given the way Kim Pushik used the *Samguk sagi* as a tool to promote his ideas on what was good for Koryŏ. See Ko Pyŏngik, "*Samguk sagi*-e issŏsŏ-ŭi yŏksa sŏsul 三國史記에 있어서의 歷史敘述," in *Kim Chaewŏn paksŏ hoegap kinyŏm nonch'ong* 金載元博士回甲紀念論叢, edited by *Kim Chaewŏn paksŏ hoegap kinyŏm nonch'ong p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe* 金載元博士回甲紀念論叢編纂委員會 (Seoul: *Kim Chaewŏn paksŏ hoegap kinyŏm nonch'ong p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe*, 1969), pp. 51-86; Yi Usŏng, "*Samguk sagi*-ŭi kusŏng-gwa Koryŏ wangjo-ŭi chŏngt'ong ŭishik," pp. 203-207; Kim Ch'ŏlchun 金哲俊, "Koryŏ chunggi-ŭi munhwa ŭishik-kwa sahak-ŭi sŏngkyŏk,"; Ha Hyŏng'ang 河炫綱, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏksa kyesŏngŭishik 高麗時代의 歷史繼承意識," *Yibwa sabak yŏn'gu* 梨花史學研究 8 (1976): pp. 12-20; Edward J. Shultz, "Kim Pushik-kwa *Samguk sagi* 金富軾과 三國史記," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 73 (1991): pp. 1-20; Shultz, "An introduction to the *Samguk sagi*" *Korean Studies* 28 (2004): pp. 1-13; Shin Hyŏngshik 申滢植, *Samguk sagi yŏn'gu* 三國史記研究 [(Seoul: Ilchokak 一潮閣, 1981); Shin Hyŏngshik, "Kim Pushik 金富軾," in *Han'guk yŏksaga-wa yŏksabak* 한국 역사가와 역사학, volume one (Seoul: Changjak-kwa p'ipyŏng 장작과 비평, 1994), edited by Cho Tonggŏl 趙東杰, Han Yŏngu 韓永遇 and Pak Ch'ansŏng 朴贊勝; Shin Hyŏngshik, *Han'guk sabaksa* 韓國史學史 (Seoul: Samyŏngsa, 1999), pp. 84-120; Yi Kangnae 李康來, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron* 三國史記典據論 (Seoul: Minjoksa 民族社, 1996); Chŏng Kubok, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 227-284; Chŏng Kubok, "Kim Pushik-ŭi (1075-1151) saengae-wa ŏpchŏk 김부식의 (1075-1151) 생애와 업적," *Chŏngshin munhwa yŏn'gu* 82 (2001): pp. 3-24.

misconstrued as a general criticism on it, while, if read in context, his remark is aimed at the omission of most of the legend of Tongmyōng, which apparently was included in full detail in the older *Samguksa*. Yi's criticism is limited to Kim's failure to include the long version of the Tongmyōng myth and does not extend to his general treatment of myths. As later critics from the early Chosŏn period somewhat indignantly remarked, Kim had included too many myths and legendary lore. Criticism from the colonial period on the contrary attacked the perceived omission of peninsular myths, usually citing a part of the commentary in which Kim evaluated Shilla history: "These stories are all fallacious and weird. They cannot be believed." This expression is then taken as a *pars pro toto* for Kim Pushik's attitude towards myths and legends.<sup>92</sup> His alleged Confucian rationalism needs qualification, however. If one reads the texts, a different picture emerges:

It is told that the Pak 朴 and Sök 昔 lineages from Shilla originally came from an egg and that [the progenitor of the] Kim lineage descended from heaven in a golden coffer or according to others in a golden chariot. These stories are all fallacious and weird. They cannot be believed, but they are transmitted among the people and regarded as matters of fact. During the Song reign period of Zhenghe 政和, our court sent an envoy to the Song led by minister Yi Charyang 李資諒. Your servant Pushik accompanied and assisted him in the capacity of academician. We entered a shrine in the Youshen-guan 佑神館 where a statue of a female spirit had been placed. The academician who accompanied us, Wang Meng 王黼, said: "That is a spirit of your esteemed country. Do you know her, my lords?" He finally told us: "Once upon a time, there was an imperial princess who got pregnant without having a husband. People doubted her [chastity]. So she crossed the sea and reached Chinhan, where she gave birth to a son who became the first lord of Haedong. The princess became an earthly transcendental and lived for a long time in Sōndo-san 仙桃山. This is her statue." I also saw the ritual text written by Song envoy Wang Xiang 王襄 in honour of the Holy Mother Eastern Spirit and found out that she is the holy person of Sōndo-san. But I could not find out when her son was king.<sup>93</sup>

Kim's abhorrence of superstition needs to be qualified: right after he states that fallacious tales should not be believed, he relates an anecdote about the mythical "mother" of Haedong, a myth which turned out to be a true story after all. The contents of this commentary suggest several things. It suggests foremost that there is a distinct difference between the strange stories that circulate among the people and the origin myths of the peninsula. Second, that the qualification of Kim Pushik as a "rational Confucian" is simplistic and reductionist. Apparently, he is sensitive to Koryŏ's origin myths and appreciates their importance. The literal truth of

<sup>92</sup> See for example Yi Usōng, "Samguk sagi-üi kusōng-gwa Koryŏ wangjo-üi chōngt'ong üishik", pp. 203-207; Kim Ch'ölchun, "Koryŏ chunggi-üi munhwa üishik-kwa sahak-üi sōngkyök," ;Ha Hyōn'gang, "Koryŏ shidae-üi yōksa kyesūngüishik" ; Shin Hyōngshik, *Samguk sagi yōn'gu*; Shin Hyōngshik, "Kim Pushik"; Shin Hyōngshik, *Han'guk sabaksa*, pp. 84-120; Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chōn'goron*; Chōng Kubok, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa*, pp. 227-284; Chōng Kubok, "Kim Pushig-üi (1075-1151) saengae-wa ōpchōk", pp. 3-24. The study of the *Samguk sagi* constitutes a field of its own, but in the context of the present research, it will not be necessary to deal with all aspects of it. I have, therefore, made choices regarding the aspects of the SGSG I shall look at. Due to its pivotal position in Korean historiography, the literature on the SGSG is understandably vast. I shall not try to give a detailed account of the history of the debates surrounding it, but limit myself to a discussion of the most important views of it and, if necessary, offer alternative interpretations.

<sup>93</sup> SGSG 12:143-144.

these myths is perhaps best not believed, but they are to be accepted as myths of descent: they fulfil a specific function in the history of a state. And thirdly, this anecdote begs the question why Kim mentions this story in his commentary on Shilla. This does not seem to make sense, since this is a story about Tongmyōng and his mother. Two different reasons for this may be offered here. The first one is that it seems to serve the purpose of having a Song scholar emphasize the fact that the peninsula (Haedong) was one from the very beginning; Paekche, Shilla and Koguryō only came into being much later. The location at the end of the Shilla basic annals (for that is where this anecdote is found, in one of Kim's appended commentaries) also facilitates the shift to the Koguryō basic annals. At any rate, the idea that Kim Pushik was a staunch denouncer of myths and tales needs to be discarded. He did, as Yi Kyubo charges, omit large parts of the Tongmyōng myth, but he did not exclude the peninsula's mythical stories of origin and descent.

The focus of the criticism of later critics was centred on the lack of proper terms of deference towards China and the peninsular focus of the *Samguk sagi*, instead of its less than complete recording of old myths. In 1402, Kwōn Kūn 權近 (1352-1409) complained about the fundamentally pluralist approach of a history that attempts to record the histories of three kingdoms in one work:

In Koryō, Kim Pushik chose the method of Sima Qian's *Record of the grand historian* as his structure, but interpretations are on several points different from the *Spring and autumn annals* and the circumstances of the same fact are recorded at several places [in the three basic annals]. Dialects and vulgar language have been mixed in, there is little mention of proper politics and wise counsels and it is hard to consult since the history of each state has been recorded separately.<sup>94</sup>

Kwōn's comment is revealing on several accounts. It confirms Kim Pushik's choice of a Chinese model – although the *Samguk sagi* took not only the *Record of the Grand Historian* (*Shiji* 史記) but also the *New Book of the Tang* (*Xin Tangshu* 新唐書) as the examples it aspired to – for his history, his idiosyncrasies in recording dialect and vulgar language and his deviant (seen from Neo-Confucian standards) ethical judgments. Most importantly, it takes issue with Kim's decision to keep the histories of the Three Kingdoms separate to the extent that he thought was justified, instead of elevating the history of Shilla (or Paekche or Koguryō) and subordinating the other histories to the one main history. This not only created difficulties of a practical nature, but also of a historiographical nature. The same fact could be listed in each of the three histories and perhaps in all of them. Moreover, there was no guarantee that the fact recorded in one history should be identical to the same fact in another history. An unambiguous example is furnished by the inclusion of Mahan's participation in battle with Koguryō in the basic annals for Koguryō, while according to the Paekche basic annals, Mahan no longer existed at the time of their involvement in the war.<sup>95</sup> The use, furthermore,

<sup>94</sup> Kwōn Kūn, *Chin Samguk saryak chōn* 進三國史略箋 [Dedication of the *Condensed history of the Three Kingdoms*] in *TMS* 44: 18a-19a. This preface dedication can also be found in Kwōn Kūn's collected works: *Yangch'onjip* 陽村集 [hereafter *JCJ*] 24: 11a-12b.

<sup>95</sup> *SGSG* 23: 227; *SGSG* 15: 161. The entry in the Paekche annals dates the destruction of Mahan in the year 3 B.C.E.,

throughout the three annals of the *Samguk sagi* of the words ‘we’ and ‘our’ only served to enhance the historiographical schizophrenia perceived by Kwön Kün. In his own *Tongguk saryak* 東國史略 or *Samguk saryak* 三國史略<sup>96</sup>, Kwön skirted this complicated problem by giving Shilla a unique precedence among the Three Kingdoms, another ironic instance when seen in the light of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century criticism against Kim Pushik. Kwön treated the period of the Three Kingdoms in the *Shilla-gi* 新羅記, the annals of Shilla. Since, according to him, “Shilla was first to arise and last to perish”, it deserved this unprecedented historiographical honour.<sup>97</sup> Kim Pushik had placed Shilla first, but he had not failed to give Paekche and Koguryō their own basic annals. Kwön, protesting against this double blasphemy, solved this problem by radically subordinating Paekche and Koguryō to Shilla, a task that was made easier by the *kangmok* 綱目 system he employed. The *kangmok* system still allowed the chronological arrangement of historical facts, but instead of the annalistic style which chronologically lists everything that is considered worth mentioning, it contains a theme (*kang*), printed in bold and slightly elevated characters, which is expanded upon in the lemma next to it (*mok*), printed in smaller characters. This approach allows a less strictly chronological and more personal arrangement of the available historical information. It should not pass unnoticed that Kwön’s obstinate incorporation of Koguryō and Paekche into the Shilla annals was overturned by the compilers of the *Samguksa chōryo* 三國史節要 (*Essentials of the history of the Three Kingdoms*) in 1476. They were led by early Chosōn intellectual giant Sō Kōjōng 徐居正, who also compiled the *Tong munsōn* and the *T’ongguk t’onggam* 東國通鑑, and chose to adopt a more balanced approach, in which Shilla was mentioned first, but entries on Koguryō and Paekche followed those on Shilla.<sup>98</sup> Even so, this approach was markedly different from that of the *Samguk sagi*. In Kim Pushik’s basic annals, all historical information pertaining to the state concerned is listed, after which new basic annals pertaining to another state are started. Sō Kōjōng opted to alternate entries on Shilla with entries on Koguryō and Paekche in limited time frames, thus obviating much if not all of the historiographical schizophrenia of the *Samguk sagi*, or at least succeeding in putting it in a straightjacket.

Kwön levelled more criticism at Kim Pushik in his preface to the *Tongguk saryak*, maintaining that it was badly organized, bulky and repeated the same facts in different places.<sup>99</sup> Harsher criticism, both in tone and content, came from Yun Chun 尹准 (1380-1436): “Lately, when I try to read Kim Pushik’s compilation, voluminous and often unnecessarily long, I get sleepy. Because it is unsubstantiated, bizarre and fallacious, it would only be sacrilege to

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while the Koguryō annals have Mahan participate on the side of Koguryō in a war in 122. The difference of more than a century between these dates is conspicuous, given that the same compiler was responsible.

<sup>96</sup> Confusingly, Kwön Kün’s *Samguk saryak* is better known as the *Tongguk saryak* 東國史略, the title of which was borrowed by the 16<sup>th</sup> century compilers of a comprehensive history on Korea, Yi U 李挑, Pak Sang 朴祥, Yu Hūiryōng 柳希齡 and Min Chein 閔齊仁. Adding to this confusion is the fact that the same title was also used by Hyōn Ch’ae 玄采 (1856-1926) in 1906 for his comprehensive overview of Korean history.

<sup>97</sup> *Samguk saryak sō* 三國史略序 [Preface to the *Condensed history of the Three Kingdoms*] in TMS 91: 20a-21a: This preface can also be found in Kwön Kün collected works: JCF 9: 10a-11b.

<sup>98</sup> Sō Kōjōng, *Chin Samguksa chōryo chōn* 進三國史節要箋 in *Samguksa chōryo* 三國史節要 1: 1b-2a.

<sup>99</sup> *Samguk saryak sō* in TMS 91: 20a-21a; JCF 9: 10a-11b.

speak of it.”<sup>100</sup> Other Chosŏn historians also had little praise for Kim Pushik’s history. According to Yi Kŭkton 李克墩 (1435-1503), it was imprecise and simple, even about periods of which written records were available; it also contained groundless theories that defied decorum.<sup>101</sup> Famous literati such as Sŏ Kŏjŏng (1420-1488), the compiler of the *Tŏng munsŏn* and the *Tongguk t’onggam* 東國通鑑, voiced similar sentiments and An Chŏngbok (1712-1791), late Chosŏn’s first professional historian, sighed that Kim Pushik would have saved later historians much grief (*han* 恨), if he had made less mistakes or had been more careful in selecting and (not) quoting records, a sentiment echoed by Chŏng Yag’yong.<sup>102</sup>

Leading up to the modern period, then, the reputation of the *Samguk sagi* was that of a history that had been carelessly compiled, that was full of strange stories and improper language, disrespectful towards China and that displayed ethical judgments that were at odds with the ruling perception of proper historiography according to the orthodox neo-Confucianism of the Chosŏn period. The reputation of the *Samguk sagi* would be changed for the remainder of the twentieth century when Shin Ch’aeho 申采浩 published his scathing attack on Kim Pushik, his suppression of Myoch’ŏng’s revolt and the *Samguk sagi*. In his *Chosŏn sasang ilch’ŏnnyŏllae cheiltae sakkŏn* 朝鮮史上一千年來第一大事件 (*The greatest event in the thousand years of Chosŏn history*), he declared that Kim Pushik’s victory over Myoch’ŏng had disastrously changed the course of Korean history. As for the *Samguk sagi*, Shin maintained that it had not been the fires caused by invading Khitan armies that on several occasions had destroyed the Koryŏ historical records available for the compilation of the *Samguk sagi*.<sup>103</sup> According to Shin, Kim Pushik’s active tampering with the surviving historical sources was to blame for this, “more than the armies and fires of history, Kim Pushik’s serving-the-greater ideology towards China destroyed the historical records.”<sup>104</sup> Shin did not substantiate his claim, although it should be mentioned that his urgent plea for a new understanding of Korean history was far more ideological than historiographical. ‘Getting history right’ was much more than historiography for Shin. The fate of the nation hung in the balance when it came to the proper understanding and teaching of the history of the nation to its people.<sup>105</sup>

Shin’s condemnation of Kim Pushik and the *Samguk sagi* has made it into Korean history primers, due to the fact that most contemporary historians trace the modern study of the

<sup>100</sup> Ŭich’ŏng *kanbaeng Tŏngguk saryak chŏn* 擬請刊行東國史略箋 [Request to publish *The condensed history of Korea*] in *TMS* 41: 21a-22a.

<sup>101</sup> *Tongguk t’onggam* 東國通鑑, preface.

<sup>102</sup> Sŏ Kŏjŏng, *Chin Tŏngguk t’onggam chŏn* 進東國通鑑箋 [Dedication of *the Comprehensive mirror of Korea*] in *Sok Tŏng munsŏn* 續東文選 [hereafter *STMS*] 11: 23a-25a; An Chŏngbok 安鼎福, *Sunam sŏnsaeng munjip* 順菴先生文集 (Collected works of master Sunam) 10: 1a, preface to *Tŏngsa mundap* 東史問答; Chŏng Yag’yong 丁若鏞, “Che kangyŏk ko kwŏndan” 題疆域考卷崑. In *Tasan chŏnjip* 茶山全集 [Complete works of Chŏng Yag’yong] 14: 34b-35b.

<sup>103</sup> Originally published in 1929, “Chosŏn sasang ilch’ŏnnyŏllae cheiltae sakkŏn” 朝鮮史上一千年來第一大事件 was part of *Chosŏnsa yŏn’gu ch’o* 朝鮮史研究草 (Research notes on Chosŏn history). It was republished in 1972 and re-edited in 1995 in the collected works of Shin Ch’aeho. See Shin Ch’aeho, *Tanjae Shin Ch’aeho chŏnjip* 丹齋申采浩全集, edited by *Tanjae Shin Ch’aeho sŏnsaeng kinyŏm saŏphoe* 丹齋申采浩先生記念事業會 (Revised edition in 4 volumes, Seoul: Hyŏngsŏl ch’ulp’ansa 螢雪出版社, 1995), vol. 2, pp. 103-124.

<sup>104</sup> Shin Ch’aeho, “Chosŏn sasang ilch’ŏnnyŏllae cheiltae sakkŏn”, p. 118.

<sup>105</sup> Michael E. Robinson, “National identity and the thought of Sin Ch’ae-ho: *Sadaejunŭi* and *chuch’e* in history and politics,” *The Journal of Korean Studies* 5 (1984): pp. 121-142

Koryŏ period back to him and his study of Myoch'ŏng's revolt.<sup>106</sup> The circumstances under which Shin's historical thought took shape evidently exercised a formative influence upon it and render his condemnation of Kim Pushik understandable. Historiographically, however, he committed sin after sin. His diatribe against Kim Pushik's slavish adoration of China, for instance, is based on a very selective reading of the *Samguk sagi*. The first few chapters of the *Samguk sagi* abound with explicit statements which contradict Shin's denunciation. Indeed, more than that, Kim Pushik had written the dedication of the *Samguk sagi* in a format that was explicitly reserved for the Chinese Son of Heaven. He nonetheless used it for Injong in 1146, the implications of which were missed by Shin.<sup>107</sup> The exact manner in which Shin's historical vision took shape, though, need not concern us here. What need concern us here is that the shadow that has been cast by Shin Ch'aeho's historiography has been long and enduring, despite the availability of different interpretations.<sup>108</sup> The historiographical perception of the

<sup>106</sup> For the representative studies on the Western Capital during the Koryŏ period, see Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko 고려 西京考," *Yŏksa hakpo* 歷史學報 35:36 (1967): pp. 139-174 (reprinted in Ha Hyŏn'gang, *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 韓國中世史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1988); Yi Hyeok 李惠玉, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-e taehan il koch'al 高麗初期 西京勢力에 대한 一考察," *Han'guk hakpo* 韓國學報 26 (1982): pp. 105-132; Yi Chŏngshin 李貞信, "Koryŏ T'aejo-ŭi kŏn'guk inyŏm-ŭi hyŏngsŏng-gwa kungnae-oe chŏngse 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내외 정세," *韓國史研究* 118 (2002): pp. 35-74; Kang Ogyŏp 姜玉葉, "Namal Yŏch'o P'aesŏ chiyŏg-e taehan il koch'al 羅末麗初 涇西地域에 대한 一考察," *Yihwa sabak yŏn'gu* 梨花史學研究 20-21 (1993): pp. 33-52; Kang Ogyŏp, "Yŏch'o Sŏgyŏng kyŏngyŏng-gwa Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-ŭi ch'ui 麗初 西京經營과 西京勢力的 推移," *Tongdae sabak* 東大史學 1 (1995): pp. 3-27; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al 高麗 西京의 風水地理的 考察," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 71 (1996): pp. 69-101; Kang Ogyŏp, "Myoch'ŏng nan-ŭi yŏn'gu tonghyang-gwa seroun inshik mosaek 妙淸亂의 研究動向과 서로운 認識 摸索," *Paeksan hakpo* 白山學報 49 (1997): pp. 169-208; Kang Ogyŏp, "Injong-dae Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndoron-ŭi taedu-wa Sŏgyŏng seryŏk-ŭi yŏkhal 인종대 서경천도론의 대두와 서경세력의 역할," *Sabak yŏn'gu* 史學研究 55-56 (1998): pp. 109-130; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Injongdae Sŏgyongmin-ŭi hangjaeng-gwa Sŏgyŏng seryog-ŭi punhwa 高麗 仁宗代 西京民의 抗爭과 西京勢力的 分化," *Sabak yŏn'gu* 史學研究 58-59 (1999): 571-590; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng chedo 高麗時代의 西京制度," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 92 (2000): pp. 93-118. The majority of monographs on the Western Capital, Kim Pushik or Myoch'ŏng starts with referring to Shin Ch'aeho, which does not necessarily imply agreement with Shin's position, but it does clearly demonstrate the influence of Shin's notions on this episode of Koryŏ history. Despite the fact that Kim Pushik was one of the towering figures of the Koryŏ period, both as a statesman and an intellectual, the public condemnation of the *Samguk sagi* goes hand in hand with a denunciation of Kim. A telling example of this is the tale that Kim eventually died sitting on a toilet by the ghost of Chŏng Chisang (?-1135), whom he allegedly had had killed for his superior poetical talents and not, as Kim explained to Injong, for the danger he posed to the court as a fanatic member of Myoch'ŏng's entourage. This tale can be found in Yi Kyubo's *Paegun sosŏl* 白雲小說; see the appendix 附錄 to the *TYSC*.

<sup>107</sup> A previous chapter has established the existence of a dual system in Koryŏ under which its ruler was both king, emperor and Son of Heaven. Kim's use of the *p'yo* 表 format for the dedication was consistent with Koryŏ precedent. For more examples, see chapter four. Note, incidentally, that the dedications of the histories written by Kwŏn Kŭn, Yun Chun and Sŏ Kŏjŏng did not take the imperial format of *p'yo* (which was reserved for the Ming emperor), but that of *chŏn* 箋, which was suited for a vassal of the Son of Heaven.

<sup>108</sup> A much less well-known contemporary of Shin Ch'aeho, Kim T'aeg'yŏng 金澤榮 (1850-1927) was active during the same period Shin was active and also went into exile to Shanghai. Kim T'aeg'yŏng, however, was by training and conviction a neo-Confucian scholar, who in his voluminous works tried to revitalize neo-Confucian thought to make it compatible with the circumstances in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Korea. Despite his contemporary fame, his vision of history, which was not critical of Kim Pushik, was significantly less attractive, because it did not propose a radical break with the past (as Shin did), nor did it locate the 'soul' of the Korean people in Tan'gun (as Shin did), demanded much of the reader because it was written in classical Chinese and finally, and most damagingly, proposed to preserve the neo-Confucian tenets of Chosŏn society. That Kim T'aeg'yŏng's understanding of a new and refurbished neo-Confucianism was in its own way as revolutionary as Shin

*Samguk sagi* has been heavily influenced by Shin's writings on it, and it has only been relatively recently that some historians have started to look at the *Samguk sagi* in a somewhat different manner, following the long-neglected lead of Ko Pyöngik's article from 1969.<sup>109</sup>

If anything, this short survey of how the *Samguk sagi* has been perceived by later generations of historians and readers shows how contemporary circumstances are tied to historical interpretations. This goes as much for Kwön Kün's comments on the *Samguk sagi* as Shin Ch'aeho's condemnation of it, despite the very different arguments both men advanced. Discounting the strenuous circumstances of the Japanese occupation of Korea, it is hard to give Shin's criticisms much credit on purely historiographical grounds. His arguments are ideological and not backed by historiographical facts, but were instead prompted by contemporary reality. Later historians furnished his ideas with historical facts and arguments, which has resulted in historiographical studies of the *Samguk sagi* with overt ideological leanings.<sup>110</sup> Kwön Kün's arguments are as ideologically inclined as Shin Ch'aeho's arguments are, but his are well-founded. Whereas Shin's condemnation ultimately rests on ethical judgments and a very selective reading of the sources, Kwön knew what he was criticizing. The serving-the-greater concept apparent in the *Samguk sagi* that was the major point of criticism for Shin Ch'aeho is actually largely absent; Kwön noted as much when he criticized the *Samguk sagi* for being disrespectful towards China. Kim Pushik had used the format of the *pon'gi*, the basic annals, for his work, while this format was exclusively reserved for the legitimate Chinese Son of Heaven. Rulers of vassal states had to make do with a differently named, but otherwise identical format, the *sega* or "hereditary houses".<sup>111</sup> And as Kwön charged, Kim Pushik was guilty of disagreeing with the orthodox historiographical tradition as represented by the *Spring and autumn annals*; Kim's mild opinion on intra-lineage marriages and women rulers, his inclusion of dialect and vulgar language are unequivocal in this respect. He had obviously paid too much attention to myth and legend, and not enough to 'proper politics and wise counsels'.<sup>112</sup> Worst, however, was his inclusion of three basic annals, as opposed to one – which should have been a *sega* (the proper format for a vassal state of China) to begin with. This undeniable characteristic of *Samguk sagi* is of defining importance for Kim Pushik's history of the peninsula. To Kwön, it was a negation of the very core of the neo-Confucian beliefs he cherished. Kwön was very much a transitional figure, a neo-Confucian scholar who had at first sided with the loyalist faction against Yi Sönggye 李成桂 and only came to support him after the founding of the Chosön dynasty. Espousing a neo-Confucian philosophy in a still predominantly Buddhist social environment, the strength of Kwön's convictions concerning

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Ch'aeho's more flamboyant ideas, was something that, understandably perhaps, was not appreciated by most of his contemporaries. Breuker, "History with a capital H: Kaesöng's forgotten claim to capital history," *Acta Koreana* 7.2 (2004): pp. 65-102.

<sup>109</sup> Ko Pyöngik, "*Samguk sagi*-e issösö-üi yöksa sösul", pp. 51-86; Shin Hyöngshik, *Han'guk sabaksa*, pp. 84-120 (Shin's evaluation of the *Samguk sagi* has become more mild in his later studies), Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chön'goron*; Edward Shultz, "Kim Pushik-kwa *Samguk sagi*", pp. 1-20; Shultz, "An introduction to the *Samguk sagi*", pp. 1-13.

<sup>110</sup> Representative of this approach is Kim Ch'ölichun's influential study of the intellectual climate in the middle of the Koryö period. See, "Koryö chunggi-üi munhwa üishik-kwa sahak-üi söngkyök", pp. 185-226.

<sup>111</sup> Kwön Kün, *Chin Samguk saryak chön* in *TMS* 44: 18a-19a; *JCJ* 24: 11a-12b.

<sup>112</sup> Kwön Kün, *Chin Samguk saryak chön* in *TMS* 44: 18a-19a; *JCJ* 24: 11a-12b.

the rightness of neo-Confucianism, of his “knowing better” as Michael Kalton put it, was exceptional.<sup>113</sup> Despite his loyalist past, he soon became the most respected scholar in the peninsula, responsible for the crucial task of composing diplomatic documents. He also became responsible for the compilation of historical works; in this capacity he criticised Kim Pushik’s compilation of the *Samguk sagi*. His own historical writings and compilations are characterised by a strong sense of morality and propriety, which also led him to censure Kim Pushik for his alleged laziness in passing proper judgment on events that did not correspond to the moral order of the universe. Kim’s greatest error in this was his inclusion of no less than three basic annals, when the inclusion of even one would already have constituted sacrilege and when the inclusion of the same event in different annals would undermine the historical and moral significance of that event.

It is ironic that later historians have consistently ignored the essence of Kwŏn Kŭn’s criticism; not only because many later criticisms were diametrically opposed to Kwŏn Kŭn with regard to their contents, but also because Kwŏn hit the proverbial nail on the head with his comments. He realized what was apparent from the *Samguk sagi*, both from its contents and its title, for a reader from late Koryŏ and early Chosŏn: it challenged the monist perception of history – of reality – that defined Chosŏn neo-Confucianism.<sup>114</sup> The double or even triple inclusions of contradictory versions of ostensibly the same historical fact were not simple mistakes on the part of the compilers. They very well knew what they were doing and it is clear from the notes in the *Samguk sagi* that they were cognizant of each other’s work and commented upon it.<sup>115</sup> Their divergent accounts further challenged the historiographical hegemony propounded by the narrative of Kwŏn Kŭn’s *Samguk saryak*.<sup>116</sup> In effect, what Kim Pushik had done with the compilation of the *Samguk sagi*, was recognizing that ideology comes second to historical contingency. History shapes the world of men, which he tries to govern to the best of his abilities using a suitable ideology: this was basically Kim’s vision, while Kwŏn looked at the tenets of neo-Confucianism with the unshakeable faith that these could make a better world. At the risk of simplification it might be said that Kim approached the world through his understanding of its historical experiences, while Kwŏn approached it through the insights he had gained through his adherence of neo-Confucianism.

The compilation of a history which would be of immediate use to the present of practical engagement evidently entailed a strong acceptance of reality, or in Kim’s case, of realities. Such

<sup>113</sup> Michael C. Kalton, “The writings of Kwŏn Kŭn: The context and shape of early Yi dynasty neo-Confucianism,” in *The rise of neo-Confucianism in Korea*, edited by Wm. Theodore de Bary and JaHyun Kim Haboush (New York: Columbia University Press 1985), p. 113.

<sup>114</sup> Chosŏn neo-Confucianism obviously had its share of contradictions, inconsistencies and hard-to-explain irregularities, but its orthodox interpretation did not recognize this and condemned these as ‘heretic’. The strictly enforced idea of orthodoxy in Chosŏn neo-Confucianism of course suggests the existence of a rather different reality. In this context, however, it is not the reality per se that is of direct significance, but the idea what that reality should look like. In contrast with Chosŏn, Koryŏ did not enforce orthodox interpretations in quite so strict a manner, because it was thought there were no legitimate reasons for it. This difference with regard to how reality should be, is of defining importance.

<sup>115</sup> Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn’goron*, pp. 41-50.

<sup>116</sup> As outlined in the preface and the dedication and executed in the structure of the work itself. Kwŏn Kŭn, *Chin Samguk saryak chŏn* in TMS 44: 18a-19a; J CJ 24: 11a-12b.; *Samguk saryak sŏ* in TMS 91: 20a-21a; J CJ 9: 10a-11b.



a history is only practical if it relates to the reader's daily reality, whatever that reality looked like. The most characteristic feature of the *Samguk sagi* is its implicit recognition of conflicting co-existing historical realities, as expressed by the three basic annals Kim thought necessary to put in. The much written about bias in favour of Shilla is optical: a comparison of the amount of space devoted to the three countries must omit the pages dedicated to Shilla after it had united the peninsula, because Paekche and Koguryō ceased to exist after the unification under Shilla. If this is done, the amount of space devoted to Shilla and Koguryō is similar; in fact, the amount devoted to Koguryō is slightly larger. The history of Paekche is told in significantly fewer pages, but this was due to an acute lack of source materials. Shilla does take first place; it is mentioned first, but it is highly debatable whether this choice was made because Kim Pushik's lineage came from Shilla's old capital Kyōngju. It is much more likely that this was done because in spite of everything it had been Shilla which had unified the peninsula under its rule.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, early Koryō was in many ways a continuation of Shilla. As such, the historical record favoured listing Shilla first.

Kim Pushik's ambiguous inclusion of three basic annals articulates the recognition of three different perceptions of reality. This is only exacerbated by the fact that the entries referring to the same historical fact received different treatments in the respective basic annals; even if the same fact was recorded in exactly the same manner, its inclusion in a different, even conflicting context changed it and its perception. There is no suggestion in the *Samguk sagi* that Kim perceived these truths to have been relative to each other. Despite their conflicting nature at times, the three peninsular histories were indispensable parts of Koryō history. The manner of compilation intimates the privileged position Kim awarded to these three historical realities; and judging from the fact that he was not active in a vacuum, but must be firmly placed within a distinct Koryō historiographical and intellectual tradition, he was not alone in doing so.<sup>118</sup> The *Samguk sagi* was compiled according to Chinese Confucian example and adapted according to peninsular needs: in this respect, it was a precise fit with the tradition of Koryō historiography. Even the earlier *Samguksa* fitted this mould. In another respect, it was also part of the Koryō historiographical tradition: its conflation of politics and historiography is typical of the mainstream historiography of this period, both in Koryō and on the continent. An overly political interpretation of the *Samguk sagi*, then, is not only stating the obvious, for politics and history were not considered to be separated and indeed to be separable, but also one-sided, for it opens the door for overly historiographical interpretations of politics. Historians had little doubt that politics and history were one of a kind: politics were present history, or history was past politics, depending on the point of view. This is clearly reflected in historical works such as the *Samguk sagi*, in which the compilers take a political stance. Impartiality was not an option, for the practical purposes of every historiographical work pre-

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<sup>117</sup> Kwōn Kūn's decision to do the same, but in a more extreme manner, and later Sō Kōjōng's decision to, again, do the same, but in a milder manner, in their respective histories show the obviousness of this choice.

<sup>118</sup> Too often, towering figures like Kim Pushik are not seen against the background of the tradition they belonged to and felt themselves to belong to. In Kim Pushik's case, his continuous involvement in politics and diplomacy makes it easy to forget that he descended from a long intellectual tradition with both peninsular and continental roots. Independent from the political significance the *SGSG* may or may not carry, it would be reductionist to regard it merely as a product of political circumstances.

empted this. Independence, even when it was only being paid lip service, was only retained with reference to the historical facts, as the strict separation of the commentaries from the main text show.

Kim Pushik's recognition that the eventualities of history were responsible for the world he lived in carried ontological consequences. As is apparent from the structure of the *Samguk sagi*, for Kim there were a number of equally valid historical realities, which through historical contingencies ended up being 'bound together', loosely allowing space to the different and conflicting realities of Shilla, Paekche and Koguryō. The question which one of these was particularly 'favoured' is to all intents and purposes largely irrelevant. The point is that the *Samguk sagi* by virtue of its contents implies and confirms that there were multiple realities that were perhaps at odds with and excluded each other, but that did – and could – not deny each other. The eventualities of history had led to the existence of the Three Kingdoms, their eventual unification under Shilla and then Koryō's hegemony. Only then did ideology enter upon the stage: only then did Kim Pushik pronounce his judgments on what was proper and moral and what lacked these qualities. The places where he inserted his thirty-one historical commentaries act as ideologically well-demarcated boundaries. The ambiguity so prominent in other places in the *Samguk sagi* and indeed in its conception is sacrificed to achieve maximum clarity on the important issues explicated in the commentaries. The picture that emerges is one of a historical narrative that acknowledges dissent and ambiguity if possible and that constrains these traits when necessary. It is in other words a work that is pluralist in conception and execution. At the same time, care is taken to insert a certain teleology in the coming about of the Three Kingdoms and Koryō. There is a tension between the historical narrative of the development of each of the Three Kingdoms and the insertion of historical cross-references to what was happening at the same time in the other kingdoms. The Shilla basic annals, for instance, mention in the twenty-first year of founder Hyōkkōse that Tongmyōng ascended the throne in Koguryō.<sup>119</sup> In the fortieth year of the same ruler, it is recorded that in Paekche Onjo ascended the throne.<sup>120</sup> The insertion of these pieces of information in the Shilla basic annals strongly suggest a link between Shilla and Koguryō and Shilla and Paekche that is only there in hindsight and that is only relevant with the knowledge of what would happen centuries later. These cross-references serve the purpose of announcing the future unification of the three narratives. It contrasts with the otherwise separate narratives of the basic annals, but this tension is conceivably necessary in order to keep the narratives 'bound' together, while simultaneously kept separate.

The *Samguk sagi* offers a perfect illustration of Barth's boundary mechanism: by including the histories of those three states in the legitimate history of the Koryō dynasty, Kim Pushik was able to furnish Koryō with an amazing ideological flexibility, emphasizing the ability to, crudely put, switch from warlike and ever-expanding Koguryō to stable and enduring Shilla or culture-loving Paekche, as the need to do so arose. Pregnant examples are Kim Pushik's condemnation of the prerogatives of the *kalmun-wang* 葛文王 in Shilla and his evaluation of

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<sup>119</sup> SGSG I: 18.

<sup>120</sup> SGSG I: 18.

foreign relations. The *kalmun-wang* was a father (or other close relative) of the king, who had not been king himself; it was an honorary title. Shilla history knows several examples of *kalmun-wang* who tried to appropriate royal prerogatives that did not fit their status. The similarities with Yi Chagyöm's ambitions with regard to his position at the court of his son-in-law Injong are conspicuous. Kim Pushik made a name for himself by standing up against Yi Chagyöm; first by opposing the performance of ritual music at the tombs of his forefathers and second by opposing the celebration of his birthday as the anniversary of a king (*insujöl* 仁壽節).<sup>121</sup> As for the second example, the praise he heaps on the anonymous defender of Anshi Fortress 安市城, who withstood the Tang emperor, or the need to maintain, if at all possible, friendly relations with foreign powers, clearly mirror his own foreign policies and the debates that raged during this time at court about how to deal with the aggressive Jin.<sup>122</sup>

This ideological flexibility is also apparent from the generous inclusion of Buddhist elements. It is well-known that Kim Pushik was a devout Buddhist himself, especially at the end of his life when he worked on the *Samguk sagi*. He built his own temple for the benefit of his family, the Kwallan-sa temple 觀瀾寺 and he became a *kōsa* 居士 (lay monk). One of his elder brothers was a monk who was on intimate terms with Ŭich'ŏn 義天<sup>123</sup> and Kim Pushik also wrote the text for the inscription of the stele honouring Ŭich'ŏn.<sup>124</sup> It is undeniably so that the *Samguk sagi* contains fewer Buddhist tales than the *Samguk yusa*, but then the *Samguk yusa* pays little attention to things outside of the realm of Buddhist and native tales, while the *Samguk sagi* on the other hand tries to strike a certain balance between the different beliefs that made up the peninsular past.

If anything, the *Samguk sagi* was well-adapted to serve the needs of the bureaucrat-scholars who had to deal with the present of practical engagement and could use all the support they could muster. Despite the 20<sup>th</sup>-century historiography on this book, it is by no means an ideological exclamation mark or a vehicle for Kim Pushik's personal likes and dislikes – which is not to say that these did not enter the picture, which they did, but that they did not exercise the decisive influence often attributed to them. Kim Pushik's ideas about Koryŏ society, how to govern it, and what kinds of values to adhere to, are clearly reflected in the *Samguk sagi*; more specifically, in the historical commentaries attached to significant incidents. These added commentaries are both reflections of Kim's ideological ideas and his practical solutions to contemporary problems. He voiced his opinion on matters of state, on the moral character of historical figures and on general moral, historical and social affairs. The commentaries show the interaction between the daily reality of a statesman and diplomat, his ideological, religious and philosophical leanings and his ethical inclinations. The overall orientation of the *Samguk sagi* emphasizes a classically Confucian approach to governing the

<sup>121</sup> *SGSG* 2:34. Also see *KS* 98: 3a-b.

<sup>122</sup> *SGSG* 21: 214; *SGSG* 45: 435. For the international situation during Injong's reign, see chapter nine on diplomacy and the last chapter.

<sup>123</sup> *KS* 98: 20a: "Tongjung 敦中 [Pushik's son] and his elder brother Tonshi 敦時 expanded and repaired the Kwallan-sa temple 觀瀾寺 that had been built by Kim Pushik".

<sup>124</sup> *Kaesŏng Yŏngi'ongsa Taegak kuksa pimun* 開成靈通寺大覺國師碑文 in *YKP* 3: 116-134. In the inscription, Kim reminisces about his only meeting with Ŭich'ŏn. When he was still a boy, he went to see his brother who lived in a monastery, at which occasion he also met Ŭich'ŏn.

state. In a commentary attached to an – ignored – advice to the ruler not to employ a person without established background in the service of the government, Kim writes the following on whom to allow to join the bureaucracy:

Only after learning can one come to know the way and only after knowing the way can one come to know the beginnings and endings of phenomena. Accordingly, entering the bureaucracy after having studied ensures that when one begins with the origins of phenomena, their endings will by itself turn out right. To make a metaphor, if one pulls the ropes at the end of a fishing net, the fishing net's holes will follow and be in order. One who has not studied does on the contrary not know that phenomena have a before and after, a beginning and an ending and are distracted by digressions and extremes. They only inconsequentially spend their attention on trifling matters and profit from that which the people manage to scrape together. They try to do good to the country and bring peace to the people by strict surveillances and holding each other in high esteem, but they rather do damage. This is why the *Records of education* 學記 [in the *Book of rites*] concludes with the remark that “efforts be devoted to the foundations” and why it is said in the *Book of documents* that “if one does not learn, one will be at a loss when confronted with something, as if one runs headfirst into a wall”. Those few words of chancellor Moch'o 毛肖 deserve to be a model for ten thousand generations.<sup>125</sup>

Learning was the only avenue that offered the techniques that make the world comprehensible and manageable. Kim was of course not unorthodox when he advocated this position; it was the prevailing attitude of Koryŏ scholars. This commentary is unequivocally orthodox Confucian, but noticing that does not exhaust its significance. It is not Kim's insistence on the importance of learning that is interesting, but rather the way in which he expressed this in the metaphor of the fishing net. Learning is a tool aimed at facilitating the government of the state and the amelioration of the lives of the people; it is not a goal in itself.

The same subordination of method to end is visible in the prominence the state occupies in the *Samguk sagi*. The commentary attached to the biography of Kim Hŭmun 金歆運 explains the origins of Shilla's elite *hwarang* 花郎 warriors and extols the virtues of those who willingly sacrifice themselves for the benefit of their country. The *Samguk sagi*'s mild historiographical schizophrenia resurfaces in this commentary: Kim does not merely seek out Shilla warriors such as the *hwarang* youths or such as Kim Yushin 金庾信 to argue the case of loyalty towards the state, but just as easily the anonymous fortress commander of the Koguryŏ fortress of Anshi-sŏng 安市城 who withstood the onslaught of the Tang armies and the legendary Paekche general Kyebaek 階伯, who had fought a losing battle at Hwang-san 黃山, rather dying for Paekche than surrendering to the Shilla commander, none other than Kim Yushin. Traitors, on the other hand, were condemned for their act of treason per se, rather than the concerned object of treason. Both Kyŏn Hwŏn 甄萱 and Kungye 弓裔 were singled out as particularly treacherous villains; Kyŏn Hwŏn because of the sacrilegious outrage he committed by invading the capital, killing the Shilla king and defiling the queen and Kungye because of his rebellion and his subsequent acts of cruelty.<sup>126</sup> Rising against tyrannical rule in itself was not a

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<sup>125</sup> SGSG IO: 116.

<sup>126</sup> In both cases the fact that these two historical figures were juxtaposed to the virtuous and righteous Wang Kŏn

bad thing, though. Kim even considered it a moral imperative. This is made explicit in two commentaries on filial piety (*byo* 孝). In the first one, Kim establishes that filial piety is a cardinal virtue. A son must not leave the side of his parents; his piety is exclusive and absolute. The historical instance he comments upon deals with Koguryŏ King Yuri 瑠璃王 (?-19 B.C.E.-18 C.E.) who orders his son to kill himself after he has shamed Yuri in the eyes of a neighbouring king. The son, although having been of good faith, ends up killing himself. Kim's verdict condemns both king and crown prince for "the father failed to act as a father and the son failed to act as a son".<sup>127</sup> There are, in other words, not only well-established rules how a son should behave towards his father, but also how a father should treat his son. The example of Yuri and his son shows the extent of filial piety, but also the dangers of not handling it properly. The selection of this tragic episode in Koguryŏ history does not seem to have been coincidental. It explicitly deals with the conflicting demands on a ruler who is also a father and a prince who is also a son. As elsewhere, filial piety is directly connected to loyalty to the state (*ch'ung* 忠).<sup>128</sup> As Kim remarked in the beginning of this commentary, filial piety is exclusive; there can be but one object of a child's attentions. Such was also the case with loyalty to the state, as the commentaries on for example Kyebaek and the anonymous lord of Anshi Fortress readily suggest.<sup>129</sup> The loyalty of a subject towards the state he served was unconditional and exclusive, but this did not mean that a minister was supposed to obey his ruler blindly and without remonstrations. Far from it, not only was remonstrations considered a highly valued, though at times rather risky, activity, in the second commentary Kim argued that just like a son must not only be filial, but must also keep his father from committing wrong acts, the minister had the duty to keep the ruler on the right path, even if this meant disobeying him.<sup>130</sup> The ruler is not the community, in other words, and the first and foremost loyalty of the subject is to the community and then to the ruler to the extent that he embodies this community.<sup>131</sup>

The attachment of the biography in three chapters of Kim Yushin is another effective means in the transmission of political lessons to be learned from peninsula's history. The fact that this biography is so long (three chapters out of the ten biography chapters) that it effectively unbalances the composition of biography section of the *Samguk sagi* reveals the importance that Kim Pushik attached to the example set by Kim Yushin. An exhaustive discussion of this biography deserves a study of its own, so I will limit the discussion here to its most relevant characteristics.<sup>132</sup> Kim Yushin's life is depicted as the life of a rather typical hero-

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undoubtedly influenced their description. It is not the historical truth per se that is of interest here, but the arguments that were invoked in judging past rulers.

<sup>127</sup> SGSG 13:150.

<sup>128</sup> Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*, pp. 351-366.

<sup>129</sup> Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*, pp. 397-398.

<sup>130</sup> SGSG 14:156; Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*, pp. 387-394.

<sup>131</sup> Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*, pp. 351-366, pp. 387-394.

<sup>132</sup> For full studies on this biography, see Frits Vos, "Kim Yushin, Persönlichkeit und Mythos: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Alt-koreanischen Geschichte," *Oriens Extremus* 1 (1954): pp. 29-70 and *Oriens Extremus* 2 (1955): pp. 210-236; Kim Yŏlgyu 金烈圭, "Musokchŏk yŏngung ko: Kim Yushin chŏn-ŭl chungshim-ŭro 巫俗의 英雄考-金庾信傳을 中心으로 하여," *Chindan bakpo* 43 (1977): pp. 83-94; Yi Kangnae, "Samguk sagi wŏnjŏn non-gwa kwallyŏnhan 'pon'gi'-wa pon'gi-ŭi munche 『三國史記』 原典論과 관련한 '本記'와 '本紀'의 문제," *Chŏnnam sabak* 全南史學 11 (1997): pp. 1-23; An Yŏnghun 安영훈, *Kim Yushin chŏn yŏn'gu* 김유신전 연구 (Seoul: Minsog'wŏn 민속원, 2004).

warrior, equipped with all the customary exaggerations – and some more. The period of gestation of Kim Yushin’s mother, for instance, was exceptionally long, twenty months in all.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, according to his stele, he was a descendant of the Yellow Emperor.<sup>134</sup> Some exaggeration is customary in hagiographies, but Kim Pushik depicted Kim Yushin as a person who could measure up to and perhaps even defeat China’s historical heroes. This elevation of Kim Yushin fitted very well into the contemporary atmosphere in Koryŏ, where its own accomplishments were thought to be of equal status with those of China. It is worthy of note that Kim Pushik went to the trouble of obtaining a rubbing of Kim Yushin’s stele and incorporating it in his biography.<sup>135</sup> The same effort shows all through the biography, which has been compiled from no longer extant works on the life of Kim Yushin.<sup>136</sup> In the commentary attached to the biography, it is intimated that Kim Yushin had been largely forgotten by the time Kim Pushik decided to reserve such a prominent place for him in the *Samguk sagi*. In fact, had it not been for some historical works that had survived, no one would have known about him. The importance Kim Pushik attached to Kim Yushin’s example is not only apparent from the length of the biography. It is also evident from the way Kim Yushin is made to function as the exemplary peninsular hero. His heroic and larger-than-life exploits are a direct negation of the strict Confucian rationalism Kim Pushik is usually credited with. Through recounting different episodes, he portrayed Kim Yushin as an amalgam of Confucian, Buddhist and native virtues, adept at interpreting the classics, performing Buddhist esoteric rituals and communicating with the peninsula’s native spirits.<sup>137</sup> In this way, he not only established Kim Yushin’s superiority as an extremely gifted and morally conscious human being, he also incorporated the importance of the enduring protection of bodhisattva’s and indigenous spirits for the peninsula. Kim Yushin communicated directly with Heaven when he entered the cave of Chung’ak 中嶽 and was rewarded by encountering a supernatural being called Nansŭng 難勝, who gave him a secret spell to aid him in his quest to unify the peninsula. Nansŭng appears to be an amalgam of a bodhisattva and an indigenous mountain spirit.<sup>138</sup> In another episode, three female spirits alert Kim Yushin to the betrayal about to be committed by a fellow *hwarang*, symbolizing how the welfare of the country is protected by its spirits and how they communicate with its chosen leader.<sup>139</sup>

An incident during the last year of the reign of queen Chindök is revealing with regard to the practical intelligence, classical learning and ethico-ideological background that Kim Yushin possessed in the eyes of Kim Pushik. Faced with inauspicious signs that seem to foretell that the rebels who are laying siege to the royal fortress will be victorious, Kim replies to her that:

<sup>133</sup> Richard D. McBride, II, “Hidden agendas in the life writings of Kim Yusin,” *Acta Koreana* 1 (1998): pp. 101-142.

<sup>134</sup> McBride, “Hidden agendas in the life writings of Kim Yusin”, pp. 101-142.

<sup>135</sup> McBride, “Hidden agendas in the life writings of Kim Yusin”, p. 112; Frits Vos, “Kim Yusin, Persönlichkeit und Mythos: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Altkoreanischen Geschichte”; Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn’goron*, p. 315.

<sup>136</sup> Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn’goron*, pp. 54, 131, 146, 315.

<sup>137</sup> Kim Yŏlgyu, “Musokchök yŏngung ko: Kim Yushin chŏn-ül chungshim-ŭro”, pp. 83-94

<sup>138</sup> SGSG 41: 405; McBride, “Hidden agendas in the life writings of Kim Yusin”, p. 112; Frits Vos, “Kim Yusin, Persönlichkeit und Mythos: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Altkoreanischen Geschichte”; Kim Yŏlgyu, “Musokchök yŏngung ko: Kim Yushin chŏn-ül chungshim-ŭro”, pp. 83-94.

<sup>139</sup> SGSG 41: 410.

Auspicious and inauspicious signs are not permanent: people merely identify them as such. That is why King Zhou 紂王 perished even though a red phoenix appeared, why Lu 魯 fell in spite of obtaining giraffes, why Gaozong 高宗 [of the Shang] flourished despite the crying of a female pheasant and why the duke of Zheng 鄭公 prospered even though two dragons were fighting. This is how we know that virtue conquers wickedness.<sup>140</sup>

Kim Pushik's recording of Kim Yushin's reaction to the precarious situation in which queen Chindök had found herself is worthy of note in several regards. First, Kim Yushin's appraisal of (in)auspicious omens is remarkable. In contrast to contemporary beliefs, he interprets these in the context of what is happening, instead of regarding them as possessing unchangeable and fixed meanings. He does not dismiss the potential truth of omens; in the next chapter we read that he correctly interprets a flight of waterfowl over his tent on the eve of a battle with Paekche troops. While his troops take this as a bad omen, spelling defeat, Yushin insists that it foretells of Paekche spies in the Shilla camp and manages to use the omen to mislead them.<sup>141</sup> Second, he displays a good knowledge of Chinese history and third, he shows a clear sense of what is good and what is wicked. Despite his clearly stated conviction that good triumphs over evil, his biography shows that this was only the case if the virtuous exert themselves on behalf of the good. Kim Yushin's entire biography reveals the compiler's determination to make Kim Yushin's life the ultimate paradigm to be emulated by later generations and nowhere does this show more clearly than in this instance, when Kim Yushin combines all the virtues and talents a heroic warrior and statesman must possess.

Yet another quality of Kim Yushin that was held in high regard, as well as practiced by, Kim Pushik was his staunch independent-mindedness. As discussed above, Kim Pushik came under fire in the twentieth century for his alleged subservience to the Song and Kim Yushin has had to share in the condemnation that befell Kim Pushik.<sup>142</sup> Kim Yushin is often condemned for his pivotal role in bringing in the Tang armies and in the relinquishing of the northern part of Koguryö's territory.<sup>143</sup> Value judgments such as these, which retroactively blame historical figures for having contributed to events that took place centuries later, depart from exclusively ethical arguments and are not tempered by historical insights. Inverted teleologies in a way, they often are at odds with the historical evidence, as is the case here. Far from relinquishing the northern territories of Koguryö, Kim Yushin had no way of conquering them, for although Koguryö had been defeated, the Koguryö armies that would soon establish the state of Parhae were still too powerful to engage and defeat. The question of Kim Yushin's, or Shilla's, subservience to the Tang is also straightforward. It should not be forgotten that the

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<sup>140</sup> SGSG 41: 407-408.

<sup>141</sup> SGSG 42: 410.

<sup>142</sup> As the architect of the unification of the peninsula, Kim Yushin has repeatedly been held responsible for Shilla's 'failure' to include Koguryö's territory in the unified state of Shilla. Korean historians during the colonial period in particular harshly judged Kim Yushin in this regard. The state of Parhae came into being where Koguryö had been, hence the usage from this time onwards of the concept of the Southern court (Shilla) and the Northern court. See Han Yöngu, *Han'guk minjokchunüi yöksabak* 韓國民族主義 歷史學 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1993); Breuker, "Contested objectivities".

<sup>143</sup> Shin Ch'aeho, *Chosön sanggosa* 朝鮮上古史, in *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho chönjip*, pp. 327-331.

Tang harboured intentions to put the peninsula under Tang control by incorporating it into its administrative system, while the victorious Shilla armies had to wage war for years to succeed in chasing the Tang armies from the peninsula. This attitude was expressed by Kim Pushik in Kim Yushin's biography by portraying the Tang armies and its commanders as unreliable and treacherous, while Shilla commanders distinguish themselves by virtue of their bravery and loyalty.<sup>144</sup> The idea of 'serving the greater' was important to Kim Pushik, but only as long as it was useful and did not harm Koryŏ. This attitude is clearly reflected in his description of Kim Yushin, who put it as follows in a warning about the possible treason of the commanding Tang general: "A dog is scared of its master, but if the master steps on its legs, it will bite him. How can we be faced with these difficulties and yet not help ourselves?"<sup>145</sup> Help yourself, for no one else will, the message is. The same independence is revealed by Shilla's reaction to a demand from the Tang court to change the posthumous name of Kim Ch'unch'u 金春秋. Kim Ch'unch'u had led the victory over Paekche and Shilla and as such received the posthumous name of T'aejo 太祖, the same posthumous name that the founder of the Tang dynasty had received. The Tang's indignant request was denied, citing the great moral virtue of the king who had managed to attract such an outstanding servant as Kim Yushin, with whom he "unified the Three Han".<sup>146</sup> These achievements were so important that they merited the bestowal of the posthumous name of T'aejo, founding ancestor, despite the breach of protocol.

Finally, in the commentary at the end of the biography, Kim Pushik explicitly emphasizes the most important lesson to be learned from the life of Kim Yushin. Ostensibly referring to his own less than ideal relationship with Injong, Kim praises the intimate and absolutely trusting relationship between Kim Yushin and Kim Ch'unch'u, later Muyŏl-wang 武烈王, simultaneously his father-in-law and his brother-in-law.<sup>147</sup> This bond of absolute loyalty and trust was yet another aspect from the life of Kim Yushin to be emulated.

In the commentary attached to Kim Yushin's biography Kim Pushik clearly explicates the vital importance of writing history.

Despite the fact that the cunning of Ŭlchi Mundŏk and the bravery of Chang Pogo 張保臯 have existed, had it not been for Chinese works, they should have been lost to us and we should not have known about them. Our people praise the likes of Kim Yushin and until now [knowledge of him] has not disappeared. It is obvious that gentlemen should know of him, but even the young children cutting hay and gathering firewood know readily of him. This is because he was undoubtedly different in character from other men.<sup>148</sup>

Had it not been for historical works, no one would ever have known about Kim Yushin, once those who had known him had passed away. He would not have been able to act as the ultimate paragon of virtue and loyalty and the state would have been the less for it. With this concrete example Kim Pushik once more shows that the writing of history is essential for the

<sup>144</sup> SGSG 41, 42, 43. The entire biography enforces this idea.

<sup>145</sup> SGSG 42: 412.

<sup>146</sup> SGSG 8: 98.

<sup>147</sup> SGSG 43: 420.

<sup>148</sup> SGSG 43: 420.



proper government of the state.

The commentaries attached by Kim Pushik to events of the past were meant to serve as additional and explicit lessons for present and future generations. Most of the commentaries were at least partially rooted in events and conflicts that Kim himself lived through, which is the main reason for the explicit comparison with reference to the present that are found in the *Samguk sagi*.<sup>149</sup> The analysis of these commentaries yields much information regarding Kim Pushik's ideas about history, politics, society and such, but I believe there is a perhaps even more important aspect about the insertion of the commentaries, which is often taken for granted and rarely commented upon. Despite the many and vehement criticisms that Kim has received for being partisan, the *Samguk sagi* distinguishes itself by its exemplary separation between the recorded and edited source materials and the opinions of the compiler as expressed in the commentaries. A remarkable characteristic of these commentaries is that they were often more thoroughly researched than the main text they referred to. The sheer number of sources used in the composition of the commentaries is actually greater than that used in the compilation of any of the three basic annals.<sup>150</sup> This feature tells us more about the *Samguk sagi* than many an analysis focusing on the interpretation of the particular contents of one passage and building a general argument on such a shaky foundation.<sup>151</sup> Ultimately, the exemplary function of interpreted historical events was considered more important than the historical facts. This makes the *Samguk sagi* in the first place a guide for government, politics and diplomacy, compiled from the most readily and most trusted materials available: peninsular historical documents, supplemented where necessary by Chinese source materials. As it turns out, Kim Pushik's dedication of the book to Injong can be taken verbatim. The structure and actual contents of the *Samguk sagi* confirm this. The fact that Kim chose to use as many domestic source materials as was possible is significant, for it signifies an often misunderstood reliance on Koryŏ culture. The scholarly *communis opinio* still holds that the *Samguk sagi* was compiled as an answer to an urgent identity crisis, caused by the insistent demands of the Jurchen Jin to be recognized as Koryŏ's legitimate suzerain. In this reading, Kim Pushik tried to find a new identity for Koryŏ, now that Song China was no longer available as the mainstay of the cultural consciousness of Koryŏ literati, who had been "intellectuals who derived their right to rule from China".<sup>152</sup> It has become abundantly clear by now, that Koryŏ intellectuals did no such thing and that their approach towards their own identity and towards Song

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<sup>149</sup> See Yi Kangnae (*Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*) for a meticulously researched and well-argued analysis of Kim Pushik's commentaries with regard to the contemporary political world in Koryŏ. References to the present are introduced by the insertion of 今 *kŭm*, presently, and followed by an explanation of the contemporary situation and the bearing the past has upon it. See for example SGSG II: 132 for modest interpolations telling of important future events such as Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn passing the Tang state examinations and the birth of Wang Kŏn.

<sup>150</sup> Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi chŏn'goron*, pp. 305-418.

<sup>151</sup> Shin Ch'aeho's study of Myoch'ŏng's revolt remains the classic example of this approach, which took one example from Koryŏ history and blew it out of proportion, to the extent of appropriating the entire history of the Korean peninsula.

<sup>152</sup> McBride, "Hidden agendas in the life writings of Kim Yusin", p. 103. This position is also apparent in Michael Roger's many articles dealing with this period. The picture painted in these articles is of architectural beauty and symmetry, but nonetheless amounts to a simplification and a remodelling of the infinitely more disordered and inconsistent historical truth.

culture was infinitely more nuanced than such crude observations (which are ultimately fed by equally crude dichotomies between ‘Korea’ and ‘China’ and so forth) suggest. And as I will show in chapter nine, the international political situation in the first half of the twelfth century was not unusually traumatic for Koryŏ.<sup>153</sup> The beginning of the relations with the Liao dynasty had been much more traumatic and twelfth-century Koryŏ literati could look back on very profitable relations with this northern dynasty. Not to mention the fact that while Koryŏ had suffered three Liao invasions in the early eleventh century, one and a half century later, officials were debating whether Koryŏ should attack the Jin.<sup>154</sup> Koryŏ rulers also certainly did not need to derive their right to rule from China. The official recognition of their investiture was always welcomed and at times even sought after, but if necessary done without, or even avoided.<sup>155</sup> The ideological inclinations of most of Koryŏ’s literate elite was also far from unified and certainly not uniformly centred on China. An approach that highlights the symmetrical contrasts between the different factions in Koryŏ only reinforces the reigning dichotomies of sinocentric Confucians versus independent nativists, of rational Confucianism versus irrational native traditions and of love for China and hate for the northern dynasties. Neither the international situation and Koryŏ’s diplomacy nor the more fundamental ideological inclinations of Koryŏ’s scholars and statesmen justify such easy dichotomies.

The practicality of the *Samguk sagi*, or at least its intended practicality, suggests yet another important characteristic of Kim Pushik’s understanding of Koryŏ and its history. If indeed it was first and foremost intended to be of practical use to scholars and statesmen, peculiarities in arrangement, such as the inclusion of three basic annals and the disproportional length of Kim Yushin’s biography, come to be seen in a different light. The ready availability of the same historical fact in three different versions, reviled by Kwŏn Kŭn and others like him, fulfilled a practical function in that it became possible to refer to different interpretations of the same fact, to rely on different legitimations as the need arose. Yet this was not a historiographical game in which anything went: the inclusions and exclusions that made up the *Samguk sagi* obviously set the parameters, the boundaries, within which flexibility was possible. Nor was this a new game. Pak Illyang’s memorials to the throne and his diplomatic correspondence with the Liao in the eleventh century suggest how this worked out in the present of practical engagement. With the same ease he referred to Shilla founder Hyŏkkŏse or to Koguryŏ’s ancient borders to argue his case before the Liao.<sup>156</sup> It is not known what sources Pak referred to while developing his arguments; it is plausible that he had access to the original sources, although it is as plausible that he used the *Samguksa*. The principle, though, remains the same. Besides the evidently ideological and even ontological dimension of the three basic annals of the *Samguk sagi* discussed above, its peculiarities of arrangement also fulfilled the very practical purpose of firmly attaching the present to the past and assisting in safely navigating through it.

<sup>153</sup> Breuker, “Koryŏ as an independent realm”.

<sup>154</sup> Attacking the Jin was hardly feasible, but the fact that it was seriously debated, while the shadow of a large-scale Jin invasion never loomed, shows how different the climate was when compared to the early eleventh century, when Koryŏ had had to deal with the Liao.

<sup>155</sup> Breuker, “Koryŏ as an independent realm”.

<sup>156</sup> See chapter four. Also see chapter nine on diplomacy.

Examples such as the importance of good foreign relations, the ability to defend oneself (Anshi-sōng, but also Kim Yushin), the importance of a harmonious relationship between the ruler and his ministers and the necessity to counteract the machinations of court ministers who want more power than they ought to have readily spring to mind as illustrations of Kim Pushik's intention to make the *Samguk sagi* an explanation of the past and guide to the present. A last suggestion that is offered by the practical leanings of the *Samguk sagi* reinforces the picture that also emerges from Kim's other works and his actions. His decision to compile the *Samguk sagi* the way he did shows him to have been less of the Confucian idealist than he is often portrayed to have been. While historians such as Kwōn Kūn were trying to realize a neo-Confucian utopian vision for Chosōn society, a society that would far surpass Koryō's Buddhist society and while Shin Ch'aeho and his contemporaries were engaged in the struggle for Korea's liberation, which perhaps cannot be accurately described as the fulfilment of a utopian ideal, but nonetheless meant the realization of a new society, built on newly gained insights, the same is not true of Kim Pushik. The *Samguk sagi* is less of an ideological manifesto than a practical historical guide, a veritable mirror for rulers and ministers. Both Kwōn Kūn and Shin Ch'aeho made their respective criticisms on Kim Pushik and his history against the background of having to realize a completely new society; the overriding concerns of their respective realities are directly reflected in their criticisms. Kim Pushik on the other hand was not trying to realize heaven on earth, nor was he trying to build Shangri La in Kaesōng. Far from fulfilling utopian ideals, Kim tried to stabilize and perhaps improve upon the existing Koryō society; but he was no revolutionary. Kim tried to compile a history that would be of immediate and lasting use for scholar-statesmen such as himself; one, moreover, that succeeded to the existing tradition of Koryō historiography. The *Samguk sagi* confirmed the importance of Shilla, Koguryō and Paekche as charter states for the Koryō state. Instead of reducing the history of the peninsula to the history of Shilla, Shilla as a unified state and then Koryō, Kim stayed in the historiographical tradition of Koryō and included the histories of Koguryō and Paekche from beginning to end; and, still staying within the tradition of the *Samguksa*, he excluded Parhae.

## KORYŎ HISTORIOGRAPHY IN PERSPECTIVE

The undertaking of writing history in Koryŏ had various dimensions. Perhaps its most striking characteristic is its emulation of Chinese examples. It was written in classical Chinese, with only rarely parts in native methods of transcription such as *idu* 吏讀 or *hyangch'al* 鄉札, and it clearly aspired to follow the best examples Chinese historiography had to offer. The education of the literati who wrote the histories was of course largely based on the body of Sinitic cultural resources available to Koryŏ and as such, the influence of Chinese historiography was inevitable. The influences drawn from shared cultural resources were not limited to language and form. The reason for writing (and reading) history was also adopted from continental examples: contents were explicitly moralizing and were expected to have a direct relevance to the present of practical engagement. The royal lectures, the lecturers of which were statesmen cum state historians, are a case in point. This Sinitic dimension was offset by the distinct peninsular character of the historical writings produced in the Koryŏ dynasty. The known universe was recentered with Koryŏ at its core. A decidedly peninsular outlook and identity were thus codified in a universally accepted way of expression, by tapping into the body of cultural resources that was shared among the Song, Liao, Jin and Koryŏ. Koryŏ historians in effect tried to prove to the Song, and to a lesser extent to the Liao and Jin, that they were as adept at building a civilized state based upon universally accepted principles as the Song (or Liao and Jin) were.

An important, yet often overlooked characteristic of Koryŏ historiography is that from its incipency the historiographical tradition in Koryŏ was Confucian. Even the much-fabled *Samguksa* was written according to Confucian standards. The mythical stories and native lore contained in the *Samguksa* – and, it should be mentioned, in the *Samguk sagi* – were recorded more or less as they were, but within a framework that relied on the example of the *Spring and autumn annals*. In the latter case this has been exhaustively noted, in the former it has been consistently ignored.

Seen from a peninsular perspective, Koryŏ historiography reveals much with regard to Koryŏ identity. In a previous chapter it has already been established that Koryŏ traced its historical legitimacy and descent back to the Three Han. The scrutiny of Koryŏ historical works in this chapter bears out those findings. The notion of plural descent is conspicuously present in all remaining contemporary writings on Koryŏ history, incorporating but not obliterating other readings of the past. Once the veil of exclusive historical successionism is lifted (be it Shilla, Paekche or Koguryŏ), it is possible to contemplate the significance of the titles of the *Samguksa* and the *Samguk sagi* and look at their contents guided by the contemporary issues that the writing of history was supposed to deal with. The Three Kingdoms functioned as chapter states for Koryŏ; not completely and not all of the time, but according to necessity and as demanded by political expedience.

The peninsular orientation of Koryŏ historiography and the Sinitic format it adopted should also give ample food for thought with regard to the often implicitly assumed idea that peninsular autonomy and the adherence to Sinitic cultural resources are somehow opposites.

The previous chapter has already challenged this idea. The very existence of historical works such as the *Samguk sagi* should further demolish it. It not only shows how Koryŏ scholars drew upon the resources of Sinitic culture, but also how they internalized these achievements and made them fit their own situation. The distinct and strong presence of a pluralist Weltanschauung in the *Samguk sagi* was a direct result of the application of Sinitic historiographical ideals upon the peninsular situation. The solution that historians such as Kim Pushik – and others before and after him – came up with was to acknowledge the complicated historical descent of the peninsula and codify it in the form of an official state history. History as such (written according to the classical adagio ‘do not invent facts, write them down’ 不作而述) took precedence over ideology. The actual pasts of the peninsula were more important than a unified and idealized version of it, but history was simultaneously thought to have a strong moral component, which took ultimate precedence. The moral was distilled from what had happened historically; not from what should have happened. Obviously, ideology played a decisive role in the development of Koryŏ historiography: it was fundamental to it, to its conception, its practical elaboration, and the way it was used. Nonetheless, the compilers of histories consciously distanced themselves from the demands of the Sinitic historiographical ideal in order to record the history of the peninsula. Ideology then only came to bear on history again after the facts had been written and interpretations – for example in the form of a commentary – needed to be made. It certainly returned in full force when the histories were used in the manner they had been envisioned to be used: as guides for behaviour in the present of practical engagement. In this manner, an intricate interplay between history, politics and ideas came into being, in which everything influenced everything else. Worthy of note, though, is the consistent tone of balanced realism that is found in Koryŏ historical writings from Ch’oe Sŭngno to Kim Pushik. The acknowledgement of conflicting realities, their codification even, certainly exercised a formative influence upon the practical view of reality in Koryŏ histories. This view on reality was based in the peninsular realities people had to deal with: complicated, ambiguous and imprecise. Despite the inevitable choices the historian must make with regard to what to record and what to omit and some equally unavoidable alterations, cosmetic interventions and the like, the views on the historical reality expressed in Koryŏ historical works are, perhaps surprisingly, not uniform, often contradictory and strongly focused on historical contingency. As such, Koryŏ historiography exercised a strong influence upon the formation and development of Koryŏ ideologies and the mythomoteurs associated with these, while being exposed to their influence at the same time. To the extent that Koryŏ historiography codified the shared memories of the past, it provided the foundations for the varied ideas that developed about Koryŏ’s future. In the next chapters I shall further look into Koryŏ ideologies and investigate who were the bearers of these ideologies and how and if they were put into practice.

**PART THREE**

**UNDERSTANDING KORYŎ PLURALIST IDEOLOGY**

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE KORYŎ RULER, COMMON FOCUS OF OBEDIENCE AND WORSHIP

Shared subjection to the same ruler and his worship as the human link between heaven and earth was an important aspect of Koryŏ society. Taken together with Koryŏ's delimited historical territory, a historically formed people that was associated with this territory, its shared and codified historical memories, its shared ideas of descent and its ideas of a shared destiny, a clearer picture emerges of the community that inhabited the peninsula. The ruler occupied the centre of the community, ideologically, ritually and politically. In the first chapter it has been established that Koryŏ knew a dual royal/imperial structure under which the ruler was king, emperor and Son of Heaven. This not only had consequences with regard to Koryŏ's foreign policy and the way it perceived itself, but obviously also for the ruler, who found himself in a continuous and flexible terminological limbo with regard to his precise status. This chapter will focus on the ruler and the way he functioned as a common focus of obedience, worship and trans-local identification. In order to look into these issues, I shall analyse the position of the Koryŏ ruler mainly with regard to its ideological and ritual characteristics.

Institutionally, the position of the ruler in the bureaucracy needs to be considered. What was his function in the government of the state? The political dimension will reveal to what extent the ruler actively participated in the day-to-day affairs of the state and to what extent he went unopposed in his actions by the aristocracy and the powerful bureaucracy. If the institutional dimensions provided the rules, politics were the match. The ideological dimension of the Koryŏ ruler has already been proven to play an important role in Koryŏ society. His position at the centre of the Koryŏ universe will be further looked into and connected with an important element of the prevalent *Weltanschauung* in Koryŏ. The ritual aspect will finally show how these ideas about the ruler were translated and transmitted; both to his subjects and to visitors from abroad.

For the sake of clarity, the respective designations for the different types of persons who exercised authority of a supreme kind must be defined. Notwithstanding the frequent conflation of the designations "emperor" (*hwangje*) 皇帝 and "Son of Heaven" (*ch'ŏnja*) 天子, I understand them to be separate. I shall use the designation emperor according to its dictionary definition, "as a title of sovereignty considered superior in dignity to that of 'king'".<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, 'king' will refer to the sovereign ruler of an independent state, but inferior in dignity to "emperor", because of tributary ties with the state of the emperor. The designation "Son of Heaven" I shall apply to that special kind of rulers who were considered to be ontologically unique links between Heaven and the people. It should be remembered that

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, entry for "emperor". My acceptance of this definition in the East Asian context does not derive from its inclusion in the *OED*, but with its correspondence to how the title of emperor was viewed in East Asia.

despite the omnipresent inclination to conflate the concepts of emperor and Son of Heaven with regard to China, Chinese political philosophy makes a fundamental distinction between “emperor” and “Son of Heaven”. The fact that the Chinese Son of Heaven happened to be emperor as well should not obscure this. Early Chinese Sons of Heaven, for instance, were referred to as king (*wang*) 王 and not as emperor.<sup>2</sup>

A quick look at the *Koryōsa* confirms that the rulers of Koryō have been recorded for posterity as kings and the state that they ruled as a kingdom. As a kingdom on the periphery of the Sinitic world, it is customary to describe Koryō as a willing participant in the traditional East-Asian world order, subservient towards Chinese dynasties and noticeably reluctant in its dealings with the northern states.<sup>3</sup> In the overwhelming majority of modern historiography on Koryō, it is either implicitly confirmed or explicitly claimed that Koryō, as a kingdom, recognized the ontological superiority of the Chinese Son of Heaven, even if it did not recognize the Chinese dynasty’s actual and political superiority. This is, however, a result of misinterpreting the sources, retrojecting later concepts, ideas and situations on the past and sometimes also of shoddy scholarship.

A more cautious and informed investigation of the *Koryōsa* and other sources of Koryō history reveals that the rulers of Koryō were considered Sons of Heaven in their own realms (*ch’ōnba*) 天下. The ruling elite of Koryō considered Koryō as an ontologically independent realm and a possible centre of the world. This was in effect made possible by the ambiguous role of the Koryō ruler as Son of Heaven in the realm of Koryō and as sometime vassal of other Sons of Heaven. The fundamental contradictions inherent to the Koryō ruler’s position have habitually been misunderstood or underestimated.<sup>4</sup> The Koryō ruler was fully equipped to function as a mediator between heaven and earth, between the cosmos and his people, a role normally reserved for the Son of Heaven. Interestingly, the dominant ideological orientation of early and mid-Koryō literati allowed for a non-monist perception of the universe in which several Sons of Heaven presiding over several realms could co-exist, albeit not without some friction. Several realms could and did co-exist, perhaps not always peacefully, but on equal ontological levels.<sup>5</sup> These indications all point at the need to reconsider the status of the Koryō ruler, because the precise nature of his status invites all kinds of questions that touch upon the core of Koryō identity. It has been established that the Koryō ruler was considered a Son of Heaven, ontologically equal to those in China proper and Manchuria, and that Koryō was a

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<sup>2</sup> Julia Ching, *Mysticism and kingship in China: The heart of Chinese wisdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> I shall deal with this issue in chapter nine.

<sup>4</sup> Although the most recent research acknowledges the imperial aspirations of the early and middle Koryō rulers, there is as of yet little research that extends these conclusions outside the field of institutional history. The studies of No Myōngho are exceptions in this regard. 金基德, “Koryō-ū chewangje-wa hwangjeguk ch’uje 고려 諸王制와 皇帝國 體制,” *Kuksagwan nonch’ong* 78 (1997): pp. 159-172; No Myōngho, “Tongmyōngwang p’yōn-gwa Yi Kyubo-ūi tawōnjōk ch’ōnha’gwan 東明王篇과 李奎報의 多元的 天下觀,” *Chindan hakpo* 83 (1997): pp. 292-315; No Myōngho, “Koryō chibaech’ūng-ūi Parhae yumin-e taehan inshik-kwa chōngch’aek 高麗 支配層의 渤海遺民에 대한 認識과 政策,” *Sanun sabak* 汕耘史學 8 (1998): pp. 147-186; No Myōngho, “Koryō shidae-ūi tawōnjōk ch’ōnha’gwan-gwa haedong ch’ōnja 高麗時代의 多元的 天下觀과 海東天子,” *Han’guksa yōn’gu* 105 (1999): pp. 3-40.

<sup>5</sup> An indication hereof is for instance the missive that the newly established Jin emperor sent to the Koryō emperor. See No Myōngho, “Koryō shidae-ūi tawōnjōk ch’ōnha’gwan”, p. 14.



realm on an ontologically equal footing with the other realms, which necessitates some fundamental questions regarding Koryŏ's self-perception and the status of the Koryŏ ruler to be reconsidered. The presence and influence of a pluralist Weltanschauung should then be seriously looked into, for the presence and acknowledgement of several coterminous Sons of Heaven may be interpreted as the presence and acknowledgement of several fundamentally different principles which cannot be reduced to one another, but which may contradict one another.

## BUREAUCRACY AND ROYAL AUTHORITY

The status of the Koryŏ ruler as titular head of the bureaucracy, of the state mechanism, has always been a staple notion of Koryŏ rulership.<sup>6</sup> When Koryŏ was founded by Wang Kŏn, the ruler was little more than a primus inter pares in a military confederacy, but his position at the head of the capital bureaucracy gave him in the long run an important advantage in the struggle for the control of Koryŏ. T'aejo Wang Kŏn was the personification of the strong ruler, but his authority did not come from this position; it was virtually the other way round.<sup>7</sup> As the dramatic decrease in authority of his first two successors show, royal authority in Koryŏ only slowly developed.<sup>8</sup> With the enthronement of Kwangjong 光宗 in 950, the position of the ruler as the bureaucracy's highest holder of office was reaffirmed and it was cemented during the reign of Sŏngjong, under whose inspired guidance Tang bureaucratic models were imported and adapted to Koryŏ needs.<sup>9</sup> Kwangjong broke the back of the powerful Koryŏ nobility by proclaiming the *Slave and Land Act* (*Nobi an'gŏmpŏp* 奴婢按檢法) in 956, which deprived nobles of much of their manpower in the form of slaves, and by purging the old nobility, the meritorious subjects and their offspring and military lineages in great numbers.<sup>10</sup> His sinification policies also ideologically supported the supremacy of the ruler. Although the full bloom of the concept of the wise ruler supported by wise ministers came in the late eleventh-early twelfth century, Kwangjong's virtually uncritical acceptance of the shared resources of

<sup>6</sup> Hwang Sŏnyŏng 황선영, *Koryŏ chŏn'gi wanggwŏn yŏn'gu* 高麗前期王權研究 (Seoul: Tonga taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1988), pp. 131; Shūtō Yoshiyuki, *Kōraichō kanryōsei no kenkyū* 高麗朝官僚制の研究 (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppanyoku 法政大學出版局, 1980).

<sup>7</sup> One reason for T'aejo's great personal authority must be located in his wholesale acceptance of the administrative structure of his predecessor Kungye, which had allowed the ruler a virtually absolute authority. Early Koryŏ inherited this system, but paradoxically the system in itself was not strong enough to survive without the backing of a strong ruler. Nonetheless, despite T'aejo's aspirations towards a form of absolute rulership, the power and influence of his confederates made this all but impossible to be sustained on a national level for a prolonged period of time.

<sup>8</sup> H.W. Kang, "The first succession struggle of Koryŏ, in 945: A reinterpretation", in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 36 (1977): pp. 411-428.; Hwang Sŏnyŏng, *Koryŏ chŏn'gi*, pp. 188-205.

<sup>9</sup> Pyŏn T'aesŏp 邊太燮, "Chungang-ūi t'ongch'i kigu 중앙의 통치기구," in *Han'guksa* 한국사, volume thirteen (Kwach'ŏn 과천: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe 국사편찬위원회, 1994), ed. Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, pp. 9-107; Pak Yongun 朴龍雲, "Kwanjik-kwa kwan'gye 관직과 관계," in *Han'guksa*, volume thirteen, pp. 108-142.

<sup>10</sup> Yi Kibaek (ed.), Yi Kibaek (ed.), *Koryŏ Kwangjong yŏn'gu* 高麗光宗研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1981), pp. 93-112; Hwang Sŏnyŏng, *Koryŏ chŏn'gi*, pp. 188-205.

Sinitic civilization firmly positioned the ruler in the centre of the state.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps his most momentous reform of the Koryŏ bureaucracy was the introduction of the state examinations, which were subsequently consolidated under Sŏngjong 成宗 and which gave the bureaucracy access to a new source of potential bureaucrats who had purposefully trained to enter the state apparatus and obey its commands.<sup>12</sup> Institutional royal authority was maximized under Sŏngjong whose policies of centralization, sinification and the dispatch of centrally appointed local officials to the provinces concentrated much of the decision making power in the hands of the monarch whose signature was required to put important decisions (which included bureaucratic appointments) into effect.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, however, these policies produced a somewhat paradoxical effect. The introduction and adaptation of Tang and later Song bureaucratic models not only promoted the institutional position of the Koryŏ ruler, they also emphasized the indispensable role of the ruler's advisors. The reigns of Mokchong 穆宗 and Hyŏnjong 顯宗 illustrate this quite clearly. Both the deposition and assassination of Mokchong and the enthronement of Hyŏnjong, not to mention his continued reign, depended in large measure on the actions and understandings of a closely-knit group of ministers, whose understanding of the role a minister should play was informed by classically Confucian ideas of the ruler-minister relationship.<sup>14</sup> The pattern in the second half of the eleventh and twelfth centuries had been set in the tenth and early eleventh centuries: although institutionally, the ruler was the head of the country, his actual authority was severely restricted by his ministers, his top bureaucrats, and by the powerful families who from the late eleventh century onwards came to dominate Koryŏ politics.<sup>15</sup> The Confucian ideal of a sagely ruler who listened to his wise ministers was forcefully emphasized by Ch'oe Sŏngno 崔承老 in his *On current affairs* (*Shimuch'aek* 時務策).<sup>16</sup> In this regard, the existence of officials who remonstrated with the

<sup>11</sup> In his *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns*, Ch'oe criticized Kwangjong directly for his blind veneration of Sinitic culture. See chapter six.

<sup>12</sup> According to Pak Yongun, a total number of approximately 7,000 successful candidates of the different state examinations can be verified in the sources. See Pak Yongun, "Tŭngyong chedo 等用제도," in *Han'guksa*, volume thirteen, pp. 367-435, esp. pp. 411-412, 416-417.

<sup>13</sup> Ku Sanu 具山佑, "Koryŏ Sŏngjong-dae chŏngch'i seryŏg-ŭi sŏngkyŏk-kwa tonghyang 高麗 成宗代 對外關係의 展開와 그 政治的 性格," *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 14 (2003): pp. 91-148; Yun Kyŏngjin 尹京鎭, "Koryŏ Sŏngjong 11nyŏn-ŭi ŭpho kaejŏng-e taehan yŏn'gu: Koryŏ ch'ogi kunhyŏnje-ŭi kusŏng-gwa kwallyŏnhayŏ 고려성종 11년의 읍호 개정에 대한 연구: 고려초기 군현제의 구성과 관련하여," *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnshil* 역사와 현실 45 (2002): pp. 159-194.

<sup>14</sup> Kim Tangt'aek 金唐澤, "Koryŏ Mokchong 12nyŏn-ŭi chŏngbyŏn-e taehan il koch'al 高麗穆宗 12년의 政變에 대한 一考察," in *Han'guk hakpo* 18 (1980): pp. 82-97. Also see Remco E. Breuker, *Forging the truth: Creative deception and national identity in medieval Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, Center for Korean Studies Monograph Series, forthcoming). Although it might seem at first sight as if the active part these ministers took in the deposing of the ruler and the enthronement of another ruler are contrary to classical Confucian ideas, these possibilities are inherent in for example Mencius' philosophy. Mencius asserted that rulers could legitimately be deposed if they were unvirtuous. His contention was understandably much disputed due to its potential subversive qualities. A debate on whether the rule of a ruler was by definition absolute and unassailable in its dynastic legitimacy commenced among the pioneers of neo-Confucianism in Song China and was only settled in favour of Mencius due to Zhu Xi's 朱子 expression of support for the Mencian interpretation.

<sup>15</sup> Pak Yongun, *Koryŏ sabŏe-wa munbŏl kwijŏk kamun* 高麗社會와 門閥 貴族 家門 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa 京仁文化史, 2001). In this study, Pak Yongun does much to draw attention to the importance of the bureaucracy to balance the influence of the great aristocratic lineages.

<sup>16</sup> See chapter six.

ruler is of importance.<sup>17</sup> Other scholars from the early Koryŏ period also affirmed the idea that rulers must rule in close and harmonious cooperation with their ministers. Kim Pushik 金富軾 was perhaps the most outspoken advocate of this kind of rule.<sup>18</sup> Not trusting the ruler to be able to steer an independent course from Koryŏ's powerful aristocratic lineages, who by the twelfth century had taken the central stage in Koryŏ's bureaucracy and political system, Kim Pushik advocated a return to ruler-minister relationship as described in the works of Mencius.<sup>19</sup> The struggle for power in which the ruler almost per definition occupied a place in the middle was played out during each and every reign. Accordingly, research on the different generations of Koryŏ rulers has mainly discussed the issues at hand in terms of weak or strong, the defining characteristic of a ruler being his ability to break free from the bureaucratic restraints or aristocratic resistance that hampered his free rule.<sup>20</sup> Such an approach implicitly suggests that the titular head of the bureaucracy may also be expected to be its actual head, unhampered by restraints or obstructions. Recent research has quite successfully questioned the idea that the Koryŏ rulers, with the exception of T'aejo and some of his more dictatorial descendants, such as Kwangjong, never were much of a political force.<sup>21</sup> According to the findings of this study, the Koryŏ king was an indispensable force in the administration of the country; he literally led the country at the head of his bureaucracy. While this kind of research is immensely valuable for the understanding of Koryŏ's political system, of the ways in which bureaucrats, ministers, aristocrats, scholars and generals worked with, against or independently from the ruler, it is not necessarily the most fruitful way to understand the Koryŏ ruler in his entirety. As the large amount of research on the institutional history of Koryŏ indicates, most Koryŏ rulers ruled the country on the strength of their respective ministers and with bureaucratic support, rather than against these factors. It is easy to read absolutist tendencies in Koryŏ history where they did not exist. The possibility that the ruler, largely independent from his political power, could nonetheless still be the common focus of obedience and worship in Koryŏ must not be ignored. Framing the question of royal authority purely in political terms obscures this important issue. The attention the tension between ruler and ministers or between ruler and the bureaucracy has often received has been at the expense of attention for other tensions between constituent parts of Koryŏ's bureaucratic system. Rather than repeating, refuting or in any way adding to this sort of argument, I aim to highlight the position of the Koryŏ ruler as the nominal head of the bureaucracy as well as his active participation in the administration of the country. The precise reach of a ruler's authority depended both on his personal abilities, the functioning of the bureaucracy during this time on the throne and the formidability of his

<sup>17</sup> Hwang Sŏnyŏng, *Koryŏ chŏn'gi*, pp. 145-148; Pak Yongun, *Koryŏ-shidae taegan chedo yŏn'gu* 高麗時代大諫制度研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1980).

<sup>18</sup> For this aspect of Kim Pushik's thought, see Shin Hyŏngshik, "Kim Pushik," in *Han'guk yŏksaga-wa yŏksahak* (Seoul: Changjak-kwa p'ipyŏng, 1995), edited by Cho Tonggŏl, Han Yŏngu and Pak Ch'ansŭng; Yi Kangnae, *Samguk sagi wŏnjŏn non* (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1996).

<sup>19</sup> See chapter seven.

<sup>20</sup> Hwang Sŏnyŏng, *Koryŏ chŏn'gi*; *Han'guksa* 13

<sup>21</sup> Pak Chaeu 박재우, *Koryŏ kukchŏng unyŏng-ŭi ch'egye-wa wanggwŏn* 고려국정 운영의 체계와 왕권 (Seoul: Shin'gu munhwasa 신구문화사, 2005). The idea that Koryŏ kings were largely ceremonial figures and had little political power is a staple notion in Koryŏ historiography; Pak Chaeu's study is the first to systematically challenge this assumption.

ministers and has been, for most rulers, described and analyzed in detail in previous studies.<sup>22</sup> The results of such studies, illuminating though they may be with regard to a particular ruler, have limited insights to offer for our purpose here. The authority of the Koryŏ ruler fundamentally resided in a different locus than his institutional role. As is quite clearly shown by the fates of the Koryŏ rulers during the period of military rule from 1170 onwards, the degradation of the ruler into a mere figurehead who had lost the right to make bureaucratic appointments, and the very real danger of assassination he faced if he withstood the military rulers, the institution of Koryŏ rulership fulfilled by a member of the Wang lineage was maintained. It should also not pass unnoticed that the military rulers never moved away from the capital of Kaegyŏng (unlike the *bakufu* 幕府 in Japan) until forced to do so by the Mongol invasions. For the reasons behind this at first sight perhaps remarkable continuity in Koryŏ rulership, the Koryŏ ruler's other roles must be scrutinized.

### THE RULER IN HIS CAPITAL

The consideration of the Koryŏ ruler as an entity with strong appeal and compelling authority outside of his political role may perhaps best start in the place where he was most at home, the capital of the Koryŏ state, Kaegyŏng 開京.<sup>23</sup> After a brief spell as capital of Kungye's state, Kaegyŏng remained the supreme capital, despite several attempts to move the capital to P'yŏngyang 平壤 or to Namyang 南陽 (present-day Seoul). The third ruler of Koryŏ, Chŏngjong 定宗 (923-945-949), attempted to relocate the capital to P'yŏngyang, but he was confronted with the resistance of the Kaegyŏng population who refused to be moved to the north.<sup>24</sup> In a partly extant memorial dating probably from the late eleventh century geomancy

<sup>22</sup> The articles in the multivolume *Han'guk* series edited by the National Institute for Korean History are a good example of this approach to the Koryŏ rulers. There are also quite many monographs that analyze the political authority of individual Koryŏ rulers. See for example Ch'oe Kyusŏng 崔圭成, *Koryŏ T'aejo Wang Kŏn yŏn'gu* 高麗太祖王建研究 (Seoul: Churyusŏng 주류성, 2005); Nam In'guk 南仁國, "Koryŏ Sukchong-ŭi chŭgwi kwajŏng-gwa wanggwŏn kanghwa 高麗 肅宗의 卽位 過程과 王權 強化," *Yŏksa kyoyuk nonjip* 歷史教育論集 5.1 (1983): pp. 127-141; Kim Tujin 金杜珍, "Koryŏ Kwangjong-dae-ŭi chŏnje wanggwŏn-gwa hojok 高麗 光宗代의 專制王權과 豪族," *Han'guk bakpo* 5.2 (1979): pp. 43-80; Yu Pyŏnggi 俞炳基, "Kwangjong-ŭi chungang chipkwŏn-ŭl wihan kaehyŏk chŏngch'i 光宗의 中央集權을 위한 改革政治," *Chŏnju taehakkyo nonmunjip (inmun, sabak kwabak p'yŏn)* 전주대학교 논문집-〈인문·사회과학 편〉 14.1 (1985): pp. 205-222; Chin Sŏg'u 진석우, "Koryŏ Injongdae Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndoron-ŭi chŏngch'ijŏk sŏngkyŏk 仁宗朝 西京遷都論과 中央官僚의 動向," *Honam taehakkyo haksul nonmunjip* 호남대학교학술논문집 17.1 (1996): pp. 91-117.

<sup>23</sup> Kaegyŏng was (and is) also known as Kaesŏng 開成, Songdo 松都 or Songgyŏng 松京. The Koryŏ capital was known under even more names, but these four were the most commonly used. The last two refer to the capital's location at the foot of Songak 松嶽 or Pine Mountain. There are two thorough monographs on Kaegyŏng during the Koryŏ period available. The first is Pak Yongun 朴龍雲, *Koryŏ-shidae Kaegyŏng yŏn'gu* 高麗時代開京研究 (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1996); the other one is Kim Ch'anhyŏn 김창현, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ in'yŏm* 고려시대개경의 구조와 이념 (Seoul: Shinsŏwŏn 신서원, 2002). There is also a slightly more popular edited work on Kaegyŏng available: *Han'guk yŏksa yŏn'guhoe* 한국역사연구회(ed.), *Koryŏ-ŭi hwangdo Kaegyŏng* 고려의 황도 개경 (Seoul: Ch'angjak-kwa pip'yŏngsa 창작과 비평사, 2002).

<sup>24</sup> Chŏngjong had been able to ascend the throne with the backing of Wang Shingnyŏm (?-949) and his powerful

expert Kim Wije 金謂碑 (fl. late eleventh century-early twelfth century) pleads for the transfer of the capital to the southern capital, citing works from the hands of Tosŏn 道誥, which are no longer extant.<sup>25</sup> The text mentions that the famous geomancer Ŭn Wŏnch'ung 殷元忠 had also presented a similar memorial to Yejong, which means somewhere between 1105 and 1122.<sup>26</sup> Myoch'ŏng 妙淸 (?-1135), geomancer, monk, and rebel, also pressed for the capital to be moved. He wanted to re-establish the Western Capital of P'yŏngyang as Koryŏ's supreme capital.<sup>27</sup> He also relied on the authority of Tosŏn and, interestingly, on that of Kim Wije, whose ideas for the transfer of the capital had been opposed to those of Myoch'ŏng.

Kaegyŏng's position as the supreme capital of Koryŏ was not uncontested, then, but the ties that bound it to the Koryŏ state and the Wang lineage were in the end too intimate and strong to be broken. Most importantly, Kaesŏng was the place where Wang Kŏn's ancestors had built their maritime trading empire and their power base.<sup>28</sup> Kaegyŏng was the place from where T'aejo had conquered and united the peninsula and from where his successors toured the peninsula to re-enact their founding ancestor's feats and to consolidate these. Koryŏ's most sacred spaces were located in or just outside of the capital: the royal ancestral shrines where the memorial tablets of previous rulers were enshrined; the round altar used for the worship of heaven; the square altar used for the worship of earth; the altars for the gods of the grain and the land; Koryŏ's oldest Buddhist temple complexes as well as the personal temples for the commemoration of deceased rulers<sup>29</sup>; Daoist shrines; and places of historical importance, such

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Sŏgyŏng-based faction. Chŏngjong's championing of Sŏgyŏng was a way of rewarding the people who had supported him. For a good discussion of Sŏgyŏng and its powerful lineages, see Kang Ogyŏp 姜玉葉, "Yŏch'o Sŏgyŏng kyŏngyŏng-gwa Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-ŭi ch'ui 麗初 西京經營과 西京勢力的 推移," *Tongdae sabak* 東大史學 1 (1995): pp. 3-27; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujiŕiŏk koch'al 高麗 西京의 風水地理的 考察," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 71 (1996): pp. 69-101. This last study looks at the history of the Western Capital from a geomantic point of view. For other studies on Sŏgyŏng during the Koryŏ period, see Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko 고려 西京考," *Yŏksa bakpo* 歷史學報 35-36 (1967): pp. 139-174 (reprinted in Ha Hyŏn'gang, *Han'guk chungsesa yŏn'gu* 韓國中世史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1988); Yi Hyeok 李惠玉, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-e taehan il koch'al 高麗初期 西京勢力에 대한 一考察," *Han'guk bakpo* 韓國學報 26 (1982): pp. 105-132; Yi Chŏngshin 李貞信, "Koryŏ T'aejo-ŭi kŏn'guk inyŏm-ŭi hyŏngsŏng-gwa kungnae-ŏe chŏngse 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내의 정세," *韓國史研究* 118 (2002): pp. 35-74; Kang Ogyŏp, "Namal Yŏch'o P'aesŏ chiyŏg-e taehan il koch'al 羅末麗初 溘西地域에 대한 一考察," *Yihwa sabak yŏn'gu* 梨花史學研究 20-21 (1993): pp. 33-52; Kang Ogyŏp, "Myoch'ŏng nan-ŭi yŏn'gu tonghyang-gwa seroun inshik mosaek 妙淸亂의 研究動向과 서로운 認識 摸索," *Paeksan bakpo* 白山學報 49 (1997): pp. 169-208; Kang Ogyŏp, "Injongdae Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndoron-ŭi taedu-wa Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-ŭi yŏkhal 인종대 서경천도론의 대두와 서경세력의 역할," *Sabak yŏn'gu* 史學研究 55-56 (1998): pp. 109-130; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Injongdae Sŏgyŏngmin-ŭi hangjaeng-gwa Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-ŭi punhwa 高麗 仁宗代 西京民의 抗爭과 西京勢力的 分化," *Sabak yŏn'gu* 史學研究 58-59 (1999): 571-590; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng chedo 高麗時代의 西京制度," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 92 (2000): pp. 93-118

<sup>25</sup> *KS* 122: 1a-3b; for a translation, see Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, pp. 434-436.

<sup>26</sup> *KS* 122: 3b.

<sup>27</sup> *KS* 127: 26b-29b.

<sup>28</sup> H.W. Kang, "The first succession struggle of Koryŏ," pp. 414-416; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ kŏn'guk-kwa hojok 高麗建國과 豪族," in *Han'guksa* 韓國史 (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe 國史編纂委員會, 1993), edited by *Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe* 國史編纂委員會, volume 12; Pak Hansŏl, "Koryŏ-ŭi Koguryŏ kyesŏngŭishik 高麗의 高句麗 繼承意識," *Koguryŏ yŏn'gu* 高句麗研究 18 (2004): pp. 573-590; Pak Hansŏl, "Namal-Yŏch'o-ŭi Sŏhaean Kyosŏpsa yŏn'gu 羅末麗初의 西海岸交涉史 研究," *Kuksagwan non'chong* 7 (1989): pp. 35-64.

<sup>29</sup> According to the *Songsbi* 宋史, more than 70 Buddhist temples existed within the capital walls during the early Koryŏ period. See Kim Ch'anghyŏn, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kuja-wa kŭ inyŏm*, p. 35; also see Sem Vermeersch,

as the palaces of the rulers of past and present. Kaegyŏng itself was one vast sacred space, since it was believed to be connected to the Great Trunk mountain range (Taegan sanmaek 大幹山脈) or the geomantic blood vein of the peninsula.<sup>30</sup> And although the frequent geomantically motivated appeals to move Kaegyŏng indicate that Kaegyŏng was not considered to be ideally located with regard to its geomantic qualities, it nonetheless figured prominently in geomantic analyses of the peninsula and myths containing geomantic elements.<sup>31</sup>

The ruler was the proverbial spider in his web. Kaegyŏng was slowly but surely transformed into an imperial city, which is among other things reflected in the contemporary terminology for the city; it was called Hokyŏng 鎬京 in imitation of the ancient Shang 商 capital of Haojing 鎬京, written with the same characters.<sup>32</sup> It was also referred to as the ‘Imperial City’ 皇城 and possessed a number of other, imperial designations.<sup>33</sup> The architectural lay-out of Kaegyŏng was also geared to the presence of a Son of Heaven, rather than a king.<sup>34</sup> The imperial status of Kaegyŏng was firmly proclaimed by Kwangjong, whose imperial aspirations were such that as a whole they were not taken very seriously, but consciously upheld during later and more moderate reigns.<sup>35</sup> Sŏngjong constructed the round altar and the royal ancestral shrines for the first time, both in concept and execution conscious appropriations of the Son of Heaven’s status.<sup>36</sup> After the destruction brought on by the Liao invasions of the tenth century, Kaegyŏng was rebuilt and restored to more than its former glories. The main palace of the ruler, mostly known as ‘Main Palace’ 本宮, but also as ‘Imperial Palace’ 皇宮 or ‘Emperor’s Palace’ 帝宮, occupied a large part of the inner city.<sup>37</sup> The intimate relationship between ruler and capital is perhaps best symbolized by the decline of Kaegyŏng after the Mongol invasions and the return from the temporary capital at Kanghwa-do 江華島. While the move to the island of Kanghwa-do had still been able to present Koryŏ officials with some hope at restoration of the dynasty and depict the new capital of Kangdo 江都 as an imperial capital that would outshine both Kaegyŏng and Sŏgyŏng, after the return to Kaegyŏng and the assumption of Yuan 元 indirect rule in Koryŏ, Kaegyŏng could no longer function as an imperial capital.<sup>38</sup> The status of the Koryŏ ruler had declined; no longer a Son of

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“Buddhism at the center: The temples of Kaesong and their socio-political role,” *Acta Koreana* 7-2 (2003): pp. 7-34.

<sup>30</sup> This mountain range ran from Paektu-san in the north all the way down south to Chiri-san. See *PHJ* 1: 6-7.

<sup>31</sup> See the account of Koryŏ’s foundation legend in Michael C. Rogers, “*P’yŏnnyŏn t’ongnok*: The foundation legend of the Koryŏ state,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 4 (1982): pp. 3-72.

<sup>32</sup> Pak Yongun, *Koryŏ-shidae Kaegyŏng-yŏn’gu*, pp. 44-57.

<sup>33</sup> For some examples, see *KMC* 58: 16 ; *KMC* 36: 38; *TMS* 104: 8b-10a; *TMS* 104: 6b-7b; *PHJ* 1: 4.

<sup>34</sup> Kim Ch’anghyŏn, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ in’yŏm*.

<sup>35</sup> Kwangjong renamed Kaegyŏng as ‘Hwangdo’ 皇都 or ‘Imperial Capital’ in 944. This was a part of his imperial movement, according to which he called himself emperor and proclaimed the Koryŏ reign name of Chunp’ung. The defining difference between Kwangjong’s imperial movement and later reigns is the uncompromising attitude of Kwangjong. Later rulers functioned both as emperor and as king, while Kwangjong seems to have excluded the possibility of acting as a king. See *KS* 2 26b; *KS* 2: 28a-b.

<sup>36</sup> *KS* 3: 2a-b; *KS* 59: 1b-2b; Kim Ch’anghyŏn, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ in’yŏm*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>37</sup> Kim Ch’anghyŏn, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ in’yŏm*, pp. 219-265.

<sup>38</sup> Ch’oe Cha 崔滋, a scholar-official who witnessed the move to Kangdo wrote a long and lyrical poem about Koryŏ’s past, the splendour of its former capitals of Kaegyŏng and Sŏgyŏng (which he compared with the magnificent capitals of China’s classical past), the possession of the mandate of heaven by its rulers and the ultimate

Heaven, he was now described as “the direct descendant through the male line of the sacred ancestor of the Three Han and the descendant through the female line of the sacred founding ancestor of the Great Yuan 大元”.<sup>39</sup> As such, the Koryŏ ruler was cemented into his status as in-law of the imperial Yuan lineage and vassal of the Yuan empire and the status of Kaegyŏng declined with him. The architecture that had characterized it as an imperial city was not rebuilt and what remained was ultimately renamed by neo-Confucian scholars of the early Chosŏn dynasty with names that did not reflect Koryŏ’s imperial past.<sup>40</sup> The architectural and ideological decline of Kaegyŏng demonstrated both the erstwhile imperial status of the Koryŏ rulers and their insoluble tie to their supreme capital.

The ruler was not only tied to Kaegyŏng by blood as the descendant of T’aejo Wang Kŏn 太祖王建, who had been prophesied to be born there, but also by his duties as ruler. Symbolically, Kaegyŏng was made to represent the whole of the country and the whole of Koryŏ’s history by naming its palaces after historical regions and states that had now been incorporated into the Koryŏ state; Kaegyŏng possessed palaces such as Kyerim-gung 鷄林宮, Puyŏ-gung 扶餘宮, Chinha-gung 辰韓宮, Chosŏn-gung 朝鮮宮, Sangan-gung 常安宮, Nangnang-gung 樂浪宮, Pyŏnhan-gung 卞韓宮, and Kŭmgwan-gung 金官宮.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, Kaegyŏng was never the only capital Koryŏ possessed; from the beginning of the dynasty on, P’yŏngyang functioned as Koryŏ’s Western Capital, while from 1067 on, Yangju 楊州 (present-day Seoul) became the state’s southern capital and was equipped with royal palaces.<sup>42</sup> The Western Capital in particular held much attraction for the ruler. It figures in the Fifth Injunction:

Fifth injunction: I relied on the mysterious help of the mountains and streams of the Three Han to bring the great enterprise to completion. In the Western Capital [P’yŏngyang] the aquatic force is balanced and smoothly flowing and [the Western Capital] is the root of the terrestrial arteries of our country. It is the place of the great dynastic undertaking for ten thousand generations – therefore, royal visits to the Western Capital should be made four times a year in the second, fifth, eighth, and eleventh months – and the monarch should reside there a total of more than one hundred days. By this means secure peace and prosperity.<sup>43</sup>

The injunctions date from the end of the reign of Hyŏnjong<sup>44</sup> and the fifth injunction gives a good idea of both the importance of the Western Capital and of the importance of the royal tours of the country.<sup>45</sup> The two capitals, expanded to three in 1067, formed the

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splendour of the capital Kangdo was to become. See *TMS* 2: 1a-5a.

<sup>39</sup> *TMS* 29: 1a-b.

<sup>40</sup> Kim Ch’anghyŏn, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ inyŏm*, pp. 304-305.

<sup>41</sup> Kim Ch’anghyŏn, *Koryŏ Kaegyŏng-ŭi kujo-wa kŭ inyŏm*, pp. 225; also see *Gaoli Tŭjing*, chapter six.

<sup>42</sup> For a detailed examination of the southern capital during the Koryŏ period, see Ch’oe Hyesuk 최혜숙, *Koryŏ-shidae Namgyŏng yŏn’gu* 高麗時代南京研究 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 2004); also see, Yannick Bruneton, “Séoul à l’époque Koryŏ,” *Revue de Corée* 101 (1997): pp. 230-260.

<sup>43</sup> *KS* 2: 15b-16a. The translation has been made with reference to the translation of this injunction in Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 264.

<sup>44</sup> Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>45</sup> References to the importance of the Western Capital are easily found. The Western Capital was the central

administrative, ideological and defensive backbone of the peninsula, brought to life by the frequent tours of the ruler, who would stay in each capital for a certain number of days. According to Kim Wije, Tosön had written the following:

The *Tosön ki* 道說記 (Record of Tosön) said: ‘In Koryŏ there are three capitals. Songak 松嶽 (Kaesŏng) is to be the central capital, Mongmyŏngyang 木覓壤 (Seoul) the southern capital, and P’yŏngyang the Western Capital. If in the eleventh, twelfth, first and second months the king resides in the central capital, in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth months the king resides in the southern capital, and in the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months the king resides in the Western Capital, then the thirty-six states of the world will offer tribute.’<sup>46</sup>

The interest in the southern capital dated from a later period than interest in the Western Capital, but the concept of royal touring (*sunbaeng* 巡幸 or *sŏngbang* 省方) to bring and keep the country together was exactly the same. When Ŭijong 毅宗 (1127-1146-1170-1173) was told by the royal astronomer that “there are signs that a tragedy is about to happen”, he was so afraid he asked the advice of another soothsayer who told him that “the duration of the undertaking of the state and the length of the life of the ruler only depend on the fervour of prayer and the number of royal tours.”<sup>47</sup> Touring the country in the capacity of the ruler was considered to have a similar beneficial effect as fervent prayer. When Sŏngjong visited the Western Capital, he issued an edict, saying:

On the *kapcha* day of the tenth month in the winter, the king issued an edict in the Western Capital: “In the year in which Emperor Sun 舜帝 toured Taishan 泰山, vassals came to him in groups. On the day the Tang emperor went to Lelang 樂浪 the realm welcomed all. In doing so, they widely spread the way of propriety and greatly performed the rite of touring the different parts of the country. Now I have followed the distant examples of the past and have come here.”<sup>48</sup>

It is no surprise, then, to find Koryŏ rulers touring the country. T’aejo had toured to

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defensive location in the case of invasions from the north. The Liao never managed to capture the city. During the invasion of 992-993, the Western Capital functioned as the rallying point of Koryŏ’s defence. During the invasions of 1011 and 1018, it again played a pivotal role in the defence of Koryŏ, while the supreme capital of Kaegyŏng was sacked and burned to the ground. Nor was this a phenomenon restricted to the Koryŏ period. P’yŏngyang had always been the site of decisive battles during large-scale invasions. Sŏngjong issued an edict codifying the importance of the Western Capital in terms of regional balance, religious significance and strategic location (*KS* 3: 17a-18b). Extensive construction activities were also undertaken there, both to fortify the city fortifications and to enhance its prestige for the state. According to the epitaph in honour of Ch’oe Sawi 崔士威, he supervised the construction of a monastery complex called Sach’ŏnwang-sa temple 四天王寺 and the Changnak-kung palace 長樂宮 which accommodated a portrait of T’aejo. Ch’oe was a famous builder; he had also supervised the construction of the Hyŏnhwa-sa temple 玄化寺, the Pongŭn-sa temple 奉恩寺 and the royal ancestral shrines, among many other buildings (*KMC* 26: 10-14). It seems that Ch’oe was appointed in the Western Capital because of his building skills. After his appointment as Sŏgyŏng’s governor, he started building extensive fortifications around the city (*KS* 4: 10b). For other examples of the Western Capital’s importance, see for instance Ha Hyŏn’gang, “Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko”, pp. 139-174. Also see *TMS* 104: 6b-7b; *KS* 3: 32b.; *KSC* 2: 60a.

<sup>46</sup> *KS* 122:1a-3b. Translation borrowed from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 434.

<sup>47</sup> *KSC* 11: 20a.

<sup>48</sup> *KS* 3: 19b.



the Western Capital at least ten times during his lifetime.<sup>49</sup> His successors followed quite literally in his footsteps, touring the country's capitals.<sup>50</sup> Although concerns of a military nature played an important role in the decisions of the Koryŏ rulers' to visit the Western Capital, other concerns also played a significant role. The P'yŏngyang aristocracy, a large part of which had been resettled there by T'aejo, was influential and needed the presence of the ruler to stay in line.<sup>51</sup> And more importantly, the geomantic perceptions of Koryŏ demanded the person of the ruler to visit geomantically charged places such as the Western Capital.<sup>52</sup> The Western Capital acted as a sort of counterbalance to Koryŏ's supreme capital of Kaegyŏng, which was basically deficient with regard to its geomantic qualities.<sup>53</sup> The Western Capital's strong terrestrial and aquatic forces could remedy these weaknesses and replenish Kaegyŏng.<sup>54</sup> The eleventh century inclusion of the southern capital was in fact an elaboration of this idea; this capital had an abundant wood virtue force (*moktŏk* 木德) to help balance the geomantic forces on the peninsula.<sup>55</sup> With regard to the persona of the ruler, it is important to realize that his journeys to the western and later southern capitals were meant to be more than military inspections or leisurely journeys into the countryside. They were also spectacles to impress the people. When the ruler toured the country, he did so in the company of more than 1,000 officials, soldiers, servants and so forth.<sup>56</sup> He was received by at least twice as many officials at his place of destination and more than 700 when he arrived in the palace inside the capital. These figures only refer to people who had one way or another official ties to the royal procession and do not include the common people lining the streets in order to get a glance of the ruler. Spectacle aside, the ruler was indispensable in these tours; his presence, and to a certain extent the blood he shared with T'aejo, made it possible for these tours to carry significance. Through him, the three capitals were reaffirmed and the country was kept in balance:

<sup>49</sup> According to the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*, T'aejo visited the Western Capital in 921 (*KS* 1: 16a), 922 (*KS* 1: 16b; *KSC* 1: 18b), 925 (*KS* 1: 17b; *KSC* 1: 19b), 926 (*KS* 1: 19b; *KSC* 1: 21a), 929 (*KS* 1: 26a; *KSC* 1: 27b), twice in 930 (*KS* 1: 27a; *KSC* 1: 29b; *KSC* 1: 30a), 931 (*KSC* 1: 30b), 932 (*KS* 2: 2a), 934 (*KS* 2: 6a; *KSC* 1: 34a) and 935 (*KS* 2: 8b; *KSC* 1: 37a).

<sup>50</sup> A Koryŏ song in the *Koryŏsa* relates how T'aejo used to tour the country, observe the customs of the people and correct what was wrong; see *KS* 71: 34a. The *Koryŏsa* also contains elaborate instructions and descriptions of the clothes of the ruler during his tours, his entourage and so forth; see *KS* 72: 32a-37b; *KS* 72: 46b-48a. For other examples of rulers touring the country, see *KS* 4: 9a; *KS* 4: 14a; *KS* 7: 7b; *KS* 9: 1a; *KS* 9: 16b; *KS* 9: 35a; *KS* 10: 13b; *KS* 11: 28b; *KS* 11: 35b; *KS* 13: 3b; *KS* 14: 11a; *KS* 14: 12b-13a; *KS* 15: 22a; *KS* 19: 2b; *KS* 28: 44a; *KS* 30: 39b; *KSC* 3: 55a; *KSC* 5: 40b; *KSC* 5: 41a-b; *KSC* 7: 16a-b; *KSC* 7: 21a; *KSC* 8: 30a; *KSC* 10: 14b-15a; *KSC* 11: 20a; *KSC* 11: 46a-b; *TMS* 43: 10b-12b; *TMS* 104: 8b-10a. For an exploration of the particular ideas behind the royal tours of Sŏgyŏng, see Chin Yŏngil 秦榮一, "Koryŏ chewang-ŭi Sŏgyŏng sunhaeng ko 高麗諸王의 西京 巡幸 考," *Chejudae nonmunjip* 제주대 논문집 25.1 (1987): pp. 197-214. Chin argues that until the reign of Chŏngjong, military and security concerns were the main reasons behind the tours of the Western Capital. Only after the Liao threat had disappeared in the second half of the eleventh century, did these tours obtain ideological and cultural dimensions.

<sup>51</sup> H. W. Kang, "The first succession struggle of Koryŏ," pp. 419-420.

<sup>52</sup> Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu*, pp. 28-30; Sem Vermeersch, *The power of the Buddha*, pp. 67-71; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", pp. 72-80.

<sup>53</sup> Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", p. 93.

<sup>54</sup> Sem Vermeersch, "The relation between geomancy and Buddhism in Koryŏ: *pibo sasang* reconsidered," in *History, language and culture in Korea: proceedings of the 20th Conference of the Association of Korean Studies in Europe (AKSE)* (London: Eastern Art Publishing, 2001), compiled by Youngsook Pak and Jaehoon Yeon.

<sup>55</sup> Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", p. 94.

<sup>56</sup> Ch'oe Hyesuk, *Koryŏ-shidae Namgyŏng yŏn'gu*, pp. 110-131.

This is using the scale to illustrate the three capitals. That is to say, the part where a holder is tied is the head, the weight of the balance is the tail, and the balance beam itself is the most essential point. Since Songak is the chains that hold the plate, it is a simile for the scale. Whereas the Western Capital is Paegagang 白牙岡, it is a simile for the head of the scale. As south of Mount Samgak 三角山 (in Seoul) is the hill of the five virtues, it is a simile for the weight of the scale.<sup>57</sup>

The comings and goings of the ruler determined whether the country was in balance; it was through him that the landscape or the geomantic forces manifested themselves. As a ruler, he was obliged to “build a capital and periodically visit there” at the places where the geomantic force was at its strongest. The entire country could stand to benefit from the forces that were channelled through the monarch. But it was only through him that this could happen. Although the ontological status of the ruler with regard to the landscape is nowhere made explicit in extant Koryŏ sources, given the many demands made upon him to prevail upon the mountains and streams of Koryŏ by prayer or by personal intervention through touring the country or by personally participating in a particular ritual, it is clear that he possessed the qualities to influence the country’s destiny for better or for worse by virtue of his position.<sup>58</sup>

The capital was the place where the ruler realized his destiny amidst the shrines that housed the memorial tablets of his ancestors, the temples devoted to their memory, the altars where he directly prayed to heaven for the well-being of the state. It was also the place of origin of his lineage, a place moreover which had been made immortal by the many, often geomantic, tales that were associated with it. If he left it, he left it in order to travel to one of Koryŏ’s other capitals, to restore the balance in the country.

## THE RULER IN RITUAL: THE KORYŎ SON OF HEAVEN

It is from the diverse rituals in early to middle Koryŏ that we get an idea of the significance of the Koryŏ ruler for Koryŏ society. The Koryŏ ruler participated in many different rituals, many of which can due to a lack of sources no longer be examined. One category of rituals he presided over was the state rituals that received the most attention during the compilation of the *Koryŏsa*; those rituals that may be said to belong to the Confucian view of the world.<sup>59</sup> These rituals included the royal ancestor worship at the royal ancestral shrines (*chongmyŏ* 宗廟 or *t’aemyŏ* 太廟), the land and grain altar (*sajiktan* 社稷壇), the heaven-

<sup>57</sup> KS 122:1a-3b. Translation borrowed from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 436.

<sup>58</sup> See for instance KSC 10: 14b-15a; KSC 11: 20a; KS 11: 35b; TMS 43: 10b-12b; TMS 104: 8b-10a.

<sup>59</sup> For a historiographical analysis of the *Koryŏsa* and its compilation process, see Pyŏn T’aesŏp, ‘*Koryŏsa*’-*ŭi yŏn’gu* 高麗史의 研究 (Seoul: Samyŏngsa 三營社, 1983). For an account of how Daoist state rituals were neglected and demoted to the section of ‘miscellaneous rituals’, see Kim Ch’ŏrung 金澈雄, “Koryŏ kukka chesa-ŭi ch’ŏje-wa kŭ t’ŭkchŏng 高麗 國家祭祀의 體制와 그 특징,” *Han’guksa yŏn’gu* 韓國史研究 118 (2002): pp. 135-60.

worship at the round altar (*wŏn'gu* 圓丘), and the earth-worship at the square altar (*pangt'aek* 方澤). Despite the exclusive prominence that was awarded to these rituals in the *Koryŏsa*, Daoist rituals including the worship of the Daoist deities and prayers for the members of the royal family (both living and deceased), Buddhist rituals in order to protect the state and other rituals in honour of deceased rulers and eclectic rituals such as the Yöndünghoe 燃燈會 and P'algwanhoe 八關會 festivals figured the person of the ruler as the most important ritual celebrant. Such rituals were essentially capital rituals, even if they had counterparts in other parts of the country. On a local level, the ruler was also worshipped in rituals that effectively subordinated local spirits and deities by incorporating them into Koryŏ's aristocratic order. An overview of these rituals and the ideas associated with them will map the ruler's position in Koryŏ. As the head of the bureaucracy and leader of the royal lineage, the Koryŏ ruler was the common focus of obedience in Koryŏ. The charting of this ritual role will establish him also as the common focus of worship and as the Koryŏ Son of Heaven, equal to the other Sons of Heaven in China and Manchuria.

The *Koryŏsa* is quite clear about the hierarchy of importance of Koryŏ's state rituals. The royal ancestor worship at the royal ancestral shrines (*chongmyo* or *t'aemyo*), the land and grain altar (*sajiktan*), the heaven-worship at the round altar (*wŏn'gu*), and the earth-worship at the square altar (*pangt'aek*) belonged to the category of "great rituals" or *taesa* 大祀. In these rituals, the ruler functioned as the human link between Heaven and the people. The importance of this fact should not be underestimated. Only Sons of Heaven could perform the rituals of the round and square altars.<sup>60</sup> The Koryŏ ruler in essence assumed the dignity of the Son of Heaven, both in the ritual spaces in Koryŏ and in the cosmological perceptions that underlay the position of Son of Heaven. In his personification of the people towards Heaven and Heaven towards the people, the Koryŏ ruler explicitly confirmed the validity of a view on the cosmos that explained the cosmos as an interconnected and all-embracing net (*kang* 綱) in which the ruler's virtue was responsible for any and all changes (both good and bad) in the cosmic fabric.<sup>61</sup> These changes in turn manifested themselves as natural phenomena, such as natural disasters, strange phenomena with regard to the birth of animals and so forth. A large part of Koryŏ's dynastic history is dedicated to the recording of natural phenomena, weather singularities and astronomical observations with explicit reference to the theory of the five phases, according to which every phenomenon belongs to one of the five basic phases or elements that constitute the cosmos. Although scientific interest per se was an important reason to keep such meticulous records of natural phenomena, and in particular anomalous occurrences, another, more ideological, reason was furnished by classical Confucian cosmological theory from the Han. The perception of the universe as an organic entity that

<sup>60</sup> The fact that the *wŏn'gu* ritual was reinstated when King Kojong 高宗 of Chosŏn became the Emperor of the Great Han Empire 大韓帝國皇帝 in 1897 reveals the strong association that was made between the Son of Heaven and the *wŏn'gu* ritual. See André Schmid, *Korea between empires, 1895-1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

<sup>61</sup> Chin Yöngil, "'Koryŏsa' ohaeng, ch'ŏnmunji-rül t'onghae pon yuga chilsŏ kaenyŏm-üi punsŏk 《高麗史》五行·天文志를 통해 본 儒家秩序概念의 分析," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 6 (1989): pp 99-146, esp. pp. 99-106. The *Koryŏsa* also contains a reference to Confucius whose statements stressed the importance of recording astronomic phenomena. See *KS* 53: 1a-b.

embraced all inorganic and organic phenomena (including humans) in which every act had its repercussion (*kongmyǒng* 共鳴). This system was synthesized out of different, older ideas about the cosmos by of Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.E.) according to whom the ruler was “the root of the country and the moving power of all phenomena”.<sup>62</sup> As such, his actions had a decisive influence upon the harmony of the cosmos and his actions were decided by this virtue.<sup>63</sup> This conception of the universe had far-reaching ideological and political consequences, not least since it was fully accepted and incorporated by Buddhist cosmological theories as well.<sup>64</sup> The political provenance and consistent political uses of this concept particularly focused on the repercussions that acts of the ruler triggered and made it at once into the most powerful tool to legitimize the ruler as well as to criticize him. The importance of the possession of the mandate of Heaven must be seen against this background. The mandate of Heaven confirmed the ruler’s position, both socio-politically and ontologically, which is why Koryŏ rulers took much trouble to proclaim their possession of the mandate.<sup>65</sup> The virtue of the ruler, both his personal and political virtue, considered to be one and the same, was inextricably tied to the mandate; ethics as expressed in the concept of rulerly virtue were the basis principle that moved the universe.<sup>66</sup>

The importance of these rituals is well expressed by Kim Puil 金富侁:

Thus, if you sacrifice at the Round Altar, the heavenly gods all descend towards you and if you sacrifice at the Square Altar all earth gods come out to watch you. The rain falls timely and the stars appear at the right moment. Every year the harvests are abundant, auspicious clouds appear, and sweet dew comes down. Auspicious fungi are magnificent and sweet springs erupt. Since all these [symbols of] blessings and signs of universal peace appear, how could this not be a bright response from Heaven? The four seasons are responding properly to one man’s felicitousness.<sup>67</sup>

Kim wrote this text in honour of the Song emperor, who had just bestowed on Koryŏ

<sup>62</sup> Dong Zhongshu, *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露, pp. 156. Dong was the Han synthesizer of cosmological metaphysics and integrated the cosmologies of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the *Book of the master of Huainan* (*Huainanzi* 淮南子), creating an ethical cosmology that connected the heavenly order with human society.

<sup>63</sup> This means that a change in one part will affect another part and thus the whole of parts, although there is no strict causal relationship between the kind of act and the kind of repercussion. In other words, instead of a Cartesian one-on-one relationship between cause and effect, the association of certain causes with certain repercussions is situational and in practice depended on the proper interpretation of Confucian scholars. Hence the suitability for a political interpretation.

<sup>64</sup> Robert Sharf, *Coming to terms with Chinese Buddhism: A reading of the Treasure Store Treatise* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005).

<sup>65</sup> There are actually quite many sources that explicitly state that T’aejo and his successors received the Heavenly Mandate. Until the Yuan domination of Koryŏ domestic politics, the acknowledgement of the possession of the heavenly mandate was normal. See for instance *TMS* 31: 15b-16a; *TMS* 32: 16b-17a; *TMS* 31: 19a-b *TMS* 35: 23b-24b *TMS* 2: 1a-5b; *TMS* 28: 5a-6b; *KS* 1:9a-b; *KS* 70: 16a-b. Also see *KS* 14: 47b, when Sŏngjong refers to himself having received the heavenly mandate. For more examples, see Breuker, “Koryŏ as an independent realm”. Also see the first chapter.

<sup>66</sup> As in the classical Confucianism of the Han and the Tang, the ethical obligations that existed between ruler and ruled were mirrored in the ethical obligations that existed between fathers and sons, husbands and wives et cetera. There was no essential difference between political and private morality.

<sup>67</sup> *TMS* 34: 18a-19b.

the magnificent gift of the new Song ritual music, but the same was true of the Koryŏ ruler, who was also invested by ‘a thousand spirits’ and who celebrated the same rituals with the same goals.<sup>68</sup> A positive response from the cosmos on the ruler’s actions benefited the people, who were the lowest rung of the hierarchical ladder that according to Dong was the cosmos. The universe was hierarchically arranged: Heaven at the top, then the ruler, then the great nobles, and in this manner all the way down to the people. Any action from the top of the pyramid, the ruler, worked its way down to the bottom. Influence worked strictly from top to bottom; only by performing the appropriate behaviour from above could the country be properly ruled. The hierarchical construction of the universe, the strict causal relations between proper behaviour of the ruler and proper conduct of the people and the strong normative character of this concept explain the importance that was attached to the heaven-worshipping rituals by the ruler and the potential benefits and harms that were associated with it. This concept of an organic universe in which Heaven and humankind were so closely linked together, further established the importance of portents and omens by connecting these with the workings of the universe. According to Dong, “the substance of Heaven and Earth is one and the same when united, when divided, it becomes yin and yang. When separated, the four seasons; when split, the five phases.” And as can be seen from the relevant sections of the *Koryŏsa* on the five phases and astronomical and natural phenomena, the five phases were each associated with specific natural disasters and phenomena. Each irregularity was thought to be due to a disturbance of the proper order of the universe.<sup>69</sup> Hence the importance that was attached to this kind of omens and portents; in this context the transformation of hens into roosters is significant and even ominous.<sup>70</sup> Rather than superstition, portents and omen and their meticulous recording by the state were part of an internally coherent system of thought that connected cosmology, governance, ethics and nature into one organic view of the world. This system advocated a rather clear-cut view of politics: if the ruler chose to neglect his heaven-ordained duties, either by committing evil acts or by not preventing or countering evil influences the disturbed tissue of the universe would cause natural calamities and strange occurrences. If, however, he availed himself of the duties belonging to the Son of Heaven, his virtuous rule would be endorsed by the appearance of auspicious omens, such as abundant harvests and favourable weather conditions.

The ruler was ontologically responsible for the well-being of the country. The fact that he had the duty to perform such rituals as the round altar heaven worship suggests as much, as does the meticulous recording of astronomical and natural phenomena. By definition, the recording of these data and the performance of this ritual, which was without exaggeration considered crucial for the existence of the realm, was the exclusive domain of the Son of Heaven. Kings perhaps officiated in similar ceremonies in honour of the spirits of local mountains and streams, but certainly not in honour of Heaven. Nonetheless, the Koryŏ ruler

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<sup>68</sup> *TMS* 2: 1a-5b.

<sup>69</sup> Dong Zhongshu, *Chunqiu fanlu*, pp. 334.

<sup>70</sup> *KS* 2: 2a-b; *KSC* 1: 31a-b. This was a portent which made T’aejo Wang Kŏn reconsider his proposed move of the capital to P’yŏngyang.

performed this ritual at the round altar.<sup>71</sup> The Koryŏ ruler's ritual sacrifices to the earth in the square altar ritual (*pangt'aek*) were of the same importance as the round altar ritual and probably of the same frequency.<sup>72</sup>

Ideologically, then, the ruler was strengthened in his position as head of the bureaucracy and of the country by relying on classical Confucian thought and performing the state rituals associated with it. This was also confirmed by another ritual space in Koryŏ, the royal ancestral shrines, which occupied a central place in Koryŏ's ritual world. A text by Yi Kyubo describing rituals at the *t'aemyo* or *chongmyo* give an idea of the ideological significance of this place, where the memorial tablets of Koryŏ's previous rulers accompanied by those of their most trusted ministers, were enshrined and worshipped. Yi described the nationwide

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<sup>71</sup> The elaborate description of the *wŏn'gu* ritual in the *Koryŏsa* and the existence of two separate entries of rituals to be performed after the ruler has officiated in the *wŏn'gu* ritual (namely, the *Congratulatory ceremony after the monarch has officiated the wŏn'gu ritual himself* 親祀圓丘後齋宮受賀儀 and the *Pardoning ceremony after the monarch has officiated the wŏn'gu ritual himself* 親祀圓丘後肆赦儀) establish the prominent position of this ritual in Koryŏ. Nonetheless, there are only 14 mentions of a Koryŏ monarch actually performing this ritual, beginning with Sŏngjong, the monarch who officially established the *wŏn'gu* ritual in Koryŏ. A strong indication that Koryŏ rulers nevertheless performed the *wŏn'gu* ritual on a regular basis is provided by Yun Sojong's 尹紹宗 admonition to King U 禡王, in which he urges him to perform in person the rituals that the Koryŏ rulers have performed themselves from the beginning of the dynasty on. Among these was the *wŏn'gu* ritual (*KS* 120: 7b). The *Koryŏsa* further mentions that Sŏngjong performed this ritual in his second year. This ritual is only mentioned another 13 times in the official annals, but as Chin Yŏngil argues, from Yi Kyubo's writings it can be inferred that the *chech'ŏn* 祭天 ritual was performed until the period of Mongol domination. The *Koryŏsa pŏmnye* 高麗史凡例 is rather vague. It states that only the first occurrence of such state rituals as *wŏn'gu*, P'algwanhoe and Yŏndŭnghoe will be mentioned and that unless so noted they were held regularly. The only exception would be when the monarch himself officiated, but in the case of the *wŏn'gu* ritual, only the monarch could perform this ritual. A last indication of the centrality of the *wŏn'gu* ritual is provided by references to it in the descriptions of other rituals. The purification rites that are a *conditio sine qua non* for the *wŏn'gu* ritual were also adhered to in for instance the *t'aemyo* ritual "as performed during the *wŏn'gu* ritual". See *KS pŏmnye* 1a-b; *KS* 59: 1b-26a; *KS* 60:2a; *KS* 67: 22a-b; *KS* 67: 35a-b. It should further be mentioned that there were two main sacrifices at the altar in Koryŏ: one was performed in spring to pray for rain, the other was performed in the winter to secure a good harvest. However, as Okamura Shūji points out, Koryŏ had no sacrifice for the winter solstice, the most important sacrifice at the altar in China. Okamura suggests, plausibly, that the P'algwanhoe, which took place around the time of the winter solstice, may have taken over some of the functions of the solstice ritual under the guise of a native/Buddhist festival. See Okamura Shūji 岡村周司, "Kōrai no enkyū shitenrei to sekaikan 高麗の園丘祀天禮と世界觀," in *Chōsen shakai no shiteki hakken to Tō-Ajia* 朝鮮社會の史的發展と東アジア (Tokyo: Yamagawa shuppankai 山川出版會, 1997), edited by Takeda Yukio 竹田幸男, pp. 305-334 (I owe this suggestion to dr. Sem Vermeersch).

<sup>72</sup> The round altar ritual and the square altar ritual were symmetrically opposed rituals; according to the *Zhou li* 周禮, the round altar ritual was originally performed in honour of Heaven at the winter solstice and the square altar ritual in honour of Earth at the summer solstice. The square altar ritual seems to have suffered the same fate as the round altar ritual during the compilation of the *Koryŏsa*, in the sense that its performance unambiguously pointed at the status of Son of Heaven of the Koryŏ rulers and was hence considered reprehensible by the *Koryŏsa*'s Chosŏn compilers. A fierce historiographical battle raged over whether or not to include Koryŏ's blasphemous rituals, titles and so forth, a battle which was won by the party that advocated to write down the facts as they had been handed down. By the time this happened, though, most of the damage had already been done and much of the original information had been edited and revised. The compilation of the *Koryŏsa* is a good example of the tensions the introduction and internalization of a universal thought system (Confucianism or Neo-Confucianism) with very strong particularistic ties (China and Chinese history) can generate if it is earnestly studied and adopted in another cultural and geographical setting. The way Confucianism came to offer support for the unique ontological status of the Koryŏ ruler and the way Neo-Confucianism in Chosŏn became the blue-print for a society that prided itself on its orthodoxy, unsurpassed even in China, point at the many different ways of accommodation that can be negotiated. For the historiographical debates surrounding the compilation of the *Koryŏsa*, see Pyŏn T'aesŏp, '*Koryŏsa*'-tŭi yŏn'gu.

importance of *t'aemyo* rituals by mentioning that Confucian officials from the capital and provinces lined up there, clad in white, at the occasion of important rituals.<sup>73</sup> This would have been the case quite often, since all important state and court rituals were followed by a closing ceremony at *t'aemyo*; the royal ancestors had to be informed of all important decisions and events in Koryŏ. As such, the royal ancestral shrines functioned as a tangible symbol of the Wang lineage's authority and strengthened the Wang ruler as ruler of Koryŏ.<sup>74</sup> They were a focal point for both state and royal family; the rituals held there celebrated both Koryŏ and its ruler. When Yi Kyubo wrote about the *t'aemyo*, he mentioned that the rituals there were accompanied by songs of praise for the vanquishing of the Khitan and he emphasized the heavenly ordained authority of the ruler, as opposed to his other qualities (which were at that period somewhat overshadowed by the qualities of the ruling Ch'oe house).<sup>75</sup>

Separate shrines for Koryŏ's deceased rulers had existed from the beginning of the dynasty and rituals had been held at these shrines<sup>76</sup>, but the establishment of Koryŏ ancestral shrines according to Chinese model only took place in the last decade of the tenth century:

On the *kyŏngshin* day, the king promulgated the following edict: 'As for the basis of the country, the royal ancestral shrine comes first. For that reason, there has never been an emperor that has not added to the halls, built palaces for the tablets, arranged the tablets with the fathers on the right and the sons on the left and held three-yearly and five-yearly memorial services. It has been several generations since our dynasty responded to its destiny and was founded, but there have not yet been memorial services in the royal ancestral shrines. [...]'<sup>77</sup>

Characteristically, the Koryŏ ancestral shrines were suited for a Son of Heaven and not for a king. Instead of the five chambers the Koryŏ ruler could claim on the grounds of his status as king of Koryŏ and vassal of the Song, he claimed the seven chambers of the Son of Heaven:<sup>78</sup>

I have heard that the father of the ruler is Heaven, his mother Earth, his elder brother the sun and his elder sister the moon. Therefore, he officiates at rituals at the appropriate times, emulates his ancestors' piety and honours his parents. The Son of Heaven honours seven ancestral shrines, the feudal lords five. He commemorates his ancestors' achievements and virtue. The ancestral tablets are lined up at the left and the right with the founding ancestor in the middle. Formidable piety moves the spirits and the epitome

<sup>73</sup> TMS 50: 20a-21b.

<sup>74</sup> For a more detailed exploration of this issue, see chapter twelve on ritual music.

<sup>75</sup> Yi referred to the Khitan but meant the Mongols, who had started their invasions of Koryŏ. For more details on the conflation of Jurchen, Khitan and Mongols, see chapter nine on diplomacy.

<sup>76</sup> These separate shrines continued to exist after the establishment of the royal ancestral shrines. Rituals for the separate shrines (*pyŏlmyo* 別廟) are described in the ritual section of the *Koryŏsa* (where they were ranked as "great rituals") and other references to these shrines are extant. The shrine for T'aejo, for instance, the Kyŏngnyŏng-jŏn hall 景靈殿, housed his portraits. See TMS 53: 11b-16b.

<sup>77</sup> KS 3:24b-25a.

<sup>78</sup> Yi Sungin 李崇仁 claimed during the late Koryŏ dynasty that Koryŏ's original *chongmyo* system had had nine chambers in the past, which meant that it was superlatively imperial, since Yi also noted that in the past Sons of Heaven worshipped their ancestors in seven chambers. Although it is probably not true to fact that Koryŏ had nine chambers in its ancestral shrines, this text does point to the fact that it was realized, even late in the Koryŏ dynasty, that Koryŏ's *chongmyo* system had originally been imperial. *Taebru samyo cheŏi* 大夫土廟制議 in TMS 106: 22b-24b

of virtue moves Heaven and Earth.<sup>79</sup>

The ancestral shrines in Koryŏ had seven chambers, which makes it clear that the Koryŏ ruler was the Son of Heaven. His clothes also point to the same fact; the robes of the Koryŏ ruler were imperial, both in colour and in function.<sup>80</sup> He wore the three imperial colours, when he performed the rituals that constituted the duty and authority of the Son of Heaven.

The royal ancestral shrines were a uniquely sacred place; the indissoluble bond between ruler and ministers, between the royal lineage and the state was literally enshrined there. The worship of the Wang lineage, its past, present and future, was transformed there into an affair of the state. Ritual worship of past rulers represented Koryŏ's past through the royal ancestral shrines; its present was played out there through the official announcement of important decisions and events to the memorial tablets of the deceased rulers; and its future was symbolized by the shrines through the fact that prophesying rituals were held there. The figure in the centre of these political, symbolical, ideological and sacred interacting fields was the ruler in all his aspects; enshrined as ruler of the past, head celebrant of its rituals as ruler of the present and the object of prophecies, predictions and prayers as ruler of the future.

Rulers were not only remembered in their respective chambers in the royal ancestral shrines. Physical representations such as portraits and statues along with personal possessions were also enshrined in Buddhist temples, which were explicitly dedicated to the memory of a ruler.<sup>81</sup> The K'aet'ae-sa temple 開泰寺, for instance, had been built by T'aejo in 936 in commemoration of Koryŏ's victory over Later Paekche.<sup>82</sup> After his death, this temple became one of the temples which were exclusively devoted to the memory of T'aejo. During his lifetime, T'aejo used the temple to commemorate his dead ancestors; after his death, his portrait and some of his clothes were enshrined there and became the objects of a cult of veneration which lasted until the end of the dynasty. The charisma of the founder of the dynasty proved strong, for until the reign of the last rulers of Koryŏ, fortune-telling ceremonies were held in front of the portrait of T'aejo when crucial decisions, such as whether or not to move the capital, had to be taken.<sup>83</sup>

The Pongŭn-sa temple 奉恩寺 was also devoted to T'aejo's memory, since he was the founder of the dynasty.<sup>84</sup> Every year in the second month of spring at the occasion of the

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<sup>79</sup> *KS* 3: 25b. Note incidentally that the distinction between the Son of Heaven and the feudal lords is made after the general definition of the ruler.

<sup>80</sup> For a full analysis of the Koryŏ ruler's clothes and his ontological status, see Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm".

<sup>81</sup> For an exhaustive and astute account of the relationship between the ancestor worship of the Wang lineage and the Buddhist temples associated with particular rulers, see Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*; also see Sem Vermeersch, "Representation of the ruler in Buddhist inscriptions of early Koryŏ", in *Korean Studies* 26: 2 (2002): pp. 216-250.

<sup>82</sup> *KS* 56: 27b-28a; a prayer text said to have been written by T'aejo himself was read when the temple was officially opened in 940 (*KS* 2: 14a). The prayer text has been recorded in the *Shinjŭng Tongguk yŏchi sŭngnam* 新增東國輿地勝覽 [hereafter *STYS*] 18: 16a-b.

<sup>83</sup> *KS* 40: 12b; *KS* 40: 14a-b; *TGYSC* 38: 6b-7a.

<sup>84</sup> *KS* 2: 27a. The Pongŭn-sa temple was built by Kwangjong in 951 and exclusively devoted to T'aejo's memory. It housed a portrait of T'aejo.



evening of the Yöndünghoe, the ruler and the court proceeded to the Pongün-sa temple, where the ruler then performed ancestor worship ceremonies in front of the sacred portrait of T'aejo. According to the *Pobanjip*, this ritual was called “visiting the Pongün-sa and burning incense”.<sup>85</sup> The many entries in the *Koryōsa* attest to the frequency with which this ritual was performed.<sup>86</sup> T'aejo was not the only ruler to have his own commemorative temple. All rulers had at least one. Even the parents of Hyōnjong, who was the product of an illegitimate affair between two persons who had never sat upon the throne, had a temple built in their honour, where they were remembered as king and queen (emperor and empress) of Koryō.<sup>87</sup> Hyōnjong's father Wang Uk was posthumously given a temple name for a ruler, Anjong, implying that by his fathering of Hyōnjong, he too had been a ruler of Koryō.

The commemoration of deceased rulers in the royal ancestral shrines and in their own Buddhist temples and their involvement in daily affairs (their spiritual tablets were kept abreast of daily affairs and fortunes were told under their auspices) meant that the posthumous charisma of Koryō rulers was significant. The ruler's ontological status in cosmological theories was transferred to daily reality by the performance of state rituals and ancestor worship. The most powerful posthumous presence was naturally that of T'aejo; his posthumous physical presence was impressive. He was worshipped in several temples, where portraits of him had been hung and statues been placed.<sup>88</sup> Kwangjong had a bronze statue of T'aejo made, slightly larger than life, which was enshrined in the Pongün-sa temple complex in its own hall, the T'aejo chinjōn hall 太祖眞殿. It was in this hall that the first celebrations of the Yöndünghoe festival took place. This way of ancestor worship was notably not Confucian and during the reign of Sōngjong, it was replaced by the orthodox Confucian form of ancestor worship by using memorial tablets. After Sōngjong's reign, the statue was again worshipped in the former manner.<sup>89</sup> T'aejo's legacy was also noticeable in other aspects. His *Ten injunctions* (apocryphal though they are) were the state's guideline for four centuries, not only for his predecessors, but

<sup>85</sup> *POHJ* 1: 75. According to the *Koryōsa*, Chōngjong made it standard practice to make a visit to the Pongün-sa temple on the evening of the Yöndünghoe festival and to personally burn incense in front of the dynastic founder's portrait. See *KS* 6: 13b.

<sup>86</sup> The *Koryōsa* records more than 300 separate visits to the Pongün-sa temple by rulers. The *Koryōsa chōryo* in contrast has only 18 entries on royal visits to the Pongün-sa, but these have been more or less equally distributed over the different reigns.

<sup>87</sup> For a full account of the Hyōnhwa-sa, see Ch'oe Pyōnghōn 崔柄憲, “Koryō chunggi Hyōnhwa-sa-üi ch'anggōn-gwa Pōpsangjong-üi yungsōng 高麗中期 玄化寺의 創建과 法相宗의 隆盛” in *Sabak non'chong: Han Ugūn paksu chōngnyōn kinyōm* 史學論叢·韓 昞博士停年紀念 (Seoul: Chishik sanōpsa 知識產業社, 1981), edited by *Han Ugūn paksu chōngnyōn kinyōm sabak non'chong* kanhaeng chunbi wiwōnhoe 韓 昞博士停年紀念史學論叢刊行準備委員會, pp. 239-260. Also see Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 88-89. Later generations of Koryō rulers, in particular Hyōnjong's three sons who became ruler (Tōkchong, Chōngjong and Munjong) also went there to pay homage to Hyōnjong's parents.

<sup>88</sup> No Myōngho, “Koryō T'aejo Wang Kōn tongsang-üi yujōn-gwa munhwajōk pae'gyōng 高麗太祖 王建 銅像의 流轉과 문화적 배경,” *Han'guksaron* 50 (2005): pp. 150-215.

<sup>89</sup> No Myōngho, “Koryō T'aejo Wang Kōn tongsang-üi yujōn-gwa munhwajōk pae'gyōng,” pp. 150-215. No Myōngho has concluded in a very detailed and perceptive study that with the exception of the reign of Sōngjong, two different ways of ancestor worship co-existed in Koryō, one indigenous and intertwined with Buddhism, the other Confucian. The indigenous character of the way of honouring the statue of T'aejo was underscored when Yi Sōnggye 李成桂 had the statue buried with due ceremony and instead instituted neo-Confucian rituals of worship in honour of the founder of the previous dynasty.

also for Koryŏ bureaucracy, since the injunctions had been made public and were widely known.<sup>90</sup> When Pak Illyang 朴寅亮 appealed to the Liao emperor to respect Koryŏ's territorial boundaries, he did so by stating that they had been established by T'aejo – and as such were inviolable.<sup>91</sup> Even in the late Koryŏ dynasty of the fourteenth century, appeals to T'aejo's policies were still effective; rhetorically, at least, T'aejo's posthumous charisma never lost its strength.<sup>92</sup>

The memory of previous rulers was present in all aspects of Koryŏ life. The celebration of the great state rituals always had a counterpart in the royal ancestral shrines and when prayers for rain were performed, these took place not only at the round altar, but also in T'aejo's ancestral shrines.<sup>93</sup> During the Liao invasions of the early eleventh century, T'aejo's coffin was moved several times to make sure it would not fall into Khitan hands.<sup>94</sup> The same happened when there were other threats and during the Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century, when T'aejo's coffin and his portraits were also moved to the new capital at Kangdo.<sup>95</sup> The remaining physical presence of T'aejo was only one aspect of his legacy. His policies were often referred to and important decrees tended to start with a reference to T'aejo.<sup>96</sup> The *Ten injunctions*' enduring influence in Koryŏ is obviously another example of T'aejo's posthumous presence.<sup>97</sup> When a ruler died, it was also customary to refer to T'aejo in his testament or recorded last words.<sup>98</sup> Memorial services for deceased rulers also seem to have been combined with memorial services for T'aejo.<sup>99</sup> And there seems to have been yet another aspect to T'aejo's memory in Koryŏ. When in 1106, Yejong officiated a Daoist ritual at court in honour of the Supreme Being, he more or less simultaneously also offered sacrifices to T'aejo, hoping for rain.<sup>100</sup> This strongly suggests that T'aejo's memory was not only spiritual and historical, but also religious in a manner that transcended the authority usually ascribed to deceased royal ancestors. This was confirmed by the practice of praying for rain at T'aejo's memorial temples

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<sup>90</sup> For a detailed discussion of the injunctions, see chapter thirteen which deals with the *Ten injunctions*.

<sup>91</sup> *Sang Taejo hwangje kojū p'yo* 上大遼皇帝告奏表 in *TMS* 39: 5a-6b.

<sup>92</sup> See for instance *TMS* 53: 16b-18b. Even when the policies that were proposed clothed in rhetoric that appealed to T'aejo were in fact contrary to T'aejo's policies, the rhetoric was apparently still powerful enough to employ. See for example a memorial by Pak Ch'o dating from the end of the Koryŏ dynasty which proposes anti-Buddhist policies by appealing to T'aejo. T'aejo had been attached to Buddhism more than anything else. See *TMS* 53: 23a-30a.

<sup>93</sup> *KS* 3: 2a-b; *KSC* 2: 34a.

<sup>94</sup> *KS* 4: 20a-b; *KS* 4: 29a; *KS* 4: 31b.

<sup>95</sup> In 1217, the memorial tablets in the royal ancestral shrines as well as T'aejo's coffin were moved to safe places, on account of marauding bands of Khitan (*KS* 22: 9b). In 1232, T'aejo's coffin was reburied in Kangdo (*KS* 23: 26b). His portrait was enshrined in a new temple in Kaegyŏng in 1234 (*KS* 23: 28b). It was moved to a new palace in the southern capital only three months later (*KS* 23:28b-29a). T'aejo's remains were again reburied in 1243 in Kangdo (*KS* 23: 36b).

<sup>96</sup> Mokchong's edict on coinage, in which he encouraged barter, started with an appeal to T'aejo's policies in the past (*KS* 79: 10a-11a). When a century later, Yejong tried to uphold his father's (Sukchong's) financial reforms, he had to battle against T'aejo's charisma and policies, which were used by the opposing bureaucracy to block the monarch's plans (*KS* 79: 12a). Injong also referred to T'aejo at the beginning of an important decree and even had his writings reprinted and distributed among his officials (*KS* 16: 2b-3a See *KS* 16: 15b).

<sup>97</sup> See chapter seven.

<sup>98</sup> When Yejong died, for instance, he explicitly mentioned that he had relied on T'aejo's teachings to govern the country. The dynasty continued at the strength of T'aejo's legacy. See *KS* 14: 41a-42b.

<sup>99</sup> See for instance *KS* 3: 27a-b; *KS* 3: 32a.

<sup>100</sup> *KS* 12: 23b-24a.

and his tomb.<sup>101</sup> In a way, the memory of T'aejo's person and reign became the guideline of all subsequent rulers and, interestingly, of the bureaucracy, which did not hesitate to invoke T'aejo's memory in matters of policy decision and execution. There is little doubt that owing to Koryŏ's adoption of a strongly sinicized bureaucratic apparatus and literati culture in general, Chinese precedent became the principle upon which the Koryŏ dynasty was to function. The golden past enshrined in the Chinese classics was as much strived after in Koryŏ as in China. Koryŏ's worship of its deceased rulers, however, and in particular of T'aejo gave a decidedly different orientation to the Koryŏ state. The worship of deceased rulers, as for instance in the continued importance of the *Ten injunctions*, was not contradictory to the Sinitic civilizational principles that underlay the Koryŏ state. This is clearly seen in for instance the *Ten injunctions*, where concepts, ideas and historical experiences from differing provenance interacted, creating a field of constantly changing tension between Koryŏ's peninsular history, its adopted Sinitic elements and other influences (such as those from the North). The same tension was upheld in the rituals performed by the ruler for his own benefit and those addressed to the memory of his predecessors in the royal ancestral shrines, Buddhist temples and Daoist shrines.

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<sup>101</sup> See for instance *KS* 10; 22b; *KS* 12: 23b-24a. It was customary to pray for rain at the shrines of the spirits of Koryŏ's mountains and streams and if necessary also in Buddhist temples and the royal ancestral shrines.

This short excursion into the remembrance of T'aejo in Koryŏ has led us to a very important aspect of the ruler in Koryŏ. Ideologies with universal pretensions (such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism) were localized through the ruler and his ancestors. On all levels, they became the mediators between universal value and particular elaboration, as in the round altar ritual, where the Koryŏ ruler represented the Koryŏ people towards Heaven and represented Heaven towards the people. The inherent tension in the performance of this ritual was never resolved; the all-under-heaven over which the Koryŏ ruler could and did claim authority was both limited and not unique. The idea of the ruler in Koryŏ eventually appropriated most of the ideology of rule. In the end, as is clearly seen during the period of military rule in the thirteenth century, the Koryŏ ruler as an ontologically unique category by himself was more important than the ideological props that supported him. This was akin to the Sinitic idea of the ruler as the “only man” 一人, a self-designation also found in Koryŏ sources.<sup>102</sup> This originally Confucian idea was expressed in a Buddhist context by Yi Kyubo in a poem singing the praises of rituals honouring the Tripitaka and rituals to avert catastrophes. Yi represented the Koryŏ ruler as the ontological link between the Buddha and the Three Han. Just as the “only man” was the only one who could influence Heaven in the round altar ritual, he was the “only man” upon whom the light of the ten million Buddha's shone down when he bowed to them.<sup>103</sup> This was not due to his great personal achievements as a Buddhist believer, but was inherent to his position as ruler of the Three Han. The Koryŏ ruler was in other words a destined ruler of the peninsula, whose localized ontological status determined his position.

Perhaps the most important expression of localized ideology in Koryŏ that figured the ruler in the most prominent place was the P'algwanhoe festival, which was celebrated once a year around the winter solstice. The elements that constituted this nominally Buddhist festival were diverse. During this festival, Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian and other elements were solidly stapled to Koryŏ's mountains and streams, their spirits and Koryŏ's history, in particular the meritorious subjects that had helped T'aejo establish the dynasty.<sup>104</sup> It was in all probability a Shilla festival which was continued into the Koryŏ period; it had been intimately connected with the *hwarang* 花郎 or flower youth tradition.<sup>105</sup> T'aejo had re-established the P'algwan festival, perhaps with the example of Kungye in his mind.<sup>106</sup> According to one scholar, under T'aejo, the festival “thus subsumed various traditions under a very loose Buddhist framework: the Shilla *hwarang* tradition, spirit worship, the Tongmaeng 東盟 festival of Koguryŏ, and the

<sup>102</sup> TMS 16b-17b; Writing his preface to the *Tongin saryuk* in the fourteenth century, Ch'oe Hae was amazed at the audacity of earlier Koryŏ rulers who would habitually call themselves “I, the only one” or “the only man”. See TMS 84: 19a-b.

<sup>103</sup> TYSC 18: 1a-5a. There is of course much less tension between universal and particularistic aspects in this case, because in theory more than one ruler could be smiled upon by the Buddha, while in theory there could only be one Son of Heaven.

<sup>104</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 75-77. For a detailed tracing of the P'algwanhoe's Indian, Chinese, Koguryŏan and Shillan elements, see An Chiwŏn 安智源, *Koryŏ-ŭi kukka pulgyo ūiryŏ-jŏk munhwa* 高麗의 國家佛教儀禮的文化 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo, 2005), pp. 124-139.

<sup>105</sup> Extant congratulatory texts explicitly mention the connection with the *hwarang*. See *Ha P'algwan p'yo* 賀八關表 in TMS 31: 15b-16a; *P'algwansŏn hap'yo* 八關仙賀表 in TMS 31: 21b-23a. This last text is quoted by Yi Illo 李仁老 in his description of the *hwarang* origins of the P'algwanhoe in the *P'abanjip*. See PHC 3: 34-35.

<sup>106</sup> KS 14: 35b; Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 80.

worship of merit subjects.”<sup>107</sup> The P’algwan festival was abolished in 987 by Sōngjong, who had had misgivings about the festival ever since witnessing it in the first year of his reign in 981, and was reinstated in the first year of Hyōnjong.<sup>108</sup> Some extant congratulatory texts may serve as good indications of what kind of ritual the P’algwan was. These texts show the ruler in full regalia; as the ontologically destined ruler of Koryō, the Son of Heaven, foremost Buddhist of the country, head of the state, the human link between Heaven and the people and as the embodiment of Koryō’s history. The first text was written by Pak Ho 朴浩 (fl. around 1100):

Your servant reports. Humbly prostrating I have observed that Your Imperial Majesty will hold the Eight Barrier Festival on the fourteenth day of this month, proceeding to the polo court with the imperial insignia carried before you, where you will listen to ritual music and receive the tribute of your servants, both from within and without [the borders of the state]. Your imperial voice will ring with clarity and you will perform the ritual offerings for the Buddha in a temple. The imperial carriage will congeal the rays of light and you will open up the palace gardens and hold a banquet. This is a gathering the auspiciousness of which will last ten thousand generations. Truly, it is a time when the whole world rejoices and is at peace. Humbly prostrating I think that Your Imperial Majesty has extended and protected the life of the country. You have succeeded to the royal line. With astronomical instruments, you arrange the seven celestial bodies and with sincerity you succeed to the spirit of Emperor Shun. In accordance with the Big Dipper, you observe the people, satisfying their waiting for Emperor Tang. Even more, you again study and revere the mysterious principles, honour the testaments of your predecessors and perform Indian rituals with great stateliness. Emulating the Han practice of holding banquets for the people, you entertain by giving feasts. The game of the fish and the dragon and a hundred other diversions are played out in the square. A thousand queues of the high and mighty share the joys at this exalted place. You affect officials and visitors alike and all enjoy themselves. Your benevolence extends to the entire realm. Your servant is faithfully guarding against the barbarians and building the frontiers, because of which he is unable to attend the festivities, and has enjoyed the honour of again following the ways of the Han emperors from afar. While immense prosperity resounds, I offer my sincerest congratulations.<sup>109</sup>

A similar text was written by Kim Pushik:

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<sup>107</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 82.

<sup>108</sup> *KS* 3: 13a; *KS* 3: 1b; See *KS* 3: 13a; *KSC* 2: 40b-41a. See *KS* 69: 11b. A description of the first Koryō P’algwanhoe can be found in the *Koryōsa chōryō*: “Eleventh month (918). The P’algwanhoe was instituted. An official said, “Every year in the second month of the winter, the former king(s) organized a grand fast of the eight commandments to pray for blessings. I beg you to honour this institution.” The king said: “Lacking in virtue, I protect the great enterprise. Relying on Buddhism, the realm can be pacified.” Then in the ball court a circle of lamps was made, flanked by rows of incense burners, so that the whole place was brightly lit at night. Also two coloured tents were made, more than 50 feet high, and furthermore a platform constructed in the shape of a lotus, it was dazzling to behold. In front of it a hundred plays, songs and dances were performed; the music troupe of the four immortals, cart-ships of dragons, phoenixes, elephants and horses, all old stories of Shilla. All the officials paraded in full dress, carrying their insignia. The whole capital came to look, and feasted day and night. The king watched from the Wibongnu. It was nominally a gathering to offer to the Buddha and enjoy the spirits. After this it became an annual event.” See *KSC* 1: 15a. Translation borrowed with slight adaptations from Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 77-78. For a similar description, see *KS* 1: 14b.

<sup>109</sup> *TMS* 31: 15b-16a.

Respectfully leading the proper rituals, you make the state ceremonies prosper. Heaven is touched by your utmost sincerity and hosts of spirits take pleasure. A harmonious atmosphere reaches all from the sides and all are beating the drums and dancing. Your servant has respectfully heard that when our sacred founding ancestor King T'aejo arose the world was awash with evil and swords and spears were all around, but he answered the Mandate of Heaven, responded to the will of the people and put an end to the troubles that were tormenting the Three Han. He established the royal house, bestowed upon us the imperial lineage and devised a plan to last a thousand years. He then said that after the autumnal colds, the glories of spring will arrive and that after thunder and lightning rich blessings will follow. Therefore musical performances are prepared to please both the spirits and the people, so that you will show the future brightly and turn it into a thing of the past. I respectfully think that Your Imperial Majesty resides at the place of heavenly virtues and that your lustre has succeeded to the brightness of the mountain spirits. Always fearful that the noble characters of Yao 堯 and Shun 舜 can perhaps not be united in one person, you emulate the filial piety of Zeng Zi 曾子 and Wen Xun 閔損 and you have obtained the happiness of the people. In accordance with the proper moment now, you have prepared this splendid meeting. The joy occasioned by the hierarchy of the nine noble ranks and the resplendent sound of the six kinds of ritual music moves heaven and earth and spring returns to the trees and plants. Your servant is far away in a coastal village, far away from the palace grounds, and is unable to visit the court to take part and dance in the courtyard.<sup>110</sup>

In contrast to Kim Pushik's Confucian and imperial terminology, Kwak Tongsun 郭東珣 (d.u., fl. twelfth century) stressed the Shillan tradition of the P'algwanhoe:

Since Fuxi ruled the world as a king, there has not been a country as lofty as the Three Han of T'aejo. The transcendentals living on Miaoguye-shan 藐姑射山 are the four *hwarang* of Shilla's [Half] Moon Fortress. Indigenous practices have been handed down for generations and their constitution has been renewed during our dynasty, which has made our ancestors happy and harmonized [the relations between] the higher and the lower classes. Your servant has heard that the old villages of Shilla were located in a corner east of the sea, that from ancient times on it was civilized and that it was known as a country of gentlemen. A purple egg descended from Heaven and a sacred dragon emerged from a well. For a thousand years the waters of the Yellow River were clear, during which time the Holy Bone and True Bone succeeded to the throne. Over a period of five hundred years famous [*hwarang*] appeared. Transcendentals such as Wöllang 原郎 and Nallang 鸞郎 searched out our country's famous sceneries and enjoyed themselves there. Persons who entered those places and meditated there number a million. Dream-like Kamsö 奔西 and Taebuk 臺北 are roads to a perfectly governed country. Our basalt rocks and whispering sands above the sea house the fairytale castle where the people do not seem to live on rice, but in fact are people who live among the clouds. Who shall once more see them, taking the divine medicine and becoming transcendentals flying through the air and playing on the face of the earth? Although the Daoist paradise is elusive and although its traces are hard to find, the ancient customs of the old masters still exist and we believe that heaven [*hwangch'ön* 黃天] has not yet perished. For this reason, our T'aejo exerted his righteousness and bravery in the last year of the Water Virtue [*sudök*] and built a large foundation at Tongmyöng's old capital. He enlisted six

<sup>110</sup> TMS 31: 19a-b.

meritorious subjects who surpassed Xiao He 蕭何, Zhang Liang 張良 and Han Xin 韓信, who had been called “the three outstanding subjects”. A kingdom to last ten thousand years had been prophesied and he unified Chin, Pyön and Ma into one house. Wishing to repay the kindness of heaven and earth together by sending him this beautiful gift, he created music which rulers and ministers enjoyed together. You received the spiritual characters [靈文] from the dragon’s pillar [龍柱], mastered the eight proper conducts, blocked the eight evil influences and examined the records of the transcendentals of Kyerim [Shilla]. Above the eastern moon and below the western moon, you said: “I have made this law an ancient law. Make it standard practice [to carry it out] once a year.” You have transmitted it to your descendants, as it is clearly stated in your records recorded on wood. Humbly I think that Your Majesty is in his prime, daily elevating the sacred teachings, having succeeded to the endless merits of your ancestors. Your virtue is endless and you are so diligent in governing the country that you wait until evening for food and dress before dawn. Your sacred enterprise is like a shining literary text. In order to achieve an era of peace and tranquillity in the country, the oxen are released and horses returned [from the waging of wars]. Even if you enjoy yourself with wine cups and drums, you do not do so because you are intoxicated by the wine, but because you wish to take pleasure in it together with the people, having chosen the season and performing the ceremonies. Now that you have chosen to celebrate the beautiful season of the winter solstice according to the ancient rituals of our country, a thousand officials are standing in long lines before the bejewelled throne you deigned to visit. Loudly, the *manse* 萬歲 hurrahs ring out through the air from the highly elevated stage. On a field as wide as Dongting lake 洞庭湖, music is performed that harmonizes the forces of yin and yang. Playing at the palace of the transcendentals, you leave high above the rain and the clouds. In the mountains and rivers extraordinary portents appear and jade and silver compete with each other to be offered as tribute. Your servant is fortunate to have been born in a time of peace and tranquillity and to have met a sagacious ruler who recognised [his abilities]. Your name is inscribed in a record of gold and your high footsteps reach to the Jade Pond [where transcendentals live]. This field is not that of Emperor Yao, but nonetheless all animals come to see you and take part in the dancing and all scholars of Zhou 周 would have gathered here to sing the poem “And young men made [constant] attainments”.<sup>111</sup> With a sincerity that reaches to the sun, I dare to look at you and congratulate you respectfully with your following of Heaven.<sup>112</sup>

Yi Kyubo emphasized other elements when he wrote a congratulatory text:

It is said.

You have followed the ancient customs of your ancestors and organised the beautiful Festival of the Eight Barriers. Enjoying it together with the people, you have levelled the good graces of myriad countries. Joy has satisfied the spirits of earth and heaven. Felicitous events abound in the whole nation. Humbly, I think that Your Majesty bestows his civilizing virtue through divine ways. You protect the era of peace and prosperity with your prudence. Folding your arms and letting your robes hang down, you sit down. I have not achieved anything, but the people are nonetheless as a matter of course influenced by your virtue, living peacefully from the land and enjoying their occupations. That this is the power of the emperor, how are the people to know? Now,

<sup>111</sup> This is a poem from the *Book of Odes*, translation by James Legge. The English text was taken from James Legge, *The Chinese classics with a translation, critical and exegetical notes, prolegomena, and copious indexes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893), 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed., vol. 4.

<sup>112</sup> *TMS* 31: 21b-23a.

the time for the felicitous festival of the winter solstice is upon us and we greatly celebrate the sacred rituals. Beautiful portents flood [the country], large tortoises cover mountains, small turtles carry maps on their backs. All kinds of music start, with dragons playing the flute and tigers playing the lute. Your consorts entrust their bodies to heaven, riding to the palace in their palanquins. Hearing the music of Emperor Yao's Nine Melodies, it seems as if we have entered the Heaven of the Supreme Being. Accepting the wishes for a long life, I earnestly guarantee the cheers of Songshan 嵩山.<sup>113</sup>

These texts are different from each other in what they emphasize, in their selection of what is important in the celebration of the P'algwanhoe. What they have in common is the flowery and ornate style in which the ruler is praised and the confirmation of the Koryŏ ruler as an "Imperial Majesty", who presided over "the ritual offerings for the Buddha in a temple", while "the whole world rejoices and is at peace." The Koryŏ ruler's ontological role in sustaining the country was also made explicit, for he extended and protected the life of the country, having succeeded to the royal line." But he was as much a patron of the sciences, since he "arranged the seven celestial bodies with astronomical instruments." Succeeding to the emperors of classical Sinitic civilization, the Koryŏ ruler nonetheless honoured Koryŏ's indigenous customs; he followed "the Big Dipper" and searched out "mysterious principles, honoured the testaments of [his] predecessors, not neglecting the performance of "Indian [Buddhist] rituals with great stateliness." The Koryŏ ruler "followed the ways of the Han emperors", having "answered the Mandate of Heaven." T'aejo was of course most important, since he had "established the royal house, bestowed upon us the imperial lineage and devised a plan to last a thousand years." Metaphorically at least the Koryŏ ruler "resided at the place of heavenly virtues" and made sure that "indigenous practices have been handed down for generations and their constitution has been renewed during our dynasty, which has made our ancestors happy and harmonized [the relations between] the higher and the lower classes." The celebration of Shilla's *hwarang* tradition was combined with the realization that T'aejo had "built a large foundation at Tongmyŏng's old capital" and that in unifying the Later Three Kingdoms, "a kingdom to last ten thousand years had been prophesied and he unified Chin, Pyŏn and Ma into one house." He was in short a ruler who adhered to the tenets of Buddhism, understood those of Confucianism and searched for those of Daoism. He was a Son of Heaven and head of the state. Most importantly perhaps, in him the history of the peninsula was realized and he formed the essential link between the mountains and streams of the Three Han and the people of the Three Han. Two poems in the *Pobanjip* sum up the essence of his position and the state's celebration of it succinctly:

When the virtue of the ruler prospers

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<sup>113</sup> TMS 31: 31b-32a. A interesting contrast emerges if these texts are compared to a text from the fourteenth century (written by Yi Saek), which also celebrates the P'algwanhoe: "Heaven's great mandate of a thousand years to which Koryŏ has responded is something of the past, but still young. The banners of the festival of the eight barriers are not today's banners but from the past. The people rejoice in your occupancy of the bejewelled throne. I humbly think that you possess the flowering of virtue and cultivate all phenomena using the utmost wisdom." The self-confident exuberance of earlier centuries is completely gone and Koryŏ has aged, at least in this text. See TMS 32: 16a-b.



the imperial land of the Pine Tree Forests [Kaesöng] shall increase once more  
Dry grasses will be fertile  
and flower mountain's portents that predict the ruler's advent have already spread.

Waves of silk engulf the capital's walls,  
The city of ten thousand generations of emperors and kings  
Mountain peaks, as if embroidered on silk, enfold the royal palace  
and once again sing the song for the emperor's birthday.<sup>114</sup>

The same imperial tone was also expressed in the slogans which were composed by famous poets for each edition of the P'algwanhoe.<sup>115</sup> This tone was not meant for domestic consumption only; foreign visitors attended the P'algwanhoe and the texts read out during the festival found their way abroad.<sup>116</sup> With regard to the P'algwanhoe, it is of importance to realize that this festival was used to receive foreign envoys and traders and to impress upon them the splendour of Koryö.<sup>117</sup> Song traders and envoys, Jurchen chieftains, envoys from T'amna and even Japanese visitors attended the P'algwanhoe.<sup>118</sup>

The constitutive elements of the P'algwanhoe were diverse and are hard to trace back to their respective sources, but the function of the festival is somewhat easier to determine. Domestically, it was a grand festival with an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 people participating that offered spectators and participants a way to share and celebrate their common history, gods, beliefs, experiences and destiny.<sup>119</sup> The festival was also celebrated in the Western Capital, which enhanced its nationwide appeal.<sup>120</sup> Most importantly, the P'algwanhoe was used to integrate local beliefs in spirits, deities, mountains and streams into the state and connect them to the person of the ruler.<sup>121</sup> Provincial officials were obliged to participate in the festival; each provincial administrative unit had to select an official to go to the capital and to the Western Capital and participate in the three-day festival and its rituals.<sup>122</sup> From 1086 onwards, these same officials were also expected to send congratulatory texts to the capital beforehand;<sup>123</sup> these texts were read and judged according to their literary merit. The best ones were posted on placards.<sup>124</sup> The importance of the provinces in the celebration of the P'algwanhoe is hard to

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<sup>114</sup> *POHJ* 3: 141.

<sup>115</sup> See for instance *TMS* 104: 4b-5a. This congratulatory text by Im Chongbi 林宗庇 also carries strong Daoist overtones.

<sup>116</sup> A famous instance of this is what happened when Kim Puil composed the festival's yearly central ritual text (a short, inspiring and motto-like text). Yejong was so pleased with it that he proposed to change the tradition and use Kim's texts in the future. A Song musician attending the festival took the text with him to the Song court, where the Song emperor read it and complimented the writer of it, although he also remarked that the language used was not suitable for a vassal. See *KS* 97: 2a-b. The original text is not extant.

<sup>117</sup> Even Song envoys and traders were received during the P'algwanhoe. Given the strong Koryö-centric orientation of this ritual in both text and execution (the seating of the Koryö ruler was that of a Son of Heaven), this is perhaps somewhat surprising. See *KS* 6: 22a; *KSC* 4: 8a-b.

<sup>118</sup> *KS* 9: 11a; An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 215-217

<sup>119</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 154

<sup>120</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>121</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 158.

<sup>122</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>123</sup> *KS* 10: 10a.

<sup>124</sup> *POHJ* 3: 139-142.

overestimate; the assembled provincial officials concretely and directly symbolized the ruler's authority over the country by their presence in the capital. Conversely, the importance of the festival for the provinces must also not be underestimated. Although it was not celebrated throughout the country, such as the Yöndünghoe was, the yearly pilgrimage of the provincial officials did not pass unnoticed. The journey to the capital and back to the province again took days, if not weeks, and must have been quite a sight. Thousands of officials made the yearly trek to the capital and their travel parties must have included a good number of assistants, servants, slaves and military escorts. Another factor that must be taken into account when trying to gauge the impact of festivals such as the P'algwanhoe and Yöndünghoe is the amount of time, expenses and manpower that went into the yearly organizing of festivals whose active participants numbered into the thousands. Not only were there special bureaus from which the organization of these festivals was led, but the very scale of the festivals meant that the preparations would have been very visible parts of Koryö life, year after year.<sup>125</sup>

The ruler was the central figure in the festival; everything started and ended with him. The procession on the first day of the festival was headed by the ruler and ended in front of T'aejo's portrait (which was incidentally the same during the Yöndünghoe).<sup>126</sup> The Pöpwangsa temple 法王寺 played a crucial role during the festival. This temple, which had been established by T'aejo in 919, right after he had established the dynasty, exemplified the history of the Koryö dynasty and its insoluble ties with the Wang lineage.<sup>127</sup> The festival, then, aimed at creating a shared idea about provenance and destiny, history and future, situated in the clearly delimited landscape of the Three Han, whose spirits and deities, merit subjects and deceased rulers were worshipped and invoked to the greater glory of the present ruler of the Three Han.

The Yöndünghoe was originally celebrated on the birthday of the historical Buddha and apparently, it was celebrated all through the country.<sup>128</sup> By all accounts, it seems as if it was more of a mass festival than the P'algwanhoe; although the number of official active participants also lay between the 3,000 and 4,000 people, there are indications that popular participation in the Yöndünghoe was higher.<sup>129</sup> And although class restrictions meant that the different classes participated at different moments (and presumably in different manners), it seems that large groups participated during the festival.<sup>130</sup> But like the P'algwanhoe, this festival also took place around the person of the ruler. It started with a three kilometre long procession led by the Koryö monarch from the palace to the Pongün-sa temple, where the ruler then sacrificed to the portrait of T'aejo.<sup>131</sup> The Yöndüng festival was celebrated on the birthday of the historical Buddha and seems as such to have been a more truly Buddhist festival

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<sup>125</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 90-98, pp. 196-204.

<sup>126</sup> For a detailed description and analysis of the P'algwanhoe's concrete execution, see An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 166-195.

<sup>127</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 183-185.

<sup>128</sup> *KSC* 3: 1b.

<sup>129</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 90-91. In an entry for the 27<sup>th</sup> year of Munjong, the staggering number of 30,000 lanterns is mentioned. Even if this is probably an exaggeration, the scale of the festival must have been immense. See *KS* 9: 6a-b.

<sup>130</sup> See *KS* 100: 16b.

<sup>131</sup> An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*, pp. 64-68, 91.

than the P'algwanhoe, although the fact that it was often celebrated in the Pongün-sa temple indicates that it was also functioned as a state-sponsored festival to worship the royal ancestors.<sup>132</sup> The Yöndüng festival also contained elements of a fertility festival.<sup>133</sup>

For this festival, congratulatory texts were composed and they give a good idea what this festival was about. In one congratulatory text Yi Kyubo wrote, he emphasized that it was a Buddhist festival, transmitted from the Koryö people's ancestors until now,<sup>134</sup> while in a poem on the festival he described the ruler in imperial terms, emphasized Daoist elements and made clear that the festival was about the ruler and the state.<sup>135</sup> Another poem by Yi described the festive atmosphere, the many participants (10,000 according to the poem) and again explicitly stated the centrality of the ruler.<sup>136</sup> In another congratulatory text Yi wrote for the festival, Buddhism is hardly mentioned; the ruler takes centre stage and the allusions are Daoist rather than Buddhist.<sup>137</sup> Such an approach seems to underscore the interpretation that the P'algwanhoe and the Yöndünghoe were in the first place festival centred on the ruler and only in the second place devoted to the Buddha and other religious figures. The following text by Im Chongbi 林宗庇 confirms this:

Sages arise and come to observe the myriad things. They greatly succeed to the splendour of several generations. The spring winds start to blow and a hundred different grasses appear. The assembly of the full moon of the first month is opened with great magnificence. Pleasure is the same everywhere, spectacular views are constantly renewed. I have heard that ritual music will appear once in every hundred years and that monarchs respond to all generations and arise. Only our T'aejo received his sacred destiny from Heaven and was born during the period of the Three Kingdoms. He was determined to realize the great unification of a king and below, he listened to the wishes of the below, while above, he obeyed the intentions of Heaven. He hoisted the righteous banner of Gaozong 高宗 of the Han 漢 and risked his destiny and success or failure in a battle. He spread the virtue of Emperor Shun and made the two branches (of the bureaucracy) dance the military dances and the civilian dances. He created a place where pleasure was made even more beautiful, devising the ritual of lighting lanterns. The pleasure of the ancestors has been preserved for their descendants. I humbly think that Your Imperial Majesty has always possessed an excellent disposition. In affluence, you have achieved the great enterprise. Acceding to the intentions [of your ancestors], you record things, uphold that which has been filled and protect achievements. Working until late and waking early you dare to regard easily the mandate of the Supreme Being. Accomplishing achievements, your rule has settled and you have reached today's splendour. Obeying eternal laws, you celebrate the sacred rituals, you sing of major odes and the minor odes of the *Book of songs* and you perform the *Zhi shao* 徵招 and the *Jue shao* 角招 of the state of

<sup>132</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 83; Hō Hūngshik 許興植, "Koryō sahoe-ūi pulgyojök kibān 高麗社會의 佛教의 基盤", in *Koryō pulgyosa yŏn'gu* 高麗佛教史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1986), pp. 47-102. The portrait of T'aejo was kept in the Pongün-sa, which suggests that the celebration of the Yöndüng festival there may have encouraged the identification of T'aejo and the historical Buddha.

<sup>133</sup> An Chiwŏn, *Koryō-ūi kukka*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>134</sup> *TMS* 114: 6a-b; *TYSC* 39: 11b-12a.

<sup>135</sup> *TYSC* 13: 3a-b.

<sup>136</sup> *TYSC* 13: 16b-17a.

<sup>137</sup> *TYSC* 19: 2b-3a; *TMS* 12a-13a. A congratulatory text by Ch'oe Cha was written in a very similar vein. See *TMS* 104: 23a-b.

Qi 齊. The people rejoice at hearing the sound of the wind and pipe music, saying “We wish our ruler to make percussion music.” All people from the four seas will listen to your sacred virtue and come, their babies wrapped in quilts. This moment is the period of peace and prosperity. Things that have been blessed with good fortune several times will all come. It is extremely joyful that you treat these felicitous events warmly. Your servants are registered in the bureau for transcendentals and live of the world of the sages. It is prosperous and beautiful. Fortunately, it is to be seen with the eyes and enjoyed with the heart. It is admirable and spiritual and without realizing it, my hands dance and my feet shuffle.<sup>138</sup>

Despite the strong Buddhist origins of the Yöndünghoe, Im’s text makes explicit what was the most important element of the ritual: the rulers of Koryö, both its deceased rulers, most prominently T’aejo, and its present one. As can be clearly surmised from texts such as this one by Im Chongbi and by descriptions of the Yöndünghoe, royal ancestor worship was an important element of the festival. This worship was moreover eminently visible for participant and spectator alike, consisting of mass processions and gatherings, both inside and outside the capital. There are no sources extant which offer any details of celebrations in the provinces of the Yöndünghoe, but it stands to reason that these festivals were also characterized by the two focal points of Buddhism and the state and the ruler and the state, in particular so, since the importance attached to the rituals associated with the Yöndünghoe was such that centrally appointed and dispatched officials presided over local rituals. The conflation of the cult of royal ancestor worship and the praying for the salvation of Koryö’s deceased rulers in Buddhist temples created an image of the ruler as a being larger than life and closer to the Buddha and heaven than any other being.

Nominally Confucian and Buddhist state rituals, regardless of the often colourful actual contents, were two important mainstays of a ruler’s position. But apart from the Confucian state rituals<sup>139</sup> and Buddhist festivals and rituals<sup>140</sup>, Daoist rituals also played an, often underestimated, role of importance in the Koryö state. Daoist rituals suffered particularly at the hands of some of the *Koryösa*’s compilers, with the result that there are virtually no records extant which explain and detail Daoist rituals at the Koryö court. Consequently, this field of study has been seriously neglected, although recent research has tried to remedy this situation by analyzing extant records and indirect references.<sup>141</sup> These studies have shown that an important part of the ruler’s position was decided by his performance of Daoist rituals, both

<sup>138</sup> *Tüngsöek ch’iö* 燈夕致語 in TMS 104: 3a-4b.

<sup>139</sup> Of which there were more than I have mentioned here; the ritual ploughing of a field to open the agricultural season is one such ritual, which was indispensable for the Koryö ruler to perform, both in order to establish and confirm his position as ruler and to create the conditions for a plentiful harvest. The sacrifices to the spirits of the land and grain are another example. These rituals were absolutely central to Koryö’s ritual and daily world, but their analysis does not add anything to our understanding of the Koryö ruler that the *wön’gu* does not.

<sup>140</sup> There were also much more Buddhist state rituals in Koryö than I have mentioned here, but again, an analysis of these rituals with regard to the figure of the ruler would not add anything new. For a complete analysis of Koryö’s Buddhist state rituals, see An Chiwön, *Koryö-üi kukka*; Kim Chongmyöng 김중명, *Han’guk chungse-üi pulgyo üiryë: sasangjök pae’gyöng-gwa yöksajök üimi* 한국중세의 불교 의례: 사상적 배경과 역사적 의미 (Seoul: Munhak-kwa chisöngsa 문학과 지성사, 2001).

<sup>141</sup> Kim Ch’örung, “Koryö kukka chesa-üi ch’ëje”. Kim Ch’örung has succeeded in rescuing Koryö Daoist rituals from academic oblivion by painstakingly detailed research into the remaining sources.

for the living and the deceased, and by his personal interest in and sponsoring of Daoist learning and institutes.<sup>142</sup> The mediating role of the Koryŏ ruler by performing heaven-worship rituals, disseminating virtue instead of vice through Confucian rituals and ideology and through the performance of Buddhist rituals was also mirrored in the officiating role of the Koryŏ ruler in Daoist court rituals. The evidence these court rituals, (*ch'o* 醮 and *chae* 齋) offer is not only important for its confirmation of the indispensable existence of the ruler, but also because of the wording of the accompanying ritual texts.<sup>143</sup> In one text the ruler refers to himself as *yŏ'ir'in*, which literally means “I, the only one”. As I have pointed out earlier, this term of the first person singular is a pronoun reserved for the Son of Heaven. It not only indicates his paramount status as most important human being, it also denotes the fact that he is—ideologically and literally—the only one who can mediate between Heaven and his people.

The Koryŏ ruler had many, different duties, some of which were ritual or bureaucratic and had to be actively performed, while others were inherent in his status. In the early eleventh century, Yi Chahyŏn 李資玄 (1061-1125), at the time Koryŏ's most famous recluse, a member of the country's most powerful family and, until his retirement from the profane world, one of Koryŏ's great nobles, defined the general duty of the ruler as follows:

Your servant has always heard that the pleasure of birds is in the deep forest and that the pleasure of fishes is in the deep waters. It would not do, citing the fishes' pleasure, to move birds to deep waters. Neither would it do, citing the birds' pleasure, to move fishes to the deep forest. A bird must be raised as a bird and be left to enjoy the forest as it pleases. If you observe a fish, you will know it; it must be thrown into the pleasure of its rivers and lakes. To make sure that not one thing loses its proper place and that each person may obtain that which he should obtain, that is truly the profound benevolence of a sagely ruler, the sacred gift of the wise king.<sup>144</sup>

According to Yi Chahyŏn, the ruler of Koryŏ had the duty to preserve the fundamental diversity and differences of human society. This went beyond the customary preservation of social differences, which, it hardly needs emphasizing, was also one of the ruler's cardinal duties, but instead focused on more ideological, even ontological forms of difference. Yi Chahyŏn's own career showed the need for allowing diversity, not only in the differences between people with different aptitudes, inclinations and predispositions (between “birds” and “fish”), but as much in the different inclinations, aptitudes and predispositions in the mind of one person, who through the protection of the ruler “may obtain that which he should obtain”.<sup>145</sup> It is important to realize that the differences Yi alluded

<sup>142</sup> Kim Ch'ŏrung, “Koryŏ kukka chesa-ŭi ch'eje”. As a concrete instance, the case of Yi Chungyak may be mentioned, who was not only famous for his knowledge of the medical arts, of Buddhism and of geomancy, but also of Daoism. He established a Daoist shrine at the Koryŏ court that existed for several centuries. See *TMS* 65: 6a-10a.

<sup>143</sup> See the concerning texts in the *Tong munsŏn*: *TMS* 115, *Chŏngsa* 請詞 (Daoist ritual texts); for the contents of these rituals at the Koryŏ court, see Kim Ch'ŏrung, “Koryŏ kukka chesa-ŭi ch'eje,” pp. 147-150.

<sup>144</sup> *TMS* 39: 4b.

<sup>145</sup> As a son of the powerful and wealthy Kyŏngwŏn Yi lineage, he was entitled to automatic entry into Koryŏ's capital bureaucracy, but instead opted to take a more difficult route towards the same goal by taking and passing the state examinations, which focused heavily on Confucian learning, literature and statecraft. He then entered the

to were of a fundamental nature; “fish” and “bird” resist attempts at levelling out or equation. Different they are and such they stay. Yi’s insistence that the ruler safeguard –fundamental – diversity in its different aspects is strongly echoed in the different qualities – and concomitant duties these entailed– in which the Koryŏ ruler acted.

A practical elaboration of the diversity the Koryŏ ruler embodied can be found in the ways he took preventive or restorative measures with regard to natural and other disasters. The following passage from the *Koryŏsa* is fairly typical and presents a good reflection of the types of recourse the ruler had in promoting good and battling evil:

In the fourth month of 1102 (the seventh year of the reign of Sukchong) insects were eating the pine trees, so Buddhist monks were mobilized to recite the *Flower garland sutra* for five days to stop this disaster. On the *kyeyu* day in the fifth month the king led some of his ministers in the palace in a celebration of a commemorative ritual for Sangje and the Five Emperors. A prayer of repentance was directed at T’aejo, the sun and the moon and was only discontinued in the evening of the third night. On the *pyŏngsul* day of the sixth month, the ruler decreed that the ministers of state should perform rituals in honour of the spirits of the great mountains and streams of the east, west, south, north and the middle of the country, divided in three separate places of worship. He furthermore decreed that 2,000 monks should be gathered and split in four groups that would tour the mountains around the capital and in the provinces, while reciting *The heart of the prajna paramita sutra* to the insects to rescue them and stop disasters. In the end, 500 soldiers were mobilized to catch the insects on Pine Tree Peak.<sup>146</sup>

This entry shows some of the ruler’s means to solve problems; in this case the problem was potentially life-threatening to the dynasty, since the pine trees on Songak mountain were considered sacred, as they symbolized the viability of the Koryŏ dynasty.<sup>147</sup> As discussed before, the ruler relied on Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian state rituals, on worship of indigenous geographical features and when the situation was critical, as is attested in other sources, even shamans.<sup>148</sup> Outside of these state emergencies, the ruler furthermore had rituals performed to pray for his well-being and prosperity and sponsored public works such as the construction of temples and monasteries. Local ceremonies were also held in his honour. Most important in this respect, however, were the celebrations in honour of local spirits who had been enfeoffed

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bureaucracy and rapidly rose in the ranks, on account of his ancestry and his exceptional talents. While still young, Yi decided to leave the bureaucracy and concentrate on a contemplative life, having read widely in Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist texts, renouncing wealth and fame, Yi Chahyŏn lived out the rest of his life as a lay Buddhist recluse (*kŏsa*, a lay Buddhist monk in Koryŏ with strong Daoist overtones) in the mountains and from time to time counselled holders of high office, scholars and even the ruler on two separate occasions. Yi Chahyŏn’s life has been recorded by a contemporary. See *KS* 97: 2b; *TMS* 64: 271-30b.

<sup>146</sup> *KS* 54: 2a-b

<sup>147</sup> The pine trees had been planted there by the grandfather of Wang Kŏn to make a prophecy come true that a future ruler of the whole peninsula would be born in this family. See *KS* 1: *segye*.

<sup>148</sup> This entry is by no means unique in Koryŏ history; for similar occurrences, see *KS* 54: 1b-2a; *KS* 54: 6b-7a; *KS* 54: 7a. For brevity’s sake, I have not gone into the problem of the exact nature of these rituals. For the majority of Koryŏ rituals, the way of celebration, the function of the celebrants and the texts and prayers used before and during the rituals make it relatively clear whether these rituals were predominantly Buddhist, Confucian or Daoist. There were on the other hand also Koryŏ rituals that are impossible to categorize like this. These rituals, such as the nominally Buddhist P’algwanhoe were constituted by elements from different belief systems, historical and mythical lore and practices and practical concerns. See Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 80-82.

by the court as members of the aristocracy.<sup>149</sup> The ubiquity of locally worshipped spirits was such that central officials were at times driven to despair, because it proved to be impossible to have the local populace worship according to the rituals the capital had devised.<sup>150</sup> One solution to this problem was the incorporation of local spirits, both those associated with the Koryŏ landscape and the so-called guardian deities (*sŏnghwang* 城隍) by granting them titles and admitting them into the aristocracy of Koryŏ.<sup>151</sup> In this manner, local spirit worship came to include an important unifying aspect in the worship of the spirit as belonging to the royal aristocratic order, the head of which was the Koryŏ ruler.<sup>152</sup> The way in which this seems to have been established was rather complicated. Local deities were most often thought to be the after-death manifestations of founding ancestors of local aristocratic lineages.<sup>153</sup> In life (and in rare cases also posthumously), such persons, or their descendants, were habitually admitted into the state's bureaucracy or the state's aristocratic system by awarding titles and ranks.<sup>154</sup> In death, however, these persons, whose significance in their own local society had been immense, were often worshipped as guardian deities of their own territory. In sustained attempts to harness these local guardian deities in the state apparatus, they were awarded titles and ranks, effectively conflating the two different identities constituted by the historical person and his posthumous incarnation as guardian deity. This seamless transition from regional aristocracy via regional deity to state guardian deity supported the Koryŏ worship of the ruler. The capital dispatched officials to celebrate ceremonies in honour of the local guardian deities roughly twice a year, in spring and in autumn, established special bureaus to coordinate the enfeoffments and celebrations of local deities, entered the chosen local deities in Koryŏ's ritual handbooks and conflated their rituals with rituals in honour of T'aejo or the present ruler.<sup>155</sup> It was customary for new rulers to celebrate their ascension to the throne by enfeoffing local

<sup>149</sup> Kim Kidŏk, "Koryŏ-ŭi chewangje-wa hwangjeguk ch'eje," pp. 159-172.

<sup>150</sup> *KMC* 36: 27-9.

<sup>151</sup> Han'guk chonggyo yŏn'guhoe 한국종교연구회 (ed.), *Sŏnghwangdang-gwa sŏnghwangje: Sunch'ang Sŏnghwang taeshin sajŏkki yŏn'gu* 성황당과 성황제: 淳昌 城隍大神事跡記 研究 (Seoul: Han'guk chonggyo yŏn'guhoe, 1999). For a complete list of sources regarding the enfeoffment of local spirits and deities, see Kim Kidŏk, "Koryŏ shidae Sŏnghwangshin-e taehan pongjak-kwa Sunch'ang-ŭi 'Sŏnghwang taeshin sajŏkki' hyŏnp'an-ŭi punsŏk 고려시대 城隍神에 대한 封爵과 淳昌의 [城隍大神事跡]懸板의 분석," in *Sŏnghwangdang-gwa sŏnghwangje*, pp. 123-146. The earliest sources date from the last years of the tenth century.

<sup>152</sup> Kim Kidŏk, *Koryŏ pongjakche yŏn'gu* 高麗시대 封爵制 研究 (Seoul: Ch'ŏngnyŏnsa chŏngnyŏnsa, 1998).

<sup>153</sup> Such as the founder of the Yangsan Kim-sshi 梁山金氏 in Yangsan (*STYS* 22: 18b), the founder of the Ŭisŏng Kim-sshi 義城金氏 in Ŭisŏng (*STYS* 25: 17a), the founder of the Miryang Son-sshi 密陽孫氏 in Miryang (*STYS* 26:16b) and the founder of the Sunch'ŏn Sŏl-sshi 順天薛氏 in Sunch'ŏn, see Kim Kaptong, "Koryŏ shidae Sunch'ang-ŭi Sŏnghwang shinang-gwa kŭ ŭimi 高麗時代 淳昌의 城隍信仰과 그 意義," in *Sŏnghwangdang-gwa sŏnghwangje*, pp. 83-122, esp. pp. 104-105. These guardian deities had to endure competition of other prominent lineage founders in the same region. See for example the instance in Sunch'ŏn, where the two sons of the founder of the Sunch'ŏn Pak-sshi 順天朴氏, Pak Yŏnggyu 朴英規, were worshipped as the Mountain Dragon Sea God 山龍海神 (*STYS* 40: 9b). The possibility that the Mountain Dragon Sea God was misspelled and should have read 'Mountain God and Dragon Sea God' 山龍海神 cannot be excluded. Dragons were associated with the sea and a god who was both sea god and mountain god is without precedence in Koryŏ.

<sup>154</sup> Kim Kidŏk, "Koryŏ shidae Sŏnghwangshin"; Kim Kidŏk, *Koryŏ pongjakche yŏn'gu*.

<sup>155</sup> Kim Kaptong, "Koryŏ shidae Sunch'ang-ŭi Sŏnghwang shinang," pp. 116-117; Kim Kidŏk, "Koryŏ shidae Sŏnghwangshin," pp. 134.

deities.<sup>156</sup> The strong capital involvement with local rituals and deities essentially reinforced the worship of the ruler in Koryŏ by purposefully drawing the worship of local deities within the fold of the state and subjecting the worship of local deities to the worship of the ruler.

The Koryŏ ruler ruled the state amidst a history that was very much alive. In understanding the Koryŏ ruler, it is important not to reduce his different functions and duties to either a Buddhist or a Confucian interpretation of his status. The most important reason behind the ability to survive of the Wang lineage as Koryŏ's rulers, even when during the period of military rule the ruler no longer had any real power, was the multitude of roles the ruler played, the many duties he performed. He was the absolute centre of the Koryŏ world in his many manifestations as head of the bureaucracy, leader of the aristocracy, Son of Heaven, foremost Buddhist believer and sponsor of Buddhist rituals, sponsor of Daoist rituals, embodiment of the Koryŏ landscape and its spirits, and perhaps most importantly as the descendant of T'aejo. As seen above, T'aejo's worship was the pre-eminent means by which universal ideologies were localized and internalized in Koryŏ. T'aejo's commemoration channelled the Sinitic idea of the sagely ruler, the Buddhist idea of the ruler as benefactor of the Buddhist teachings, the mysticism of the Daoist rituals and the unique qualities of Koryŏ's mountains and streams into one person and through that person it was spread all over the country, by way of constantly reaffirmed rituals in the capitals and the provinces, well-known songs<sup>157</sup> and proclamations, not too mention the laws that were enacted in the name of the ruler or the many construction projects such as public works, defence works and monasteries also undertaken in the name of the ruler. As such, he was the focus of worship and obedience in Koryŏ society, responsible for the well-being of the people and obliged "to make sure that not one thing loses its proper place and that each person may obtain that which he should obtain", which would be "truly the profound benevolence of a sagely ruler, the sacred gift of the wise king."<sup>158</sup>

According to a song recorded in the *Koryŏsa*, the Koryŏ ruler was the Son of Heaven of Haedong 海東天子.<sup>159</sup> Given the prevalence of Samhan in Koryŏ, 'Samhan ch'ŏnja' 三韓天子 would perhaps have been expected. But the fact that the ruler as Son of Heaven is called Son of Heaven of Haedong is significant. It points to the fact that the concept of Son of Heaven was an originally alien concept in Koryŏ, because Haedong was used in opposition to or in contrast with Sinitic civilization, as established in chapter one. Hence, Haedong was used instead of Samhan. This is again a somewhat paradoxical but unavoidable consequence of the internalization of Confucian statecraft, cosmology and the institutionalization of rituals such as

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<sup>156</sup> The importance of these deities is indicated among other things by their prominent inclusion in the celebration of the P'algwanhoe, their repeated mention in the *Ten injunctions*, the frequent mentions of ceremonies in their honour in the *Koryŏsa* and by anecdotal evidence such as furnished by Kim Pushik who immediately made a sacrifice to the guardian deities of the Western Capital after he had conquered the city or by the Koryŏ army's commander sacrificing to all guardian deities in Koryŏ's cities and towns just before participating in the Mongol invasions of Japan (*STYS* 35: 23a).

<sup>157</sup> See for instance *KS* 71: 34a-b; *KS* 71: 39a-40a. See No Myŏnggho, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha'gwan", pp. 3-40.

<sup>158</sup> *TMS* 39: 4b.

<sup>159</sup> *KS* 71: 39a-40a.



the sacrifice at the Round Altar, the altar of the grain gods and the construction of the royal ancestral shrines. No Myŏngho has noted a similar phenomenon in the co-existence of two forms of royal ancestor worship in Koryŏ.<sup>160</sup> It adds yet another dimension to the status of the ruler in Koryŏ, who localized abstract and universal ideology, anchored it in the mountains and streams of Koryŏ and was at the centre of a Koryŏ-centric view of the world.

The ruler symbolized the historical, present and future unity of the Three Han. The Three Han possessed a delimited historical territory, a historically formed people that were associated with this territory and historical memories that codified a shared past, present and future. Moreover, the community of the Three Han was in all respects subjected to the authority of the ruler, who politically, ideologically, historiographically, ritually and religiously enforced communal ties of worship and obedience. As such, he was the object of trans-local identification and the 'one and only' who could hold the Three Han's plural pasts and presents together by frequent and large-scale reinforcements of his status. His realm was ontologically equal to but in practice differentiated from those of the Chinese and Manchurian Sons of Heaven. In a sense, the position of the ruler was the largest contradiction and most conspicuous inconsistency of early and middle Koryŏ, because it unified in one person a host of incommensurable qualities, duties and identities.

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<sup>160</sup> No Myŏngho, "Koryŏ T'aejo Wang Kŏn tongsang-ŭi yujŏn-gwa munhwajŏk pae'gyŏng, pp. 150-215.

## CHAPTER NINE

### KORYŎ DIPLOMACY

#### CONCEPTS OF KORYŎ DIPLOMATIC HISTORY

In part one, I have attempted to sketch how plural perceptions of the past were an important factor in Koryŏ society and how that society looked to the ruler to keep it together as a community of common descent and with a common destiny. In this part, I shall consider the concrete workings of pluralist ideology in Koryŏ and in particular the question how the historical background explored in the first part was expressed in policy and action by Koryŏ's scholar-officials. This chapter deals with Koryŏ's construction of the Other – and of the Self – as expressed in its diplomatic actions. Koryŏ diplomacy is an area of Koryŏ historiography that has for a change not been understudied. Koryŏ diplomacy is one of the prisms through which the ways Koryŏ perceived the world became clear. Its diverse and often hard to define relations with its neighbours reveal important concepts and ideas that structured these relations. Koryŏ's independent stance towards its often more powerful neighbouring states is conspicuous; now a source of national pride for the Korean nation, contemporary sources often accused Koryŏ of disloyalty, opportunism and capriciousness. To an extent, this reputation was deserved. When the need to do so arose, the Koryŏ state wasted little time before severing old ties and establishing new ones. Diplomatic relations that had existed for decades if not centuries would thus be sacrificed. Although diplomatic ties could be severed instantly, Koryŏ was tied to its neighbours (and vice versa) in more than one way and cultural, economic, historical or religious ties could not be severed with the issuing of an edict or by the decision of the Security Council. These ties often persevered in spite of official disapproval, creating an intricate tangle of international relations, some of which were official, others were private and yet others positively proscribed.

The framework in which diplomatic relations took place was ostensibly the tributary system, but the limitations of analyses that focus on the tributary system as a means of understanding pre-modern international relations in East Asia have been noted.<sup>1</sup> Koryŏ's diplomatic history has been studied with something that approaches fervour; in contrast with other aspects of Koryŏ history, its diplomacy has received ample attention from scholars.<sup>2</sup> I

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance Peter Yun, *Rethinking the tribute system: Korean states and Northeast Asian interstate relations, 600-1600* (PhD. diss. UCLA, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> A critical bibliography of the history of Koryŏ diplomacy would need a volume of its own. The following studies are good introductions to this vast field of historiography. Important themes in post-colonial historiography on Koryŏ have been determined by the historiography of the colonial period. Drawing implicit parallels with colonial

shall refer to their studies, but I shall be mainly occupied with showing the ambiguity of Koryŏ's diplomatic relations. Many studies have more or less been satisfied with gathering relevant entries in the dynastic histories and drawing conclusions from these entries as to

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Korea under the rule of the Japanese Government-General, both colonial and post-colonial Korean studies tended to focus on Koryŏ's resistance against invaders and the formative influence this resistance exercised on the formation of a Korean nation. A representative study that takes this approach is that of Kim Sanggi. See Kim Sanggi, "Tan'gu-gwa-ŭi hangjaeng 단구과의 항쟁", in *Kuksasang-ŭi chemunje* 국사상의 제문제 (Seoul: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1959), volume 2, pp. 101-175. The decolonization process in the field of historiography has changed many of the previously established interpretations, but the influence of this period and the points of view it created are still not to be discounted. As for recent scholarship, the studies by Pak Chonggi may serve as good review articles of the current state of scholarship in the field: Pak Chonggi 朴宗基, "Koryŏ chunggi taeye chŏngch'aeg-ŭi pyŏnhwa-e taehayŏ: Sŏnjong-dae-rŭl chungshim-ŭro 고려 中期 對外政策의 變化에 대하여-宣宗代를 중심으로," *Han'gukbak nonch'ong* 韓國學論叢 16 (1993): pp. 39-70; Pak Chonggi, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi taeye kwan'gye 고려시대의 대외관계," in *Han'guksa 5: chungse saboe-ŭi sŏngnip* 한국사 5: 중세사회의 성립 (Seoul: Han'gilsa 한길사, 1994), edited by *Han'guksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe* 한국사편집위원회, volume two, pp. 221-254; Pak Chonggi, "11segi Koryŏ-ŭi taeye kwan'gye-wa chŏngguk unyŏngnon-ŭi ch'ui 11세기 고려의 대외관계와 정국운영론의 추이," *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnsil* 30 (1998): pp. 148-172. An Pyŏngu's monograph on Koryŏ-Song relations gives a much-needed consideration on the ideological background of the debates in the Song and Koryŏ on foreign relations; An Pyŏngu 안병우, "Koryŏ-wa Song-ŭi sangho inshik-kwa kyosŏp: 11segi huban-12segi chŏnban 고려와 송의 상호 인식과 교섭: 11세기 후반-12세기 전반," *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnsil* 43 (2002): pp. 78-110. Related to this, also see Chŏng Sua 鄭修芽, "Koryŏ chunggi taeye Song oeyo-ŭi chŏn'gae-wa kŭ ŭiŭi 고려 중기 대송 외교의 전개와 그 의의," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 61 (1995): pp. 149-173. Okamura's studies, short as they are, have been groundbreaking with regard to the way Koryŏ's self-perception was expressed in the way it treated foreign envoys: Okamura Shŭji 奥村周司, "Korai ni okeru Hachikan'e teki chitsujō to kokusai kankyō 高麗における八關會の秩序と國際環境" in *Chōsen shi kenkyūkai ronbunshū* 朝鮮史研究會論文集 16 (1979): pp. 71-100; Okamura Shŭji, "Kōrai no gaikō shisei to kokka'ishiki 高麗の外交姿勢と國家意識," in *Rekishi-gaku kenkyū* 歴史學研究 (Tokyo: Chūseishibu kai 中世史部會, 1982), special edition, pp. 67-77; Okamura Shŭji, "Shisetsu geisetsurei yori mita Kōrai no gaikō jisei: jūichi, jūni seki ni okeru tai-Chū kankei no ichimen 使節迎接禮より見た高麗の外交姿勢: 十一, 二世紀における對中關係の一面," *Shikan* 110 (1987): pp. 27-42. The several articles Yi Chŏngshin's book contains are well-researched and informed pieces of scholarship on how domestic circumstances influenced Koryŏ's foreign policy. Although I do not agree with the emphasis Yi puts on Koryŏ's expansion to the north, Yi's studies are valuable contributions to the conceptualizing of Koryŏ's foreign relations: *Koryŏshidae-ŭi chŏngch'i pyŏndong-gwa taeye chŏngch'aek* 고려시대의 정치변동과 대외정책 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa 景仁文化社, 2003). The following studies, in particular those by Kim Chaeman, put much emphasis on the fundamental rift between Koryŏ and the Liao: Sŏ Sŏngho 서성호, "Koryŏ T'aejo-dae taekōran chŏngch'aeg-ŭi ch'ui-wa sŏngkyŏk 고려 태조대 대거란정책의 추의와 성격," *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnsil* 34 (1999): pp. 16-49; Kim Chaeman 金在滿, "Kōran, Koryŏ kukkyo chōnsa 契丹, 高麗國交前史," in *Inmun sabak* 人文科學 15 (1986): pp. 99-136; Kim Chaeman, *Kōran, Koryŏ kwan'gyesa yŏn'gu* 契丹, 高麗關係史研究 (Seoul: Kukhak charyowŏn 國學資料院, 1998). Peter Yun has recently discussed Koryŏ foreign relations in a framework that allowed the existence of several regional centres, but his view on the nature of Koryŏ foreign relations is purely political and uses a dichotomizing interpretative strategy with regard to Koryŏ's relations with the Manchurian states. See Peter Yun, *Rethinking the tribute system*. The pioneering studies of Michael Rogers should also be mentioned here. Roger's monographs on Koryŏ's foreign relations have contributed much to the understanding of Koryŏ history, but their emphasis on the dichotomies between Confucian and nativist and the conflation of pro-Chinese politics with Confucianism and independence with nativism means that some care must be taken when referring to these studies. See Michael C. Rogers, "Sukchong of Koryŏ: His accession and his relations with Liao," *Toung Pao* 47.1-2 (1959): pp. 30-62; Rogers, "Regularization of Koryŏ-Chin relations, 1116-1131," *Central Asiatic Journal* 6.1 (1961): pp. 51-84; Rogers, "Some kings of Koryŏ as registered in Chinese works," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 81.4 (1961): pp. 415-422; Rogers, "The Chinese world order in its transmural extension: The case of Chin and Koryŏ," *Korean Studies Forum* 4 (1978): pp. 1-22; Rogers, "P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok: The Foundation Legend of the Koryŏ state", in *Journal of Korean Studies* 4 (1982-1983): pp. 3-72; Rogers, "National consciousness in medieval Korea: The impact of Liao and Chin on Koryŏ," in *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its neighbors, 10th to 14th centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), edited by Morris Rossabi, pp. 151-172; Rogers, "Notes on Koryŏ's relations with 'Sung' and 'Liao'," *Chindan hakpo* 71-72 (1991): pp. 310-335.

Koryŏ diplomacy. This approach, fundamentally quantitative in character, ignores the quality of diplomatic relations during this period and does not pay enough attention to unauthorized, unofficial or private contacts across the borders. Source materials that put Koryŏ diplomacy in quite another light have fortunately survived. These materials consist of different types, but most are comments, literary or historical, on contemporary relations with foreign states. Through an examination of these sources, supplemented by a critical review of previous studies, it will be possible to approach the issue of Koryŏ foreign relations from a different angle and shed new light on their nature. This chapter analyzes Koryŏ diplomacy and lays special emphasis on its pluralist nature as well as the coping mechanisms Koryŏ developed to deal with its powerful neighbours. It also refutes the long held belief that Koryŏ was fundamentally sympathetic towards Han Chinese dynasties and hostile to the northern Manchurian dynasties.

Perhaps remarkably for a study of foreign relations on the Korean peninsula, I shall not look at the relationship with Japan. The reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, relations with Japan in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries were limited. On the state level no relations existed and official embassies were limited to Japanese Buddhist monks travelling to the Koryŏ court. Intensive relations with Japan came into being after Koryŏ's absorption into the Mongol Yuan empire, culminating in the two failed invasions of the late thirteenth century, but late Koryŏ falls outside the scope of this study. Informal relations during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries were much more extensive than official contacts during the same period and in the southern provinces of the Korean peninsula trade with Japanese merchants was frequent, but research into this is hampered by a lack of sources.<sup>3</sup> Secondly and more importantly, Koryŏ did not show any desire to import Japanese cultural achievements or any inclination to look to the east in order to build its own state and society. The impact of Japan on Koryŏ in the period before the Mongol invasions was minimal and particularly so with regard to processes of identity and worldview formation. For these reasons, then, Koryŏ's relations with Japan will not be considered in this chapter.

Finally, some remarks remain about the ideological interpretation of Koryŏ foreign relations. One of the aims of this study is to criticize the overly ideological interpretations of Koryŏ foreign relations that have resulted in stark dichotomies of opposing ideologies.<sup>4</sup> Although I take issue with this kind of interpretation, I certainly do not propose a non-ideological approach to Koryŏ foreign relations if that means – as it often does – a reduction of decision-making processes to pragmatism and opportunism.<sup>5</sup> Such an approach shifts the

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<sup>3</sup> A recent publication has made accessible Japanese sources which mention Koryŏ or contact with Koryŏ. This meticulously researched and annotated volume confirms the virtual absence of official contacts between Koryŏ and Japan prior to the Yuan absorption of Koryŏ. See Chang Tongik 張東翼, *Ilbon ko-jungse Koryŏ charyo yŏn'gu* 日本古中世 高麗資料研究 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu 서울대학교출판부, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Rogers, "Sukchong of Koryŏ: His accession and his relations with Liao"; Rogers, "Regularization of Koryŏ-Chin relations, 1116-1131"; Rogers, "The Chinese world order in its transmural extension"; Rogers, "National consciousness in medieval Korea"; Rogers, "Notes on Koryŏ's relations with 'Sung' and 'Liao'".

<sup>5</sup> See for example Peter Yun, *Rethinking the tribute system*, pp. 6-9, 41-42, 128-9. Discussing Koryŏ relations with the Liao, Jin and Song, Yun concludes that "[c]ultural and economic factors affected Koryŏ foreign policy only *as long as* they did not compromise the overriding security objective." (italics in original). This statement is reductionist in the sense that it characterizes Koryŏ foreign policy exclusively as security-driven. It goes without saying that its security

emphasis to focus exclusively on “down-to-earth” motivations and “pragmatic” Realpolitik. It fundamentally relies on the doubtful assertion that a useful distinction can be made between those facts that “matter” – that are pragmatic and justified by political circumstances—and those that do not “matter” – whose direct relationship with politically relevant questions is less visible.<sup>6</sup> This distinction is based upon the perceived relationship between fact and political outcome that privileges politically connected facts. It hardly needs to be said that this is in itself an ideological statement that is accepted on faith and through habituation, rather than reasoning. Ideological factors are thus regarded in an instrumentalist manner; ideologies only justify, they do not instigate or define. Recent research has convincingly shown otherwise.<sup>7</sup> It has become clear that ideologies function as the means by which man meets his world. Neutral in origin, the world is digested, as it were, through ideology that makes it comprehensible and manageable. Every ideology obviously has its parameters outside of which it ceases to function and needs to be replaced, but human creativity and ingenuity have always guaranteed that ideology is stretched to the limit when circumstances demand so. Ideology functions in a dynamical discourse in which action and reaction are hard if not impossible to separate. Boundaries overlap and are blurred. Ideologies both prohibit and enable, depending on the circumstances; the boundaries are never absolute. Nonetheless, man’s perception of the world is shaped by his ideologies and as such a non-ideological interpretation of politics is itself an expression of a specific kind of ideology that has objectivity as its core value shaping its Weltanschauung.

Another relevant objection against the separation of ideology and politics is the fact that it is a-historical. As is well known, no society lives up to its own ideals. Rulers that flouted the contemporary norms articulated by contemporary ideology knew that they had done so. Breaking norms or disregarding culturally conditioned ideals does not mean that these do not exist, or that they do not exert influence.<sup>8</sup> Detaching the ideological background from historical actions and utterances is a form of retrospective projection of contemporary concepts on past situations. Daily reality is for a large part formed by the mainly culturally determined ideas, concepts, preconceptions, prejudices, norms, dreams and fears that man carries around

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was of great concern for Koryō, but so were such factors as economical development and cultural prestige. As will be shown in this chapter, cultural factors must be considered in order to understand Koryō foreign policy.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Oakeshott has analyzed and debunked this kind of reasoning that tries to distinguish between – in his terms – “objective” and “subjective” historical facts and that accords “objective” historical facts more reality. In the same vein, Paul Feyerabend has rightly remarked that the dreams of kings – ephemeral, impossible to pin down and non-political though they might be – “might lead to war and multiple murder”. See Oakeshott, *On history and other essays*, pp. 1-49; Feyerabend, *The conquest of abundance*, p. 178.

<sup>7</sup> See for example the aforementioned study of Paul Feyerabend. Similar conclusions have also been reached by historians of nationalism. Instrumentalist interpretations of the role of nationalist ideologies have not been able to explain, for example, the attachment of people to a certain nation, while the approaches of such scholars as Anthony Smith and Benedict Anderson have been able to do so, by treating the role of ideology as an important element of human experiences. For an insightful account of theories dealing with this subject, see Anthony D. Smith, *The nation in history: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000; Feyerabend, *The conquest of abundance*, pp. 3-18.

<sup>8</sup> For an eloquent and theoretically well-grounded exposition against disregarding medieval normative and ideological concepts in interpreting medieval Western society, see Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and communities in Western Europe 900-1300* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, second edition), pp. lxii-lxvi.

with him. Denying these in favour of political realities means depriving historical realities from their contemporary ideological contents with the arbitrary assertion that only practical motivations “matter”. An exclusive emphasis on the political power relations between states also inescapably favours the more powerful states: it is from their perspective that history is written and historical events are analyzed, even when this is unintentional.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, conceptually, contemporary notions like “non-ideology” or “political pragmatism” are solidly moored to their own ideological tenets. Removing historically determined ideological conditions and replacing them with these concepts creates a chimera. Admittedly, it cleans up the picture, but it does so at the cost of important constituent elements. In this chapter, therefore, ideology is seen as an important and flexible element of the historical landscape, not easily to be dismissed as mere legitimation, superstition or an assortment of historically irrelevant ideas. It should be noted, however, that an ideology does not necessarily correspond to such neatly defined notions as ‘Confucianism’, ‘Buddhism’ or ‘Daoism’, but may well be a much less well articulated set of related ideas and notions that guide behaviour and facilitate understanding one’s environment.

As any state that depended for its prolonged survival on astute diplomatic actions, Koryŏ’s policy makers were well aware of the intricacies of international relations. One extant treatment of the different kinds of edicts and diplomatic writings is particularly revealing as to the degree to which Koryŏ statesmen were accustomed to tread the fine lines between acceptable assertiveness and insolence. The format of diplomatic correspondence determined its contents to a large extent; to address an emperor properly, one should use the proper format, if not, the contents would not even matter anymore. Conversely, in communicating with vassals or smaller states, the way these were addressed was of the utmost importance. Slight differences in format, titles and vocabulary conveyed much about the sender’s attitude towards the addressee. The treatment of different formats is contained in the *Pobanjiip*.<sup>10</sup> In it, the implications and connotations of the different available formats are explained, alongside examples from Chinese and Koryŏ sources. It also mentions a guide, composed during the reign of Yejong, in which the finesses of domestic and international correspondence were explained. The importance of the proper format of diplomatic correspondence, ritual texts, edicts and so forth is consistently emphasized by the obvious care taken in establishing the appropriate examples and rules for their composition.<sup>11</sup> Although an aesthetic element was

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<sup>9</sup> Good examples are: Rogers, “The Chinese world order in its transmural extension” and Rogers, “National consciousness in medieval Korea”. In these studies of Koryŏ foreign relations, Rogers describes Koryŏ as reacting to developments set in action in China or Manchuria. Even Koryŏ’s domestic circumstances are derived from the international situation. Essentially, Koryŏ diplomacy is portrayed as the history of the reactions to Chinese or non-Chinese dynastic actions. The 1170 military coup for instance is regarded as “a delayed reaction to the ‘Catastrophe of *Ching-k’ang*’ of 1126”. With regard to Koryŏ’s dynastic myths, he states that “[t]he disintegration of Chinese universalism set in motion a quest for origins – the elaboration of state-founding legends – among the peoples on the periphery”. See Rogers, “The Chinese world order in its transmural extension”, pp. 4, 6, 9-11; Rogers, “National consciousness in medieval Korea”, p. 159.

<sup>10</sup> *POHJ* 3: 139-142

<sup>11</sup> The importance of composing proper texts is also emphasized in another part of the *Pobanjiip*: “Even worse, at the Hallim Academy the words used in the texts devoted to the Buddha and the spirits are unnecessarily complex and ever increasing. These are not merely unnecessarily complex sentences, but they are also deceiving Buddha and misleading man by discussing about the Buddha, the spirits and spiritual retribution or the fortunes of the state or

undoubtedly present in the composition of these texts, their efficacy was of overriding importance. In this sense, it is significant to note that of these texts “there were many in one year in Koryŏ”.<sup>12</sup> Another noteworthy detail is that the diplomatic correspondence from other states was not understood monolithically; that is, there existed a very strong differentiation between diplomatic writings from the Song 宋, Liao 遼 and Jin 金 and between each of these and Koryŏ documents. It seems, in other words, that Koryŏ’s position was well understood as different from its neighbouring states and that its official documents ought to reflect this.

A similar idea was articulated by Kim Puil 金富侁 in a text in which he congratulated the Liao emperor because he “developed and enlarged [his] territory and made both Chinese and barbarians follow [him] peacefully”.<sup>13</sup> This text not only contradicts the often encountered modern historical opinion that Koryŏ would rather recognize a Han Chinese dynasty than a so-called barbarian one, it also defies the usual dichotomy which divided the world according to the categories of Chinese/civilized and barbarian/uncivilized. The Liao are apparently a third category, neither Chinese, nor barbarian. This in itself opens the door for the positioning of Koryŏ as yet another category, close to but fundamentally outside of the categories of China, Liao and barbarians. The deflation of the Chinese-barbarian dichotomy (which despite its long use still enjoys popularity as an interpretive concept in diplomatic history) is de facto complete when it is realized that Koryŏ considered itself to have the credentials to build a state on the body of cultural resources which it shared with both the Song and the Liao. Kim Yŏn 金緣, one of the most influential scholars of his time, visited the Song in IIII (a date which is ironically given in Liao period names) and told the Koryŏ ruler upon his return that “the Song emperor treated our country warmly and received us with more than the customary courtesy. But everything is exceedingly luxurious and strange. One might call [this state of affairs] lamentable.”<sup>14</sup> By IIII Koryŏ considered itself to be culturally self-sufficient and could afford to be picky when it came to accepting Sinitic cultural resources.<sup>15</sup>

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barbarian invasions, writing them down and exaggerating about them. This they have made their talent. How can the fact that the compositions of the ancients were necessarily concise, mean that their talents were not sufficient for exaggeration and embellishment? This was because they rejected that which was wrong and meaningless, kept that which was true and tried to express this according to the facts. People who compose texts should keep this in mind.” *POHJ* 3: 145. Wrongly composed texts were both the result of improper thought and conduct and also gave rise to it. Another example is furnished by an incident that took place when a Koryŏ envoy visited the Liao court in 1055. The envoy in question was aghast to find out that one of the characters in his name, with which he had signed his letter for the Liao emperor, was a taboo character, because it also appeared in the Liao emperor’s personal name. He then changed his name on the document by erasing the taboo character in his name. He effectively changed his name according to the contemporary perception. Koryŏ officials were less than pleased with his reckless damaging of the integrity of the diplomatic document and impeached him, stressing that he should have told the Liao court that he did not have the authority to change the document himself. By failing to do so, he had contaminated the sacred nature of the state and the mission he had been sent on. Munjong, however, was lenient. Although he recognized the gravity of the envoy’s error, he forgave him. See *KS* 35b-36a. Yet another example is from 1125 when the newly established Jin dynasty refused to receive Koryŏ’s diplomatic mission and the correspondence it carried, because it did not use the imperial *p’yo* format and the term *shinba* or ‘servant’ to refer to Koryŏ. The very possibility of diplomatic contacts jeopardized by the improper use of textual formats and terminology. See *KS* 15: 10a.

<sup>12</sup> *POHJ* 3: 140

<sup>13</sup> *TMS* 39: 14b-15a.

<sup>14</sup> *POHJ* 1: 74. Incidentally, Kim Yŏn was very much admired by Liao scholars who had visited Koryŏ. See *KS* 96: 3a-b.

<sup>15</sup> Breuker, “The emperor’s clothes”.

## RELATIONS WITH THE LIAO

Koryŏ's ambivalence toward the Song, the Liao and later the Jin is well expressed in the diplomatic actions of some of its most prominent statesmen and most authoritative scholars, such as Sŏ Hŭi 徐熙 (942-988), Pak Illyang 朴寅亮 (?-1096), Yun Kwan 尹瓘 (?-1111), Kim Yŏn 金緣 (Kim Injon 金仁存, ?-1127), Kim Puil 金富侁 (1071-1132) and Kim Pushik 金富軾 (1075-1151). These scholars and statesmen are in several important respects representative of the majority of their contemporary colleagues. They did not necessarily share the same opinions or belong to the same factions, but their writings and diplomatic actions show some fundamental agreements about Koryŏ's position in the world.<sup>16</sup> The characteristic that united these in other aspects quite different statesmen was their realistic grasp of Koryŏ's position in the international world and their policies, which reflected their assumption of the centrality of Koryŏ in the international world. Their ideas, decisions and activities shaped Koryŏ diplomacy for over two centuries, although most scholarly attention has been directed at the most glorious and conspicuous events in the history of Koryŏ foreign relations. The diplomatic history of Koryŏ until 1170 has traditionally been dominated by the attention lavished on the Koryŏ heroes who managed to defeat the barbarians at the gates. Sŏ Hŭi performed a diplomatic miracle in 993 by convincing the Liao army not only to retreat but also to return occupied territory to Koryŏ. The account in the *Koryŏsa* of Sŏ's exploits is literally the stuff that legends are made from and due to a complete lack of corroborating Liao sources highly suspect.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, it would go too far to conclude that it did not take place, especially since the Liao retreat did take place. It is the manner in which an agreement between Koryŏ and the Liao was reached that should be doubted, but not the agreement itself. The actual circumstances of Sŏ's negotiations may be impossible to get at due to the one-sidedness of the extant sources, but Koryŏ's celebration of what it considered to be a significant victory leaves little room for doubt how much this feat was celebrated. After a glorious career with many honours and accolades Sŏ also received many posthumous tributes and was publicly honoured as late as the reign of Ch'ungsŏn-wang 忠宣王 (r. 1298 and 1308-1313).<sup>18</sup> If possible, Kang Kamch'an's 姜邯贊 (948-1031) routing of the Liao army in 1018 was celebrated even more. Kang was usually honoured together with Sŏ and other, minor heroes who had distinguished themselves in the battles against the Khitan.

Sŏ and others played important roles in Koryŏ history, but by exclusively focusing on their actions and the exploits of Koryŏ's heroes, the nature of Koryŏ's foreign relations runs the

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<sup>16</sup> See chapter ten for an in-depth analysis of these literati; also see Breuker, "The emperor's clothes".

<sup>17</sup> This has led Michael Rogers to conclude that Sŏ Hŭi's successful negotiations with the Liao never took place, but were in reality a Koryŏ embellishment of a painful truth, the invasion of their country by the Liao. See Rogers, "National consciousness in medieval Korea", pp. 154-159.

<sup>18</sup> *KS* 84: 23b.



risk of being reduced to one-dimensional ties, either good or bad, friendly or hostile.<sup>19</sup> This is exactly what happened to the historiography of the Koryŏ-Liao relationship. The straightforward enmity that clearly speaks from the continued celebration of Sŏ and Kang was only one aspect of Koryŏ-Liao relations. Except for exceptionally threatening situations, such as imminent invasion or large-scale warfare, trade and commerce across the Koryŏ-Liao border refused to be interrupted.<sup>20</sup> The steady stream of Khitan émigrés entering Koryŏ also did not dry up.<sup>21</sup> Having said that, the number of incidents between Liao and Koryŏ troops in the frontier area was and remained significant. The frontier in the north was where most of the Koryŏ-Liao battles, skirmishes and other clashes took place, but it was at the same time a region characterized by other forms of interaction. It was at once the most contested Koryŏ region and culturally and economically one of its most diverse. In particular after the Liao conquered a Chinese region where traditionally metal was worked, trade with Koryŏ really took off.<sup>22</sup> Other import products included all kinds of riding utensils and several kinds of silk.<sup>23</sup> Most of the trade and barter was conducted through the frontier market at the border in Poju 保州 (Üiju 義州), which had been established between 1008 and 1010.<sup>24</sup>

Yet another aspect of Koryŏ-Liao relations was formed by the pervasiveness of Khitan customs and products in Koryŏ together with the large presence of naturalized Khitan in Koryŏ. All through the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries, small groups of Khitan came to surrender to Koryŏ in order to live within its borders.<sup>25</sup> Among these émigrés, there were many skilled craftsmen and artisans, which helps explaining why Koryŏ architecture shows many Liao influences.<sup>26</sup> Buddhist architecture in particular shows significant influences from the Liao, although it should be mentioned that Liao influence was not exclusive. Koryŏ Buddhist architecture also betrayed the influence of Song examples.

By far the most important part of Koryŏ life to be affected by the Liao (apart from the militarization of the frontier area) was Buddhism and through Buddhism the entire society was influenced. It has been noted that the Liao used Koryŏ's hunger for Liao Buddhist knowledge,

<sup>19</sup> One rather extreme example of the dichotomy between good (China) and bad (Khitan) is found the statement that the only blemish on T'aejo's record as an ideal ruler was the fact that T'aejo had allowed Khitan customs to enter Koryŏ, despite his resolute stance on diplomatic relations. See Hŏ Chunggwŏn 許重權, "Koryŏ ch'ogi yugyojŏk chŏngch'i sasang-üi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng-e kwanhan il koch'al 高麗初期 儒教의 政治의 形成過程에 관한 一考察," *Sabakchi* 사학지 26 (1993): pp. 127-165.

<sup>20</sup> An Kwisuk 안귀숙, "Koryŏ shidae kümsok kongye-üi tae-Jung kyosŏp 高麗時代 金石工藝의 對中 交涉," in *Koryŏ misur-üi taecŏe kyosŏp* 高麗 美術의 對外 交涉 (Seoul: Yegyŏng 예경, 2004), ed. Han'guk misulsa hakhoe 한국미술사 하회, pp. 153-192, esp. pp. 155.

<sup>21</sup> Pak Okkŏl's monograph on émigrés to Koryŏ has shown how steady the influx of Khitan émigrés into Koryŏ was during this period. See Pak Okkŏl 朴玉杰, *Koryŏ shidae-üi kwibwain yŏn'gu* 高麗時代의 歸化人 研究 (Seoul: Kughak charyowŏn 國學資料院, 1996).

<sup>22</sup> An Kwisuk, "Koryŏ shidae kümsok kongye", pp. 155.

<sup>23</sup> An Kwisuk, "Koryŏ shidae kümsok kongye", pp. 157.

<sup>24</sup> An Kwisuk, "Koryŏ shidae kümsok kongye", pp. 156-158.

<sup>25</sup> Song envoy Xu Jing 徐兢 remarked in his *Illustrated account of Koryŏ* or *Gaoli Tuijing* 高麗圖經 that there were tens of thousands of Khitan within Koryŏ's border, a large number of which was employed in the metal working trade. See *Gaoli Tuijing*, chapter 19. Also see Pak Okkŏl, *Koryŏ shidae-üi kwibwain yŏn'gu*.

<sup>26</sup> Kim Tonguk 김동욱, "Koryŏ shidae mokcho kŏnch'ug-üi taecŏe kyosŏp 고려시대 木造建築의 대외교섭," in *Koryŏ misur-üi taecŏe kyosŏp*, pp. 249-286, esp. pp. 270-271.

artefacts, books and collections to influence Koryŏ foreign policy. The gift of the complete Liao Tripitaka, a scholarly achievement of virtually unsurpassed excellence, was for instance made when Munjong was making advances to the Song court in the second half of the eleventh century.<sup>27</sup> The gift of the Liao Tripitaka offers an interesting contrast with the carving of the first Koryŏ Tripitaka in the early years of the eleventh century. The first Koryŏ Tripitaka was partially meant to ward off the Khitan invasions of the early eleventh century.<sup>28</sup> Most analyses of the carving of the Tripitaka in both Liao and Koryŏ emphasize the magico-religious aspects of the compilation of a Tripitaka, invoking the protection of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas against foreign invaders or in order to prolong the life of the dynasty, but an undertaking of this magnitude must also be seen as a project designed to propagate civilizational virtues. The right to commission a Tripitaka was exclusively held by the Son of Heaven, which meant that when the Liao and Koryŏ commissioned their own versions of the Tripitaka, they were knowingly – albeit indirectly – impinging on the territory of the Chinese Son of Heaven.<sup>29</sup> The Liao ability to offer Koryŏ a complete carving of their version of the Tripitaka was consciously made in reference to the 991 gift to Koryŏ of the Song Tripitaka. The Liao gift in effect demonstrated the civilizational virtues of the Liao, by directly appropriating a privilege traditionally associated with the Chinese Son of Heaven.

Exchange of Buddhist knowledge between the Liao and Koryŏ gained momentum during the eleventh century, but this would not have been possible without the overtures played out in the tenth century. These overtures consisted of concrete measures; Koryŏ sent high-ranking envoys, monks as well as entertainers and musicians, and perhaps most significantly young children to learn the language.<sup>30</sup> This last measure in particular showed Koryŏ's realistic grasp of the situation; the Liao would be at its northern border for a long time to come.

Koryŏ-Liao relations, then, were much more fragmented and ambiguous than is usually assumed in modern historiography. This alerts us to two important facts: the first is that Koryŏ-Liao relations were to a significant extent decentred. Decisions made in the respective capitals and the rhetoric that was launched to explain those decisions are only one aspect of the Koryŏ-Liao relationship; other aspects include the incessant trade, exchange of knowledge and achievements on informal levels, and the circumstances in the frontier region, which was a region that in a sense stood apart from both the Liao and Koryŏ.<sup>31</sup> The other fact to be

<sup>27</sup> Kim Yŏngmi 김영미, "11segi huban-12segi ch'o Koryŏ-Yo oegyo kwan'gye-wa pulgyŏng kyoryu 11세기 후반-12세기 초 고려-요 외교관계와 불경교류," *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnsil* 43 (2002): pp. 47-77.

<sup>28</sup> Lewis R. Lancaster, "The Buddhist canon in the Koryŏ period," in *Buddhism in Koryŏ: A royal religion* (Berkeley: Centre for Korean Studies and Institute of East Asian Studies University of California at Berkeley, 1996), edited by Lewis R. Lancaster and Chai-shin Yu, pp. 173-193.

<sup>29</sup> Lancaster, "The Buddhist canon", pp. 175-176.

<sup>30</sup> *Liaoshi* [hereafter *LS*] 13: 6b-7a; *KS* 3: 27a-28b.

<sup>31</sup> Breuker, "Bordering on insolence: Double entendres between Koryŏ and the Liao," paper given at the workshop "Missing links: The first century of the Liao dynasty (907-1125) and its neighbours" at the University of Newcastle, UK, October 21, 2005. The following description, which is quite neutral in tone, of the contested frontier territory of Üju (or Poju) offers a peek at the realities of frontier life: "Üju was originally Koguryŏ's Yongman-hyŏn 龍灣縣 and is also known as Hwaiü 和義. It was first called Poju 保州 when the Khitan build fortifications at the eastern bank of the Amnok river. During the reign of Munjong, the Khitan furthermore build a gate and called it P'aju 抱州

observed is the importance of historical memories in the establishment and maintenance of relations with neighbouring states. The main reason why modern historiography tends to view Koryŏ's foreign relations as a dichotomy also has direct bearing on the issue of historical memories in Koryŏ. The modern tendency to look away from the substantial amount of exchange, mutual admiration and informal yet extensive contacts that characterized the Koryŏ-Liao relationship emerged from the adoption of the *hwa-i* 華夷 paradigm, the dichotomy between Chinese civilization and barbarian chaos, a paradigm that is ancient, but nonetheless was particularly popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This paradigm is consistently found in analyses of Koryŏ's diplomatic relations and despite the limited validity it possesses has become the most important explanans of Koryŏ's Weltanschauung (while it is rather an explanandum). However, given the fundamentally fragmented nature of the Koryŏ-Liao relationship, the strong differentiation made in Koryŏ between the Song, Liao and Jin and the availability of interpretative strategies that did not rely on this dichotomy but on the contrary seem to have allowed at least three and perhaps even four ontological/civilizational categories, it seems necessary to interpret Koryŏ diplomacy in a radically different light. The Koryŏ-Liao relationship may serve as an excellent example of the obfuscations the application of the *hwa-i* dichotomy gives rise to.

The fundamental problem of the *hwa-i* dichotomy is that it does not allow of, firstly, fundamental Koryŏ hesitation with regard to the suitability and adoption of Sinitic cultural achievements and, secondly, of an earnest Koryŏ admiration for the achievements of those states that according to this dichotomy are barbarian. As we have seen before, Koryŏ's relationship with the Han Chinese dynasties and the Sinitic heritage these safeguarded was also ambiguous in the sense that Koryŏ was partial in selecting what to accept from China and what to reject. The ambiguity was enhanced by Koryŏ's subversion of originally Sinitic ideas and achievements.<sup>32</sup> As the statement by Kim Yŏn, quoted above, clearly shows, Koryŏ had a definite idea about what China was supposed to be and when the particular Chinese dynasty in power had started to decline. From the middle of the eleventh century onwards, there is distinct reluctance noticeable towards the acceptance of Sinitic cultural resources.<sup>33</sup> Koryŏ literati voiced the idea that the Song dynasty had started to decline into decadence and luxury, an idea to which the military downfall of the Song greatly contributed.

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or P'aju 把州. When in the fifteenth year of the reign of Yejong Liao general Chang Xiao-sun 常孝孫 and marshal Yelu Ning 耶律寧 fled the attacking Jin armies by way of the sea and arrived there, they sent a letter to Yŏngdŏk-sŏng 寧德城, promising to return Naewŏnsŏng 來遠城 and Poju 抱州 [to Koryŏ]. When our army advanced on these fortresses, they obtained weapons, armour and supplies. The king rejoiced at this and installed a defence commissioner 關防 there. He moved people from the south there, making the Amnok river once more the border of the state. Border defences were also built. In the fourth year of Injong's reign, the Jin returned the county to Koryŏ. It was demoted in status and called Hamshin 咸新 during the eighth year of Kojong, due to a rebellion there, but shortly thereafter its old name was restored and in the fifteenth year of King Kongmin 恭愍王 it was elevated to the status of shepherdship (*mok* 牧). In the 18<sup>th</sup> year, a bureau for the administration of 10,000 families was established and it was once again named Yongman 龍灣. In this district, the Amnok river (also known as Majasu 馬訾水 or Ch'ŏngha 清河) flows." *KS* 58: 33b-34b.

<sup>32</sup> Breuker, "Listening to the beat of different drums: Ideology, ritual and music in Koryŏ". *Review of Korean Studies* 7.4 (2004): pp. 147-174.

<sup>33</sup> Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm".

Simultaneously, the Koryŏ-Liao relationship had been exerting significant influence on Koryŏ. The presence of the Liao military threat and the incessant armed clashes in the northern frontier region had given rise to the emergence of a distinct concept of the Koryŏ historic home territory, which was to be defended at the northern frontier.<sup>34</sup> Koryŏ's capital of Kaesŏng had been laid waste during the 1010-1011 Liao invasion and Koryŏ had been forced to submit to the Liao suzerain. At the same time, the formative influence exercised by the Liao on Koryŏ was also enormous. The influx of Buddhist knowledge, the gift of the Liao Tripitaka, literary influences, import of art objects, the impact of Liao architecture and artistic principles, and substantial trade fundamentally changed Koryŏ. This northern influence is too often discounted or portrayed as destructive in accounts of Koryŏ, although the 150 years of close association with the Liao inevitably left their mark on Koryŏ society.

The willingness on the part of Koryŏ to look towards the north for knowledge, achievements and principles in fields it held sacred (Buddhism, religious architecture, literature and art) and to venture beyond a relationship driven by security concerns, is perhaps somewhat remarkable. Interestingly, Sŏ Hŭi's famous negotiations with the Liao army about to invade Koryŏ may offer a clue. Sŏ's exploits have been celebrated for over a thousand years and have been seen as defining Koryŏ's attitude toward the Liao. The account of the negotiations in the *Koryŏsa* has unanimously been interpreted as a clear example of Koryŏ's historical succession to Koguryŏ.<sup>35</sup> This is how the *Koryŏsa* relates part of their dialogue:

Xunning said to Hŭi, "Your country rose in Shilla territory. Koguryŏ is in our possession. But you have encroached on it. Your country is connected to us by land, and yet you cross the sea to serve China. Because of this, our great country came to attack you. If you relinquish land to us and establish a tributary relationship, everything will be alright." Hŭi replied, "That is not so. Our country is in fact former Koguryŏ, and that is why it is named Koryŏ and has a capital at P'yŏngyang. If you want to discuss territorial boundaries, the Eastern Capital of your country is within our borders. How can you call our move an encroachment? Moreover, the land on both sides of the Yalu River is also within our borders, but the Jurchens have now stolen it. Being obstinate and crafty, they shift and deceive, and they have obstructed the roads, making them more difficult to travel than the sea. That we cannot have a tributary relationship is because of the Jurchens. If you tell us to drive out the Jurchens, recover our former territory, construct fortresses, and open the roads, then how could we dare not to have relations? If you take my words to your emperor, how could he not accept them out of sympathy?"<sup>36</sup>

There is little doubt that Sŏ Hŭi asserted Koryŏ's rights to the disputed territory. There is also little doubt that Sŏ asserted these rights by claiming Koryŏ's succession to Koguryŏ. As discussed in chapter four the Liao general also claimed succession to Koguryŏ and that Sŏ did not try to refute this assertion; Sŏ Hŭi merely insisted that Koryŏ had not succeeded solely to Shilla. It has become clear in previous chapters that Koryŏ traced its historical descent back to the three states of Paekche, Shilla and Koguryŏ, often represented by

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<sup>34</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>35</sup> For the historiography on this subject, see chapter one.

<sup>36</sup> *KS* 94:4b-5a. I borrowed the translation from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 300. I have changed the transliteration of the Chinese name to pinyin for convenience's sake.

the comprehensive name of the Three Han. Koryŏ identification with Koguryŏ was rather limited and partially forced by the historical circumstances on the peninsula; identification with Koguryŏ did not extend beyond worship of the Koguryŏ founder (who had also been worshipped in Paekche), strong identification with Koguryŏ's capital of P'yŏngyang and through the appropriation of some of Koguryŏ's history. Kim Pushik recorded and codified Koryŏ's historical memories of Koguryŏ by emphasizing Koguryŏ's defensive wars and success in defending the country against invading armies.<sup>37</sup> It is noteworthy, also, that none of Koryŏ's aristocratic lineages seems to have claimed descent from a Koguryŏ ancestor.<sup>38</sup>

The Liao state, on the other hand, seems to have had a valid claim toward Koguryŏ succession. It had occupied Koguryŏ's Manchurian territories, always the bulk of the Koguryŏ empire, and it had conquered Koguryŏ's direct successor Parhae 渤海.<sup>39</sup> Parhae officials were recruited in great numbers by the Liao bureaucracy to help governing the country and build a sophisticated state apparatus that would be up to the task of administering the vast Liao empire.<sup>40</sup> The tribes and peoples now ruled by the Liao were bound by historical memories and by descent to Koguryŏ. Liao culture, also, seems to have possessed an intriguing continuity with Koguryŏ culture; the similarity of tomb murals is remarkable, as is the astronomical knowledge reflected in those murals.<sup>41</sup> The Liao general's claim that the Liao had succeeded Koguryŏ was plausible, then, and the absence of a rebuttal of this claim by Sŏ Hŭi also makes sense. If the Koryŏ-Liao negotiations are read in this way, a completely different

<sup>37</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>38</sup> John B. Duncan, "Historical memories of Koguryŏ in Koryŏ and Chosŏn", in *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2004): pp. 90-117.

<sup>39</sup> The *Liaoshi* emphasizes the Liao absorption of Parhae and Parhae's status as official successor of Koguryŏ; official, because the Tang emperor invest Tae Choyŏng 大祚榮 as ruler of Parhae and Koguryŏ's former territories (*LS* 38: 1b). The fact that the Liao empire possessed a county named after Koguryŏ and situated in former Koguryŏ territory is also revealing with regard to the idea that the Liao also possessed part of the Koguryŏ legacy through the conquest of Parhae. The Geography Section usually mentions Parhae and Koguryŏ together. See *LS* 36: 1a; *LS* 38: 1a-3b;. The *Jinshi* 金史 tells a very similar story. In the section of Jin-Koryŏ relations, Koguryŏ and Koryŏ are conflated, as happens often in Chinese sources, but interestingly, although it is clear that Koryŏ was in some or other way a successor to Koguryŏ, so was Parhae. Parhae was then conquered by the Liao, but managed to maintain a distinct identity all through the Liao. When the Jin conquered the Liao, the descendants of the Parhae kingdom submitted to the Jin, establishing the succession of the Jin to Koguryŏ. The *Jinshi* is quite explicit in its description of the historical interconnectedness of Koguryŏ, Koryŏ, Liao, Parhae and Jin. It also launches the assertion that Paektu-san was sacred territory for the Jin, since the dynasty had arisen there. See *Jinshi* 135: 1a-b.

<sup>40</sup> Denis Twitchett and Klaus Peter Tietze, "The Liao," in *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 6, Alien Regimes and Border States, 987-1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), ed. Herbert Franke and Dennis Twitchett, pp. 43-153.

<sup>41</sup> The structure and contents of Liao tomb murals possess a strong continuity with those of Koguryŏ, as well as with astronomical knowledge depicted in Koryŏ tombs. There is a tantalizing possibility that at the end of the tenth century the Liao sought astronomical knowledge in Koryŏ and send a scholar there to learn from a Koryŏ Buddhist astrologer. Similar occurrences suggest that the exchange of knowledge went both ways and was more equal than habitually assumed. This is corroborated by an extant early Liao diplomatic document in which the Liao emperor addresses the Koryŏ ruler as 'emperor', confirming the equality between their two states. There are precious little sources available regarding the earliest relations between the Liao and Koryŏ, but the few sources of information that are available suggest the possibility of an equal relationship, both formally and practically, and the Liao acceptance of a pluralist international order. See Kim Ilgwŏn, "Koguryŏ pyŏkhwa-wa koda Tong-Asia pyŏkhwa ch'ŏnmun chŏnt'ong koch'al: Ilbon K'itora ch'ŏnmundo-ŭi saeroun tŏngjŏng-ŭl tŏtpuch'ŏ 高句麗 壁畫와 古代 동아시아의 壁畫 天文 傳統 考察 - 日本 기토라 天文圖의 새로운 동정을 덧붙여", in *Koguryŏ yŏn'gu* 高句麗研究 16 (2003): pp. 243-286.

picture emerges, one in which Koryŏ and the Liao share Koguryŏ's historic legacy.

Koguryŏ was one part of Koryŏ's legacy; as one of the Three Kingdoms and metaphorically (through a persistent association of Pyŏnhan with Koguryŏ) as one of the Tree Han. Conversely, Koryŏ was a partial successor to Koguryŏ. It never claimed possession to all of Koguryŏ's history or to its territories. In many respects, the Koryŏ state was a continuation of the Shilla state; administratively, linguistically and culturally, Shilla's influence as a charter state had been formative. Koryŏ looked towards Koguryŏ firstly because of the late ninth- and early tenth-century circumstances on the peninsula virtually forced it to adopt a policy of overt identification with Koguryŏ. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, Koryŏ looked towards Koguryŏ, towards the north, in search of an example and not out of a sense of being directly related. Koryŏ's establishment of Koguryŏ as one of its charter states had no direct relation with its sense of being a direct successor to Koguryŏ in all respects. Identifications by 20<sup>th</sup>-century historians of Koryŏ with Koguryŏ expansionism reveal more about the intellectual climate during the colonial period in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Korea than about Koryŏ history.<sup>42</sup> Koryŏ's policies confirm that all through its history, it in effect duplicated Koguryŏ's defensive strength, and not its offensive expansionism.<sup>43</sup> The realization that Koguryŏ's legacy was shared with the Liao gave rise to an idea that Koryŏ was, partially at least, tied to a lineage of Manchurian states.

Koryŏ's appropriation of Koguryŏ's legacy started with its name and was ostensibly continued in Koryŏ's selective remembrance of Koguryŏ history, while most of the Koguryŏ territory and its population had been claimed by the state of Parhae, which had been founded by a Koguryŏ general and presented itself as Koguryŏ's successor. Koryŏ's perception of its relationship with Parhae supports the interpretation that Koryŏ considered this, at least partly, to be true. The metaphor T'aejo used for the Koryŏ-Parhae relationship was "related by marriage".<sup>44</sup> Koryŏ's preferential treatment of Parhae refugees after Parhae's conquest by the Liao in 926 was occasioned by the realization of the influence a large group of highly educated sinicized refugees would have on the balance of power in early Koryŏ. It was directly inspired by the advantages the Koryŏ ruler enjoyed by admitting a large group from outside into the Koryŏ power structure at a time when the state was converting from a military confederacy to an increasingly centralized bureaucracy.<sup>45</sup>

Koryŏ, Parhae and the Liao claimed Koguryŏ's legacy, then, and sometimes did so at the same time. Koguryŏ was a charter state for various later states: Koryŏ, Parhae, the Liao, and later the Jin. The incident of Sŏ Hŭi's negotiations is a clear example of a time when these claims clashed over a piece of disputed territory, but in general the three states claimed different aspects of the Koguryŏ legacy. In its historical context, these claims do not seem to have been clear fabrications, although opportunism was never completely absent. Koryŏ, then, was linked to a lineage of Manchurian states of which Koguryŏ, Parhae and the Liao were full-

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<sup>42</sup> See chapter two for the example of Shin Ch'aeho.

<sup>43</sup> See the historical comments of Kim Pushik attached to the relevant battles in the *Samguk sagi*, discussed in chapter two. Kim Pushik selected those battles in which Koguryŏ fought to survive and beat back the Chinese. He did not celebrate Koguryŏ expansionism.

<sup>44</sup> *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 285: 9298.

<sup>45</sup> Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

fledged members. Koryŏ had always had the historical memory or the actual presence of a strong Manchurian state at its northern border. Koguryŏ's role as charter state for Koryŏ must accordingly be limited to Koguryŏ's identity as a Manchurian state. Although the sources are incomplete, there is enough evidence that supports the assumption that Koguryŏ culture was highly esteemed in Koryŏ, although perhaps it was not as dominant as Shilla culture.<sup>46</sup> Parhae culture, also, was much appreciated in Koryŏ. Educated Parhae refugees with bureaucratic or other professional experience were recruited into the Koryŏ bureaucracy. The Parhae bureaucrats and professional specialists that had opted to stay and to serve the Liao were in a similar manner immediately recruited into the young Liao bureaucracy. Judging from the impact these Parhae bureaucrats had on Liao administration, it may be surmised that their influence on the equally young Koryŏ administration is not to be underestimated.<sup>47</sup> The impact of Liao knowledge and culture on Koryŏ has already been discussed above.

A Manchurian state on its northern border was an inescapable reality for Koryŏ, a reality which only disappeared with the Mongol conquest of the continent.<sup>48</sup> As much a reality as the northern border, the incumbent Chinese dynasty also played an important part in determining Koryŏ's worldview, leading one Koryŏ monarch to state that Koryŏ "maintains diplomatic relations with the Liao in the north, has always served the Song in the south, while these days the Jurchen in the east have become enemies to be reckoned with."<sup>49</sup> Visitors from the Song agreed, Koryŏ "bordered on the Khitan and the Jin in the north-west", which made it imperative to maintain a well-guarded border.<sup>50</sup> The close proximity of a strong state in the north was both a curse and a blessing. Invasions and incessant frontier clashes were part and parcel of Koryŏ's relations with its northern neighbours, as were trade, barter, exchange of knowledge and lavish gifts. Moreover, the military strength of the northern dynasties was not only a potential threat to Koryŏ's security, it could also act to benefit Koryŏ. The dynasties in the north were supposed to put a stop to the frontier violence perpetrated by unallied tribes or the unruly remnants of the previous dynasty. In this manner, The Mongols were expected to put an end to the frontier violence of the Jurchen, who had just lost their state.<sup>51</sup> In a similar vein, Koryŏ considered it to be the duty of the Khitan Liao to prevent the marauding Jurchen tribes from invading Koryŏ's borders, just as it became the duty of the newly established Jin dynasty to defeat the bands of Liao Khitan that roamed the frontier area after the Jin conquest of the Khitan.

The manner in which Koryŏ dealt with the different dynasties at its borders may serve as one argument to throw out the *hwa-i* dichotomy as an analytical category. Another argument

<sup>46</sup> Astronomic knowledge seems to have been transmitted to Koryŏ, judging from constellations depicted in Koryŏ tomb murals. These are quite different from those found in China, but similar to those found in Liao tombs. See Kim Ilgwŏn, "Koguryŏ pyŏkhwa-wa koda Tong-Asia pyŏkhwa ch'ŏnmun chŏnt'ong koch'al", pp. 243-286.

<sup>47</sup> Twitchett and Klaus Peter Tietze, "The Liao".

<sup>48</sup> Although even during the Mongol period, Koryŏ identified the Mongols with the earlier Liao and Jin, due to their shared northern provenance.

<sup>49</sup> *KS* 10: 30b. The difference in terminology used with regard to the Liao and the Song in this sentence is arbitrary and inspired by literary motives, rather than political ones. The terms used here for the Koryŏ relationship with the Liao and the Song were mutually exchangeable and indeed mutually exchanged.

<sup>50</sup> *Gaoli Tijing*, chapter three.

<sup>51</sup> See for example hereafter *TYSC* 28: 3a.

is constituted by Koryŏ's sense of being related to the Manchurian dynasties. In a way, Koryŏ tried to appropriate the histories of both the Khitan and the Jurchen. Its claim to Koguryŏ as a charter state made this perhaps not inevitable, but at least probable. It is perhaps debatable whether Koryŏ was indeed related in any way to the Khitan or Jurchen peoples, but the idea seems to have been widespread. Koryŏ's frontier population was related to the tribes and peoples of Manchuria, but the idea took root among the capital's literati. In fact, Koryŏ contested some of the most sacred Manchurian places, such as Paektu-san and T'aebaek-san and appropriated them for its own use.<sup>52</sup> The continuous struggle for the Amnok and Tuman rivers also had a historiosophical dimension, in the sense that Koryŏ considered these rivers to be of direct importance to its history and sense of identity, as did the peoples bordering the frontier. Another instance of historical appropriation is furnished by the idea that Koryŏ was older than the Manchurian states contemporaneous to it and had even given birth to its leaders. The popular notion, for instance, that the Jurchen Jin dynasty was a bastard dynasty of Koryŏ and as such related, though also looked down upon, divulges as much.<sup>53</sup> Most of the virulent anti-Manchurian rhetoric usually associated with Koryŏ's attitude towards the Liao and later the Jin is of a much later period than the Koryŏ period, or the late Koryŏ period at the earliest, and hence a retroprojection of later values and notions.<sup>54</sup> Until the late twelfth century at the earliest, Koryŏ literati who were based in the capital took care to construct a vision of Koryŏ history that did not exclude its cousins in the north, but on the contrary included them as relatives or offspring – be it bastard offspring.

As mentioned before, there are convincing indications that in the perception of Koryŏ literati, the international world it dealt with directly could be roughly divided into three categories: Sinitic, barbarian and northern.<sup>55</sup> Koryŏ's relationships with the Chinese dynasties

<sup>52</sup> See chapter one.

<sup>53</sup> *KMC* 56: 39-41; *KS* 14: 2a-b: "Some people say that long ago, a monk from P'yŏngju 平州 by the name of Kim Chun 金俊 fled to the Jurchen and settled down in the village of Ajigo 阿之古村. There he became the ancestor of the Jin dynasty. Other people say that the son of P'yŏngju monk Kim Haengji 金幸之, Kim Kŭksu 金克守 went for the first time to the Jurchen village of Ajigo, married a Jurchen woman and produced a son called Koŭl t'aesa 古乙太師. Koŭl had a son called Hwalla t'aesa 活羅太師. Hwalla had several sons. The eldest was called Haengnibal 劔里鉢, the second Yŏngga 盈歌, who was the best and gained the trust of the people. When Yŏngga died the eldest son of Haengnibal, Oasok 烏雅束, succeeded him and when he died, his younger brother Agolt'a 阿骨打 became chief [...]" The anecdote ends with the statement that "the Jurchen are originally the offspring of our own people and used to serve us and bring tribute to our lord. The people living in the borderlands have from olden times on always been recorded in our genealogies."

<sup>54</sup> Again, the example of Shin Ch'aeho readily comes to mind. Also see Han Yŏngu, *Han'guk minjokchuii yŏksabak* 韓國民族主義 歷史學 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1993), pp. 14-15, pp. 89, 93, 174, 223

<sup>55</sup> This is not to say that Koryŏ literati had no conception of other foreign states, with which it did not have dealings. India, for instance, occupied an important place in the mental world of Koryŏ literati, but it did not belong to one of the three categories mentioned here. This tripartite division is important, but it is also approximate and not exhaustive. Having said so, the division into Sinitic, barbarian and northern categories is well attested and was often used. This is also witnessed by the fact that there existed qualitatively different rituals for the southern court, the northern court and barbarians. See the Rituals Section of the *Koryŏsa* (*kwŏn* 65). The notion that Koryŏ faced three different kinds of neighbours and thus had to deal with them in three different ways is a recurrent theme in writings from this period. See for example Yi Chehyŏn's commentary on Munjong, who ruled for an incredible 53 years from the early eleventh century until the late eleventh century: "Each year letters from the Song praising the king arrived and from the Liao embassies to congratulate him on his birthday came to Koryŏ each year. [...] He welcomed the barbarians in the north within the borders and gave them land and houses. This is why Im Wan 林完



have been well researched and it has been well understood that Koryŏ aimed at internalizing those Sinitic cultural resources that would help Koryŏ to build and maintain a state that would be different from, but nonetheless equal to the indigenous Chinese dynasties. At the same time, however, Koryŏ had fixed its gaze on the north. Universal principles that underlay Sinitic civilization could also be found in the Liao; the transfer of Buddhist knowledge to Koryŏ, epitomized by the gift of the Liao Tripitaka, was one expression of this principle. Another expression was the desire of Koryŏ scholars to be known and recognized both in the north and the south; the importance of literary fame in the north underscores Koryŏ's perception of the northern dynasty's ability to evaluate literary and other scholarly achievements.<sup>56</sup> The influence of Liao architecture on Koryŏ ritual and religious architecture is, though smaller in scale, of a similar conceptual magnitude. It is important to realize that knowledge such as this was actively sought after by Koryŏ, as were other innovations of fundamental scope such as legal practices or the use of money.<sup>57</sup> More examples of Liao influence can be found, but these suffice to demonstrate that Koryŏ hoped to gain, and did gain, more from its relationship with the Liao than frontier security and trade opportunities. Contemporary sources support the conclusion that in Koryŏ's perception, the Liao dynasty was the 'northern dynasty' (*pukcho* 北朝), a term that is often found to describe the Liao vis-à-vis the Song and with reference to Koryŏ.<sup>58</sup> It was used as a generic term to describe the Manchurian dynasties with regard to Koryŏ and the indigenous Chinese dynasties. Both Koguryŏ and Parhae were described in contemporary sources as the 'northern dynasty' or the 'northern state' (*pukkuk* 北國) and both terms were habitually used to refer to the Jin.<sup>59</sup> After the Mongol conquests, the term was used to signify the Yuan. Another way to phrase the difference between Koryŏ's gaze towards the

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[a twelfth century scholar] called him a saintly ruler of our country". See *KS* 9: 37a-b. The distinction between the Song, the Liao and the barbarians is clearly made here and the importance of properly dealing with them is emphasized.

<sup>56</sup> See for example the case of Pak Illyang (*KS* 95: 18b) or the comments on Ŭich'ŏn's achievements in the *Koryŏsa* (*KS* 90: 15a) in which the fact that he was famous in both the Song and the Liao is taken as evidence for his true excellence.

<sup>57</sup> There are indications that Koryŏ was well aware of Liao legal practices, especially with regard to the application of *ius territorialis* and *ius sanguinis* on different ethnical groups. See *KS* 95: 19b-20a; *KSC* 4: 20a. A senior statesman, Hwang Churyang, commented here on a case of interethnic murder and how it should be dealt with. Hwang's comments were in line with the traditional opinions about the legal governing of multi-ethnic states. Both the Liao and the Jin empires applied this principle of *ius sanguinis*. Hwang's use of the legal term *hwaein* 化外人 suggests that he was cognizant of Liao legal practices. See Twitchett and Tietze, "The Liao", pp. 93. It has also been established that Liao financial practices, especially the use of money, were avidly followed in Koryŏ and emulated. "The monetary law was aimed by former rulers at enriching the country and making the people comfortable. My father did not intend to increase property and capital. Let alone now that the Great Liao have started to use money! If a law is proclaimed, slander and abuse of it will follow automatically. That is why it is said that the people cannot understand something that has just been started. But unexpectedly, many officials are boycotting the use of money, using T'aejo's injunction not to copy T'ang and Khitan customs as a pretext. But [T'aejo's] proscription actually aimed at nothing but decadent customs. If we were to do away with Chinese civilization and institutions, what then?" See *KS* 79: 12a.

<sup>58</sup> Song scholars also considered Parhae and its peoples, the Khitan, the Liao, the Jurchen and the Jin related to Koryŏ. These peoples made up the north. See Chao Shuozi 晁說之, *Songsban wenji* 2 *zouyi* 嵩山文集 2 奏議 in Chang Tongik 張東翼 (ed.), *Songdae Yŏsa charyo chimmok* 宋大麗史資料集錄 (Seoul: Sŏul taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 2000) [hereafter *SYCC*], p. 547.

<sup>59</sup> For instances of Koguryŏ and Parhae described as the 'northern dynasty' or 'northern state', see *SGSG* 10: 116; *SGSG* 10: 120; *SGSG* 37: 360. For examples of the Jin as the 'northern state', see *KMC* 52: 16; *KMC* 86: 15; *KMC* 138: 6.

north and its eye on the south is by way of the charter state concept. States situated in China proper, never functioned as charter states for Koryŏ, simply because territorial, administrative and cultural differences were insurpassable. The states in the north did however serve as Koryŏ's charter states; there was enough territorial, cultural and administrative overlap to make this possible. It should be noted though that Koryŏ was not the only state to claim these northern states as charter state.

The existence of a contemporary Koryŏ concept of the 'northern dynasty' is also confirmed by the often-found identification of Khitan and Mongols, of Jurchen and Mongols and of Jurchen and Khitan. That this identification supports the argument of the existence of an analytical category pertaining to the northern court and not to a straightforward inability to tell Koryŏ's frontier tribes apart, is due to the conspicuous phenomenon that the Khitan, Mongols and Jurchen are used interchangeably only in certain situations. In the description of frontier tribes, Koryŏ scholars knew well who was who; the imperial Khitan were not mistaken for the hardy 'uncooked' Jurchen. Koryŏ had lived with Khitan and Jurchen tribes at its frontier for centuries. The most successful tribal chiefs served in some capacity or other in the Koryŏ bureaucracy or more often in the Koryŏ frontier army. Wang Kŏn had relied on a large Jurchen cavalry contingent to defeat Kyŏn Hwŏn. It is hard to imagine, then, that Koryŏ's scholars and historians, often the same people who had seen frontier duty at the start of their careers, would not be able to tell Jurchen from Khitan, let alone from the Mongols who arrived much later in Koryŏ and were distinctly different from Koryŏ's frontier people. Nonetheless, when imperial Jurchen Jin envoys came, or later in the dynasty when imperial Mongol envoys came, they were often described as Khitan. Similarly, when the Mongol armies devastated Koryŏ, they were identified with the Khitans of the 1010 invasion.<sup>60</sup> The conflation of the different northern dynasties by people who demonstrably knew better should be interpreted as metaphorical use of the concept of the northern dynasty. The fact that during the Mongol invasions the Mongols were often dubbed Khitan is telling in this respect: it reveals what role the Khitan had come to play in Koryŏ's imagination as aggressors, as the alien other that threatened Koryŏ's way of life.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, however, it must not be forgotten that the Liao also dazzled and tempted Koryŏ with their Buddhist civilization, of which Koryŏ eagerly partook. At such times, a pluralist outlook on the world, the ability to tolerate contradictions just a little longer, is expedient, perhaps even essential. While it is no exaggeration to state that the Khitan became Koryŏ's archetype for the barbarian other, the Liao was also an example to be emulated. This contradiction was gladly accommodated in Koryŏ; most of the time, it was ignored, but if circumstances demanded it, either the barbarism of the Khitan was emphasized, or the achievements of the Liao praised.

<sup>60</sup> Yi Kyubo's writings are representative for this period. Apart from being a literator whose writings have been preserved in large number, Yi was also an eyewitness to the Mongol invasions and responsible for the drafting of diplomatic documents. For several instances of the use of 'Khitan' for 'Mongol', see *Mun kwan'gun yŏ nojŏnch'ŏp* 問官軍與虜戰捷 in TYSC 14: 13a-b; *Myohyangsan Pogwang-sa tangju Piroch'ana yŏrae changnyuk sosang ki* 妙香山普賢寺堂主毗盧遮那如來丈六塑像記 in TYSC 24: 16b; *Monggo pyŏngma susa maksong chugwa sŏ* 蒙古兵馬帥師幕送酒菓書 in TYSC 28: 1b; *Kukhambaeng tap Monggosŏ imjin iwŏl* 國衛行答蒙古書 壬辰二月 in TYSC 28: 5b; *Munsŏnsa aesa* 文禪師哀詞 in TYSC 37: 5b-6b.

<sup>61</sup> See chapter seven.

Koryŏ foreign policy during the tenth and eleventh centuries was geared to providing maximum frontier security and a maximum of desired cultural resources from both the Song and the Liao. To this end, the Koryŏ state took troubles to maintain relations with both courts, both official and unofficial and only as long as it suited Koryŏ. T'aejo Wang Kŏn's apocryphal fourth injunction, which warned against Khitan and Tang influences, gives a good idea of the dominant Koryŏ perception of foreign influences. It pleads for a balanced and restricted acceptance of Sinitic civilization, an attitude that was prevalent among Koryŏ's most important scholars and statesmen.<sup>62</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, the vehement criticism of the Khitan in this injunction must be seen within the context of the ten years of warfare following the destructive 1010 invasion.<sup>63</sup> In practice, the same restrictions that applied to Sinitic cultural resources were in place for the reception of Liao influences. Both diplomatically and intellectually, Koryŏ made overtures to both the northern and southern courts, but where the Sinitic cultural resources of the southern court represented a universal civilization propagated by a people with which Koryŏ maintained moral, intellectual and political ties, the northern court and its equally universal achievements were considered to be related to Koryŏ through the mediation of Koguryŏ and Parhae. Koryŏ and the Manchurian dynasties literally shared a history as they shared charter states, while in the perception of Koryŏ's literati Koryŏ and the Song shared a culture.

### THE TRANSITION TO THE JIN

The transition from the Liao to the Jin offers a good perspective on how Koryŏ conducted its foreign policy and how flexible it was, when the circumstances demanded it. It also demonstrates how the northern dynasty at Koryŏ's northern frontier functioned in practice and how traumatic dynastic change in the north could be.

The Jurchen tribes living in the Amnok river region had been tributaries of Koryŏ since the establishment of the dynasty, when T'aejo Wang Kŏn heavily relied on a large segment of Jurchen cavalry to defeat the armies of Later Paekche. The position and status of these Jurchen is hard to determine using the framework of the Koryŏ and Liao states as reference, since the Jurchen chiefs generally took care to steer a middle course between Koryŏ and the Liao, changing sides or absconding whenever that was deemed the best course.<sup>64</sup> As mentioned

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<sup>62</sup> See for example Ch'oe Sŭngno's 崔承老 recommendation in his *On current affairs*: "It is impossible not to adhere to the ways of China, but since the customs of all regions throughout the country each follow their own characteristics, it seems to be difficult to change them all. Our vulgar ways must be corrected according to Chinese rules with regard to the teaching of [proper] rites and music, poetry and literature and with regard to the moral principles between ruler and minister, father and son. But with regard to such things as transport and clothing, we can adhere to our local customs and reach a balance between luxury and thrift. There is no reason to strain ourselves unreasonably to be the same." See Yi Kibaek, *Ch'oe Sŭngno*, pp. 55, 60.

<sup>63</sup> Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

<sup>64</sup> It seems that the news of Kang Cho's 康兆 dethronement and eventual murder of Mokchong was conveyed to the Liao by Jurchen who had dealings with Koryŏ. See *KS* 4: 4b-5a.

above, Koryŏ and the Liao competed quite fiercely to obtain the allegiance of the Jurchen tribes who in the absence of large armies effectively controlled much of the frontier area outside of the Koryŏ and Liao fortifications.<sup>65</sup> These tribes were expert in handling the tension between the Liao and Koryŏ, playing out divide-and-rule policies backed up by threats of border violence. It seems that the relationship between the semi-nomadic Jurchen and their peninsular neighbours bore much resemblance to Thomas Barfield's description of the relationship between Chinese states and their nomad neighbours.<sup>66</sup> Using their military superiority and mobility as an implicit threat to Koryŏ's border security, the Jurchen chieftains appeared at Koryŏ's court to offer tribute and expected to be richly rewarded in return.<sup>67</sup> The role of these chieftains was ambiguous. They posed a serious threat to Koryŏ's security, but they could be appeased by lavish gifts and appointments in Koryŏ bureaucracy.<sup>68</sup> The greatest ambiguity in the Jurchen-Koryŏ relationship was comprised by the fact that the same Jurchen chieftain could be Koryŏ's foe one moment and its ally the next.<sup>69</sup> Some of the Jurchen chieftains were commended for their services in the defence of Koryŏ.<sup>70</sup> Koryŏ's frontiers, in other words, were often guarded by the same tribes that troubled it. In rewarding the chieftains that helped Koryŏ, Koryŏ tried to establish and maintain close ties with a few select Jurchen chieftains. Judging from the frequency with which the same Jurchen chieftain names appear in the *Koryŏsa*, Koryŏ's appeasement policies were at least successful to the extent of establishing relationships with some of the important Jurchen leaders. Largely, the frontier was outside of direct control from the capital, unless it sent out an expedition army to reaffirm Koryŏ control. Direct appeasement of the Jurchen by using lavish gifts was one of Koryŏ's

<sup>65</sup> A particular poignant example comes from 1013, two years after the Liao invasion and destruction of the Koryŏ capital. Planning another invasion into Koryŏ, a Liao official introduces a Jurchen "who knows Koryŏ affairs" to the Liao court. He tells the Liao court that he had been captured three years earlier (perhaps during the 1010-1011 Liao invasion), but managed to become an official. According to him "to the east of Kaegyŏng, seven days distance by horse, there is a large military outpost, as large as Kaegyŏng itself. The precious and special tribute of the adjoining prefectures is all stored there. To the south of Sŭngju 勝州 and Naju 羅州 there are again two large military outposts. Tribute is also stored there. If the great army was to march again following the road it took before [1010?], take the road north of the Hapsahan Jurchen 哈斯罕女真, cross the Amnok and follow the river upstream until Kwakchu, where the important roads [of Koryŏ] meet, Koryŏ will be for the taking." The Liao emperor listened to the advice of the Jurchen chief and the Liao armies did march across the Amnok in 1116 following the route proposed by him. See *Liaoshi shiji benmo* 遼史記事本末 edited by (Qing) (清) Li Yutang 李有棠 (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1983), two volumes, vol. 1, p. 179. After Koryŏ's rout of the Liao armies in 1018 (which had again be guided by Jurchen living in the frontier area), Jurchen chiefs took care to befriend Koryŏ again. Right after the defeat Jurchen chieftains visited the Koryŏ court, presenting weapons, horses, armour, battle banners and so forth. Both the Jurchen tribes living in the north-east (the Eastern Jurchen) and those living the in the north-west (the Western Jurchen) came to offer tribute to Koryŏ. See *KS* 4: 26a-28b for some examples.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas Barfield, *The perilous frontier. Nomadic empires and China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

<sup>67</sup> The majority of entries regarding the Jurchen in the *Koryŏsa* (before the establishment of the Jin) refer to either Jurchen raids or Jurchen tribute missions, showing part of the dynamics of this relationship.

<sup>68</sup> The Jurchen, in particular the Western Jurchen living in or near to what is now Hamgyŏng-do 咸鏡道 posed a threat that was greater than endangering Koryŏ's frontier. Often, these tribes would mount naval attacks on Koryŏ as far south as Kyŏngju 慶州. See *KS* 4: 10b; *KS* 4: 18a; *KS* 6: 29a; *KS* 8: 32b;

<sup>69</sup> This could lead to awkward situations when it was found out at the Koryŏ court that a Jurchen chieftain who had entered court to bring tribute had been responsible for recent raids on Koryŏ territory. In some cases, if the culprits were repentant, the raid already forgotten and the Jurchen usable, they would be forgiven. See for instance *KS* 4: 29a-b. In other instances, they would be apprehended and executed.

<sup>70</sup> See for instance *KS* 5: 5a; *KS* 6: 25a; *KS* 8: 35b.

means to control the Jurchen. Another means was accepting Jurchen chieftains and their followers into Koryŏ and as citizens of the Koryŏ state. In 1073, for instance, when a Jurchen chieftain who had maintained contacts with Koryŏ for some decades, came to request official submission to Koryŏ, he, his family and his followers were given new names.<sup>71</sup> Another instance of formal submission by a Jurchen group in 1081 shows the restrictions that were in place to prevent unassimilated Jurchen from residing in Koryŏ for any prolonged period of time:

On the *kimi* day of the eighth month, the Western Jurchen 西女真 Mandu 漫豆, leading his family of 17 people, submitted. The following was reported by the Bureau for Guests: "According to the old regulations, it is forbidden for persons to [to enter the country] with the exception of persons belonging to the frontier population who have been kidnapped by the frontier barbarians and wish to return home or Song persons of high ability. Hŭksŭ 黑水 and Jurchen have been prohibited to enter the country completely. According to the old regulations, Mandu should be sent back." In response to this, minister of rites No Tan 盧旦 wrote: "Mandu and his family may be ignorant, but they highly value honour. Since he has submitted to us, we cannot refuse him. It would be proper to have him settle in the counties and districts in the Sannam-region 山南州縣." The king followed his advice.<sup>72</sup>

This shows both the restrictions on Jurchen and other frontier tribes, but also the practice of Koryŏ's appeasement policies. Jurchen groups who wished to settle in Koryŏ were allowed to do so, often far away from the northern frontier.<sup>73</sup> Using Jurchen in the defence of the northern frontier, resettling them away from the frontier and appeasing those chieftains that did not formally submit to Koryŏ were well-thought out and time-tested policies. On the other hand, the government maintained a strict policy against Koryŏ inhabitants caught dealing with the Jurchen. In 1101, a man called Chang Kŭmnam 長今男 was executed after having been caught stealing four suits of armour and selling these to the Jurchens.<sup>74</sup>

The appeasement policies of the Koryŏ court towards individual Jurchen leaders show why Koryŏ did not need to exert direct control, while simultaneously keeping the frontier relatively stable. As long as some of the most powerful chieftains of the Jurchen could be enticed to serve Koryŏ and fight on its behalf, while other more hostile chieftains could at least be sometimes withheld from attacking Koryŏ settlements, Koryŏ did not need to worry too much about frontier stability on account of the Jurchen. This changed, however, when the

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<sup>71</sup> *KS* 9: 5b. It seems that this same Jurchen chieftain, who was known in Koryŏ under the name of Kodohwa 古刀化 (his Chinese-style name, given to him by Koryŏ, was Son Posae 孫保塞) figured in a legal dispute. A Jurchen by the same name was accused of killing another Jurchen. A discussion on the legal status of naturalized Jurchen in Koryŏ ensued and was debated at court. See *KS* 95: 19b-20a; *KSC* 4: 20a. A senior statesman, Hwang Churyang 黃周亮 argued that a Jurchen killing a Jurchen should be tried according to Jurchen common law and not according to the Koryŏ codex. Both the Liao and the Jin empires applied this principle of *ius sanguinis*.

<sup>72</sup> *KS* 9: 32a-b.

<sup>73</sup> See for example two instances from 1101. In this year the Jurchen leader Kosamo 古舍毛 and five others were admitted into Koryŏ, given houses and land and formally made part of the Koryŏ population. The Western Jurchen Koshimo 古時毛 also submitted in that year. He was also given a house and land to live on. See *KS* 11: 29a; *KS* 11: 31a.

<sup>74</sup> *KS* 11: 30a.

Jurchen tribes started to unite.

When the Jurchen tribes, among them especially the Wan-yen clan 完顏部, united and grew stronger, the pressure on the Liao and Koryŏ frontier mounted.<sup>75</sup> The leaders of the Wan-yen clan knew Koryŏ intimately and knew exactly which Jurchen leaders were on Koryŏ's side.<sup>76</sup> The Wan-yen clan used its power to force those chieftains to give up their allegiance to Koryŏ.<sup>77</sup> The unification of the Jurchen tribes created a military entity that was without equal in early twelfth-century East Asia. Jurchen cavalry was virtually invincible and their preparedness to always give battle gave them the upper hand in confrontations with the Liao and the Song. Despite the frequent trouble at the border, Koryŏ was never considered as an object of invasion by the Jin. More than Koryŏ, the Liao suffered severely under the Jurchen threat, but even so, Koryŏ deemed the emerging Jurchen federation enough of a threat to merit an extensive series of campaigns in the early twelfth century to regain control of the borderlands.<sup>78</sup> The expedition was led by Yun Kwan and led to the famous construction of the Nine Fortresses 九城 in the frontier area.<sup>79</sup> In what is usually seen as the result of in-fighting at the court, victorious general Yun Kwan and his co-commander O Yŏnch'ong 吳延寵 (1055-1116) were impeached, stripped of their respective ranks and the Nine Fortresses were handed back to the Jurchen. Most historians see the return of the Nine Fortresses to Jurchen control as a strategically and ideologically unsound action of the Koryŏ court.<sup>80</sup>

There are indications, however, to reinterpret the expedition against the Jurchen and the Nine Fortresses-controversy in a different way. Firstly, it should not be forgotten that

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<sup>75</sup> According to the *Koryŏsa*, the Jurchen rise to prominence was first reported to Koryŏ by a Koryŏ physician who had successfully treated a member of the Wan-yen clan. As a reward, he was released and sent back to Koryŏ. The physician went to the Koryŏ capital and told the Koryŏ ruler that the Jurchen living in the Hŭksu region were growing in strength every day. The Koryŏ ruler reacted by exchanging envoys with the Wan-yen Jurchen. Koryŏ even sent a congratulatory envoy when the Jurchen had destroyed a Khitan settlement. See *KS* 12: 3b-4a.

<sup>76</sup> Most Jurchen leaders had been in Koryŏ at one time or another, a substantial number among them was detained in Koryŏ as hostages or on account of transgressions of the border, attacks on Koryŏ territory and so forth.

<sup>77</sup> Pak Hannam 朴漢男, "Koryŏ Injong-dae tae-Gŭm chŏngch'aeg-ŭi sŏngkyŏk", pp. 55-60. This became a contentious issue between 1127 and 1130, when the Jin used the presence of Jurchen refugees in Koryŏ territory to pressure Koryŏ in to submitting to the Jin. See *KS* 16: 7a-8b.

<sup>78</sup> Ch'oe Kyusŏng 崔圭成 "Koryŏ ch'ogi-ŭi yŏjin kwan'gye-wa pukpang chŏngch'aek 高麗初期의 女眞關係와 北方政策," *Tŏngguk sabak* 東國史學 15-16 (1981): pp. 149-168; Ch'ŭ Myŏngyŏp 秋明燁, "11se'gimal-12se'gich'o Yŏjin chŏngbŏl munje-wa chŏngguk tonghyang 11世紀末~12世紀初 女眞征伐問題와 政局動向," *Han'guk saron* 韓國史論 45 (2001): pp. 73-124; Ch'ŭ Myŏngyŏp, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi 'pŏn' inshik-kwa 'tong-sobŏn'-ŭi hyŏngsŏng 고려 전기 '번(蕃)인식과 '동.서번'의 형성," *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnshil* 역사와 현실 43 (2002): pp. 14-46.

<sup>79</sup> Ch'ŭ Myŏngyŏp, "11se'gimal-12se'gich'o Yŏjin chŏngbŏl munje-wa chŏngguk tonghyang"; Chŏng Sua, "Yun Kwan seryŏg-ŭi hyŏngsŏng: Yun Kwan-ŭi Yŏjin chŏngbol-gwa kwallyŏn-toen myŏt kaji munje-ŭi kŏmt'o-rŭl chunghim-ŭro 尹瓘勢力의 形成; 尹瓘의 女眞征伐과 관련된 몇 가지 問題의 檢討를 중심으로," *Chindan hakpo* 震檀學報 66 (1988): pp. 1-33.

<sup>80</sup> Ch'oe Kyusŏng sees the return of the Nine Fortresses to the Jurchen as a result of the resistance of settled Jurchen whose lands had been taken away from them. The return of the fortresses was the end of Koryŏ's ambitions to reclaim Koguryŏ's ancient territories, according to Ch'oe. See Ch'oe Kyusŏng, "Pukpang minjŏk-kwa-ŭi kwan'gye bokpangminjŏk-gwa의 관계," in *Han'guksa* 15 (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa py'ŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1995), pp. 319-1384. Also see Pak Hannam and Ch'oe Kyusŏng, "10-12segi Tong-Asia chŏngse-wa Koryŏ-ŭi pukchin chŏngch'aek 10-12세기 동아시아 정세와 고려의 북진정책," in *Han'guksa* 15, pp. 225-273; Kim Tang'taek, 金塘澤, "Koryŏ Sukchong, Yejong-dae-ŭi Yŏjuin chŏngbŏl 高麗 肅宗 •睿宗代의 女眞征伐," in *Tongasbia yŏksa-ŭi hwallyu* 東아시아 歷史의 還流 (Seoul: Chishik sanŏpsa 지식산업사, 2000), pp. 179-208.

Koryŏ's border was for a large part guarded by Jurchen generals.<sup>81</sup> When the Wan-yen clan started to unite the Jurchen tribes, these Jurchen in Koryŏ service came to occupy an awkward position and often chose to forsake their Koryŏ allegiance, which resulted in weakened frontier security for Koryŏ. The direct reason for Yun Kwan's expedition against the Jurchen must be located in the emergence of the Jurchen and the weakening of the Koryŏ border. Few historians dispute this. The matter of the Nine Fortresses is of a quite different character, though. Handing back the recently constructed fortresses and the territory they controlled, despite the enormous costs of the military campaign against the Jurchen, does not seem to make sense at first sight. The rise of the Jurchen was accentuated by the decline of the Liao; both phenomena were closely watched in Koryŏ. Based on the relatively swift return of the Nine Fortresses to the Jurchen, Koryŏ's strict neutrality towards the Liao and the Song after the return of the disputed territory, Koryŏ's steadfast refusal to help the Liao and Koryŏ's rapid occupation of the Liao fortresses along the Amnok after these had been attacked by the Jin, it seems plausible to conclude that Koryŏ and the Jin had reached an agreement about their co-existence at the northern frontier. Seen in the light of Koryŏ's long and important relation with the Liao, it is strange that Koryŏ refused all Liao appeals. Koryŏ did not even take the trouble of finding suitable excuses, but flatly refused all requests.<sup>82</sup> Not only did Koryŏ reject the Liao, it also occupied the forts along the Amnok for which the Liao had requested military support from Koryŏ.<sup>83</sup> Koryŏ did so, after having been informed of the Jin attacks by the Jin. Against the background of the intimate relations between Koryŏ and the Wan-yen clan, among other things expressed in a congratulatory mission in 1103, the frequent contacts between the Koryŏ court and the Jurchen chieftains point at an understanding of some sort between Koryŏ and the Jin. Koryŏ-Jurchen contacts increased in frequency during and after the handing back the Nine Fortresses, Jurchen envoys visiting the Koryŏ court several times a year. Different from before, the king took an active part in receiving the Jurchen.<sup>84</sup> In 1111, the king received thirty Jurchen chieftains from the frontier region in the Sŏnjŏng-jŏn hall 宣政殿.<sup>85</sup> The frequent visits did not cease after the return of the fortresses, but raids on the Koryŏ border did. From this time on, the sources record no more submissions from Jurchen to Koryŏ, but an increased number of visits to the Koryŏ capital. The ease with which Koryŏ decided to abandon the use of the Liao reign period illustrates Koryŏ's assessment of the situation:

On the *shinmi* day the secretariat-chancellery reported: "Since the Liao will shortly collapse now that they are under attack of the Jurchen, their reign period has become unusable and we should no longer use their reign period of Tiankang 天慶 on official documents, but instead revert to the stems and branches system. The king followed this

<sup>81</sup> These generals were either generals in the Koryŏ military (a rank that was usually awarded after years of meritorious service) or occupied a similar position as war leader in Jurchen society.

<sup>82</sup> The Liao requested military assistance from Koryŏ in 1114 (KS 13: 35a-b), twice in 1115 (KS 14: 3b; KS 14: 6a) and 1117 (KS 14: 21a).

<sup>83</sup> KS 14: 21a.

<sup>84</sup> See for some instances KS 13: 4a; KS 13: 17a; KS 13: 18a-b; KS 13: 33a-b. In 1110 the king personally received a Jurchen envoy in the Sŏnjŏng Hall. Not long after, he received a Western Jurchen embassy in the Chunggwang-jŏn hall 重光殿. See KS 13: 33a-b.

<sup>85</sup> KS 13: 19b.

advice.<sup>86</sup>

Koryŏ fully expected the Liao to collapse and the Jin to take over their position. It also endeavoured to take advantage of the situation by reclaiming the contested Amnok region, in particular where Poju (Üiju) was situated.<sup>87</sup> The return of the Nine Fortresses to the Jurchen was strategically a clever move, since the region had never really been under Koryŏ control and maintaining hegemony there would be very costly. A prolonged conflict with the militarily superior Jurchen troops was also not in Koryŏ's favour. After Yun Kwan's initial defeats against the Jurchen cavalry, it had become abundantly clear that Koryŏ could only hope to dominate the Jurchen if it made a prolonged war effort. The return of the Nine Fortresses, then, as well as the promise not to support the Liao when they came under Jin attack, meant that Koryŏ's frontier would be secure. For the Jurchen, also, this agreement was profitable, since it meant that they did not have to focus on Koryŏ as an enemy, but only on the Liao and the Song.<sup>88</sup>

The rapprochement between Koryŏ and the Jurchen made the frontier secure and relatively quiet for the first time in centuries. In this sense, Koryŏ's policies to contain the Jurchen threat were successful. Honouring the Jin demand to recognize the Jin Son of Heaven as Koryŏ's suzerain was more painful.<sup>89</sup> Despite the ease with which Koryŏ abandoned its ties with the Liao when the political and military necessity to do so arose, it turned out to be much harder to replace the fruitful relationship with the Liao with an as yet unknown relationship with the Jin. After it had become clear that the role of the Liao had been played out, the Jin emperor reversed the tables on Koryŏ and demanded recognition as the Koryŏ king's elder brother in 1117.<sup>90</sup> Most officials were against Koryŏ recognition of the Jin, but there was a small minority that thought otherwise:

It is my humble opinion that the Han 漢 with regard to the Xiongnu 匈奴 and the Tang 唐 with regard to the Tujue 突厥 took all possible measures to ensure that their relations with them would be amicable, whether by designating themselves as a lesser country or by giving in marriage their princesses to them. Now even the great Song calls itself the younger brother of the Khitan and they have gotten along peacefully for generations.

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<sup>86</sup> *KS* 14: 10b-11a.

<sup>87</sup> Koryŏ regained control over the region because the Jin allowed Koryŏ to do so. The same region became contested again, when Koryŏ hesitated to recognize the Jin Son of Heaven as the legitimate suzerain of Koryŏ. The use of this region as bargaining chip in the relation between Koryŏ and the Jin supports the assumption that it had been promised to Koryŏ in exchange for the Nine Fortresses and a continuous refusal to help the Liao.

<sup>88</sup> This is not to say that the two countries became allies. Hostilities were suspended, but judging from the atmosphere of distrust and animosity that dominated early Koryŏ-Jin relations, the centuries of contained warfare between the Jurchen and Koryŏ were not forgotten all at once. See for example the panicky Koryŏ reaction when the Jin concentrated a large number of troops in Liaoyang. *KS* 16: 16b

<sup>89</sup> See for instance this text by Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng 崔惟清: "Recently the northern barbarians have had the nerve to adopt the title of emperor and to take advantage of the military troubles of the two countries [i.e. Liao and Song] to unfold the treacherous plans of their tyrannical ruler. For a long time now they have looked down upon us and given us brutal commands. When arrogant messages were sent to the Han, Heaven made [the sender's] affliction even worse, and it has made our country into a stick to beat Jin with. I wish to erase this shame. This is the proper correction of the relations between a ruler and his ministers, it lessens the worries about our borders and teaches later generations that crooked things are straightened out, through which the realm will greatly benefit. To undertake this great enterprise, who better than you, my lord? [...]." *TMS* 29: 21b-22a.

<sup>90</sup> *KS* 14: 21b-22a.



And although there is nothing under heaven that can measure up to the dignity of the Son of Heaven [of Koryŏ], submitting to and obeying the barbarians like this is the proper policy, one that the sages called the temporarily putting aside of one's principles as circumstances demand it and the protection of the whole country. We should sincerely make an example and a reminder of that time in the past during the reign of King Sŏngjong when a misguided border defence policy brought the invasions of the Khitan upon us. Your humble servant hopes that you will devise a long-term plan in order to protect our country so that there will be no regrets.<sup>91</sup>

Kim Puŭi 金富儀, younger brother of Kim Pushik 金富軾, spoke against the rejection of the Jin emperor's demand. His proposal was laughed off by the officials present, who rather debated whether the Jin envoys should or should not be beheaded.<sup>92</sup> Kim Puŭi effectively spoke for his brother Kim Pushik, who at that moment as an envoy paid a visit to the Song.<sup>93</sup> Nonetheless, a few years later Koryŏ officially decided that it should recognize the Jin. Koryŏ's stubbornness in the face of the Jin demands was in a way to be expected; it had taken the Liao several invasions, after all, before Koryŏ-Liao relations could start to take off. On the other hand, the Jin court referred to historical precedent, pointing out that the Jin had replaced the Liao and that as such, Koryŏ should recognize the Jin.<sup>94</sup> To put it differently, the northern dynasty pointed out that it was the northern dynasty and that as such Koryŏ should recognize it, instead of bemoaning the quirks and twists of history that had made a former tributary state the new suzerain. Koryŏ dragged its feet, but there was no real issue; the Jin dynasty had every right to expect to be recognized, which it very well knew. Koryŏ knew this as well; Kim Pushik, Kim Puŭi, Yi Chagyŏm and Ch'ŏk Chungyŏng 拓俊京, who had fought under Yun Kwan against the Jurchen, knew the strength of the Jin and appreciated the fact that Koryŏ only stood to lose if it did not recognize the Jin Son of Heaven. The mandate of the northern dynasty had passed from the Liao to the Jin. The Koryŏ bureaucracy half-heartedly resisted official contacts with the Liao by writing letters to the Jin Son of Heaven that did not use the

<sup>91</sup> *KS* 97:3a-b; *KSC* 8:20a-b.

<sup>92</sup> *KS* 97: 3a.

<sup>93</sup> Kim Pushik and Yi Chagyŏm 李資謙 were unlikely allies in their conviction that recognition of the Jin was the best policy for Koryŏ. Yi may have had ulterior motives, such as the consolidation of his rule at the Koryŏ court by stabilizing Koryŏ's international relations, but Kim and Yi's positions coincided here. Kim Pushik's correspondence to the Liao court gives a good view on Koryŏ diplomacy. In a sworn letter, Kim denies any wrongdoing with regard to the Liao while referring to Pak Sŭngjung's 朴昇中 diplomatic letter to the Liao (*TMS* 39: 12b-13b). He also recognizes the increasing strength of the Jurchen, but swears that Koryŏ is loyal to the Liao; if not, may the gods destroy it. This letter is a prime example of the flexibility (or unreliability, seen from a Liao point of view) of Koryŏ diplomacy; at this time, Kim Pushik was in favour of the recognition of the Jin Son of Heaven. (*TMS* 39: 26b-27a) Kim Pushik's writings also offer other instances of his fundamentally pluralist orientation. In a diplomatic communication to the Jin, Kim writes in the name of the ruler that "since I am faithfully protecting Chumong's 朱蒙 old territory on the lands of P'yŏngyang, I cannot participate as a vassal and bring tribute." (*TMS* 44: 13b) The tone in another writing, this time to the Song emperor, was completely different: Kim stated that Koryŏ succeeded Kija 箕子 who was enfeoffed by the Chinese Son of Heaven; he insisted that the peninsula's development mirrored that of the Middle Kingdom, by equating Kija with the Zhou 周, Shilla with the Han 漢, and Koryŏ with the Song 宋; he expressed pride with regard to Koryŏ's learning that was close to that of the Song; and he concluded by stating that it was the barbarians who stood between Koryŏ and Song, literally and figuratively. (*TMS* 34: 26a-27ba). This last letter was written just before Kim Pushik succeeded in having the Koryŏ court recognize the Jin ruler as Son of Heaven.

<sup>94</sup> *KS* 15: 10a; *JS* 135: 2885.

proper format (on account of which Kim Pushik punished the officials responsible for this breach of protocol), composing official documents to the Jin that omitted the personal name of the Koryŏ ruler, thereby implying that he was no vassal of the Jin, or even referring to the Jin as barbarians in official communications.<sup>95</sup> This kind of protest was, however, quite ineffective as long as powerful statesmen as Kim Pushik supported relations with the Jin. The rise of the Mongols precluded the Koryŏ-Jin relationship from becoming as significant and influential as the Koryŏ-Liao relationship had been, but there are no indications that suggest that Koryŏ had a fundamentally hostile relationship with the Jurchen Jin.

The anger and frustration that was felt in Koryŏ at the inevitable necessity of recognizing the Jin emperor as the Son of Heaven was abated by a number of well-established accommodation mechanisms. Firstly, Koryŏ's fundamentally pluralist view of the international world ensured that the Jurchen Jin's emperor's elevation to Son of Heaven was not absolute. The Koryŏ monarch retained his position of Son of Heaven in Koryŏ and potentially of the world.<sup>96</sup> The incorporation of Jurchen history into that of Koryŏ also functioned to soften the blow; by emphasizing the fact that the Jin emperors were bastard offspring of Koryŏ, the painful reality of the Jurchen vassals who had become the Jin suzerain was made somewhat more acceptable.<sup>97</sup> The idea that the Jin had succeeded the Liao as the new northern dynasty, too, worked as a way of accommodating the new role of the Jurchen. As the northern dynasty, the Jin possessed at least a semblance of legitimacy. And finally, Koryŏ's estimation of the situation was realistic. It did not have the military strength to fight a full-blown war with the Jurchen, whose cavalry was unrivalled at that time. The reason behind the acceptance of Jin political and military superiority must largely be located in a realistic assessment of the situation, as well as an reluctance to get unnecessarily involved in continental affairs, while Koryŏ's accommodation mechanisms, most notably its pluralism and the concept of the northern dynasty, served to give the Jin a recognized place in Koryŏ's worldview, making it easier to deal with them.

The concept of the northern dynasty not only accommodated the acceptance of Jin suzerainty in Koryŏ, it also explains the ease with which Koryŏ severed its ties with the Liao. As a temporary manifestation of the northern dynasty, the Liao occupied a per force temporary place in Koryŏ's view of the world; while the northern dynasty was a fixture in this worldview, the Liao were not. Accordingly, despite the infrequent misgivings of the bureaucracy, Koryŏ relatively quickly and smoothly established official relations with the Jin. Many studies focus their attention on the traumatic aspects the Liao-Jin transition held for Koryŏ. But while these aspects were certainly present, it should not pass unnoticed that in a period of intensive warfare that engulfed most of North-East Asia, Koryŏ alone remained untouched. The Liao dynasty perished under the continuous assaults and invasions of Jurchen armies, while the Song, who had tried to win over the Jurchen as their allies, were the next victim of the expanding Jin empire. Koryŏ alone was relatively untouched during this period. If anything, Koryŏ's success to stave off invasion and military conflict in an otherwise violent and unstable

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<sup>95</sup> *KS* 15: 10a; *KS* 17: 24a; *KS* 17: 18a.

<sup>96</sup> Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm".

<sup>97</sup> *KMC* 56: 39-41; *KS* 114: 2a-b.

period – while internally it started to become divided over several crucial ideological issues – demonstrates the qualities of Koryŏ diplomacy. By adapting its appeasement policies with regard to the Jurchen chieftains at its frontiers to encompass the rise of the Jin as a suzerain state and as the new manifestation of the northern dynasty, Koryŏ averted what would otherwise have been extensive warfare. The price to be paid, though, was high. The long-standing relations with the Liao were cut, despite the many gains these had brought Koryŏ and the trauma of the Liao-Jin transition reverberated through Koryŏ society. As late as 1158, an astrologer of the bureau of astrology could write a memorial to the throne that actively propagated relocating the capital to the north (to Paekchu) and conquering the Jin from there.<sup>98</sup> These convulsions of Liao loyalty or perhaps of conservatism died away in the twelfth century, leaving the Jin firmly in the place of the northern dynasty.

## CONTACTS WITH THE SONG

Koryŏ's relations with the Liao and the Jin dynasties exerted a formative influence on state, society and people of Koryŏ. These relations with the northern dynasties were to an extent balanced by Koryŏ's ties with the Song and later the Southern Song. Historiography on Koryŏ has shown an unmistakable tendency to portray this relationship as Koryŏ's most important relationship with a foreign civilization.<sup>99</sup> Song China acted as the source of much of Koryŏ's acquisitions in the field of Sinitic civilization. The Koryŏ bureaucracy was modelled to a large extent on the Song example.<sup>100</sup> The length of Koryŏ-Song interaction is also impressive; if unofficial contacts are taken into account, the two states were in contact with each other, with varying degrees of intensity, from the establishment of the Song until the demise of the Southern Song.<sup>101</sup> But, as many examinations of the Koryŏ's foreign relations have brought to light, there were long gaps in the official contacts between the two countries, most notably from the late tenth century to the late eleventh century. In the absence of official contacts, which at times were vehemently opposed by both Koryŏ and Song officials, contact between these two states was indirect, through chance meetings at the Liao court for example, or was maintained in an informal manner, by merchants and other travellers.

In discussing the Koryŏ-Song relationship, most scholars have assumed the cultural

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<sup>98</sup> *KS* 18: 11b-12a.

<sup>99</sup> The monographs that constitute the *Han'guksa* series are a good example of this. The Tang and Song models and their influence in Koryŏ are well-researched subjects; the importance of these studies for the understanding of Koryŏ history is immense. On the other hand, this effort to appreciate Sinitic influence in Koryŏ has not been accompanied by a similar effort to understand formative Liao and Jin influences on the Koryŏ dynasty. This distorts a balanced perception of Koryŏ history. See volumes 12-16 of *Han'guksa* (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa py'ŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1994-1995).

<sup>100</sup> Shūtō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之, "Kōrai shōki no kanri teido: toku ni ryōfu no zaisō ni tsuite 高麗初期の官吏制度—特に兩部の宰相について," reprinted in *Kōraichō kanryōsei no kenkyū* 高麗朝官僚制の研究 (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppanyoku 法政大學出版局, 1980), pp. 95-123.

<sup>101</sup> *KS* 2: 29a. Koryŏ started the use the Song reign period names in 963. To underscore the good relations, the heir apparent of Koryŏ was dispatched to the Song in 977. *KS* 2: 33b.

importance, even indispensability, of Song culture for Koryŏ.<sup>102</sup> And to be sure, Song culture played an important formative role in early to middle Koryŏ. In 976 Koryŏ sent its first student to the Song National Academy, Kim Haengsŏng 金行成, who returned two years later.<sup>103</sup> When Ŭich'ŏn visited the Song in the late eleventh century, it was remarked in Song sources that he did so not in order to bring tribute, but to learn and associate with, presumably learned, people.<sup>104</sup> The Song academies stayed attractive to Koryŏ, in particular so after 1099, when permission was granted for foreigners to take the state examinations.<sup>105</sup> In 1115, Kim Tan 金端 and four others entered the national academy. One of these students, Kwŏn Chŏk 權適, was such an excellent scholar that his graduation, two years later in 1117, drew the attention of the Song emperor himself. Kwŏn was awarded a post in the Song bureaucracy and received a handwritten poem from the emperor, but returned home to Koryŏ with Yi Charyang 李資諒, who was then visiting the Song court as Koryŏ's envoy.<sup>106</sup>

The influence of Koryŏ scholars who had been educated in the Song was quite substantial, as Kwŏn Chŏk's subsequent career showed, but it should not pass unnoticed that only an extremely small minority of Koryŏ scholars managed to get an education in the Song. Song intellectual influence on Koryŏ scholars was consequently more pervasive in the field of imported books and knowledge. The Song calendar, for instance, was scrupulously studied by Koryŏ scholars, although not necessarily followed.<sup>107</sup> Song medicine was also much in demand at the Koryŏ court. Both Munjong and Yejong had health problems and the Song court saw this as an opportunity to draw Koryŏ closer by sending doctors, medicine and medical treatises or by training Koryŏ medical students.<sup>108</sup>

Books were another important aspect of Song-Koryŏ cultural relations. Koryŏ had received the Song Tripitaka as early as 991, when Sŏngjong had also asked for woodblock prints of the Nine Classics and handed in a detailed list of books that Koryŏ wanted.<sup>109</sup> Books were a constant factor in Koryŏ-Song relations: every Koryŏ embassy to the Song purchased as many books and manuscripts as possible, while Song embassies to Koryŏ anticipated Koryŏ literati's desires and unfailingly brought books with them. Merchants also realized this, as is

<sup>102</sup> Shūtō Yoshiyuki, *Kōraichō kanryōsei no kenkyū*; Pak Yongun, *Koryŏ sbidaesa*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>103</sup> *KS* 2: 33b; *KS* 74: 7b. For the particulars of other students who were sent to study in the Song during this period, see *Xianping pingong Wang Yinglin yubai* 咸平賓貢 王應麟 玉海 116 *xuanju keju* 選舉 科舉, in *Songdae Yōsa charyo chimmok* (hereafter SYCC), p. 416. In this thirteenth century record, the following successful candidates of the Song state exams are mentioned: in 980 Kang Chŏn 康戡, in 998 Kim Haengjŏk 金行績 [who probably is the same person as Kim Sŏngjŏk 金成績], and in 1034, Kang Mumin 康撫民. Another document in the same collection confirms that Kim Haengsŏng studied in the Song in 976.

<sup>104</sup> *Fanxue Zhang Ruyi Qunshu kaoshuo buji* 蕃學 章如愚 群書考索 後集 30 in SYCC, pp. 418-419.

<sup>105</sup> *KS* 11: 18b.

<sup>106</sup> *Fanxue Zhang Ruyi Qunshu kaoshuo buji* 蕃學 章如愚 群書考索 後集 30 in SYCC, pp. 418-419.; *KSC* 8: 8b; *KSC* 21a-b; *KS* 14: 16b.

<sup>107</sup> *KS* 5: 14b. In 1030, it was noticed in Koryŏ that this calendar differed on some points with the calendar made by Koryŏ's astronomers. An immediate investigation was ordered. In 1081 Koryŏ astronomers protested against adhering to what they perceived as idiosyncrasies in the Song calendar. Their protest was heard and the Song example was not followed. *KS* 9: 33a-b.

<sup>108</sup> In 1072, the Song emperor sent doctors to treat Munjong (*KS* 9: 1b). For similar entries, see *KS* 9: 10b-11a; *KS* 9: 11b; *KS* 12: 3a.

<sup>109</sup> *KS* 3: 23a-24a; *Wang Yinglin yubai* 154 *chaogong* 王應麟 玉海 154 朝貢 錫予外夷 in SYCC, p. 130.

shown by the donation of 579 books by a Song merchant in 1027.<sup>110</sup>

Buddhist knowledge was also exchanged between the two countries, most notably in the form of the already mentioned gift of the Song Tripitaka to Koryŏ in 991 and Ŭich'ŏn's 義天 travels to the Song to collect Buddhist manuscripts and to discuss Buddhist theology with eminent Song monks.<sup>111</sup> Nonetheless, exchange of Buddhist knowledge seems to have been relatively low in intensity. In marked contrast with the lively exchange conducted with the Liao, Koryŏ scholars and Buddhists did not habitually turn to the Song for Buddhist knowledge, with the aforementioned exception of Ŭich'ŏn.

The exchange of knowledge went both ways, although it seems to have become almost customary to stress the Song influence on Koryŏ. Koryŏ's generous financial support for the Koryŏ monastery in Hangzhou 杭州 ensured that Ŭich'ŏn's legacy as a Buddhist thinker was recognized during the Song and Yuan dynasties.<sup>112</sup> Song appeals to Koryŏ to send books no longer extant in the Song as well as Koryŏ books have also been preserved.<sup>113</sup> There even seems to have been a measure of interest in Koryŏ music; Koryŏ envoys are recorded as having performed 'Koryŏ music' on a full moon somewhere between 1078 and 1085.<sup>114</sup> Cultural achievements flowed both ways, both in material form (books, manuscripts, paintings and so forth) and in a less tangible form when envoys met and exchanged ideas and poems.<sup>115</sup> Pak Illyang in particular made a deep impression on Song scholars. His poems were published in the Song, together with those of his fellow envoy Kim Kŭn 金瑾 (the father of Kim Pushik).<sup>116</sup> The allusions in his poems were so intricate that even the most renowned Song court scholars had to look them up before being able to understand them.<sup>117</sup>

Nonetheless, despite the importance of official contacts between Koryŏ and the Song, the Koryŏ-Song relationship was ambiguous and prone to be disrupted by political troubles for long periods. The inherent imbalance perceived in this relationship by most studies on the

<sup>110</sup> *KS* 5: 9a-b.

<sup>111</sup> Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn 崔柄憲, "Ŭich'ŏn-gwa Song-ŭi Ch'ŏnt'aejong 義天과 宋의 天台宗," in *Kasan Yi Chiwang Sŏnim hwagap kinyŏm nonch'ong: Han'guk pulgyo munbwa sasang sa* 가산이지관스님화갑기념논총 한국불교문화사상사 (Seoul: Nonch'ong kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe 논총간행위원회, 1992), volume one, pp. 841-862; *KS* 10: 5b. One of the few mentions connected to Buddhism that can be found is an entry from 1120 in the *Koryŏsa*, when a Buddhist relic (teeth and bones from the historical Buddha) brought back from the Song by Wang Anji (see chapter seven) was moved to another site for enshrining. See *KS* 14: 33a. For an account of the Chinese side see: Chi-chiang Huang, "Ŭich'ŏn's pilgrimage and the rising prominence of the Korean monastery in Hang-chou during the Sung and Yuan periods," in *Currents and countercurrents: Korean influences on the East Asian Buddhist tradition* (Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2005), edited by Robert E. Buswell, Jr., pp. 242-276.

<sup>112</sup> Chi-chiang Huang, "Ŭich'ŏn's pilgrimage,"

<sup>113</sup> The Song emperor requested hundreds of books, mostly copies of Chinese works, see *KS* 10: 23a-26a. The following books were also requested by the Song: *Kuchimnyŏk* 九執曆, Koryŏ copies of sutra's 高麗佛經, Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn's *Kyewŏn p'iljŏng* 桂苑筆耕, Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn's *saryuk* 崔致遠四六, *Koryŏ ponsangsŏ* 高麗本尙書, *Tonghae samguk t'ongnok* 東海三國通錄, *Koryŏ illyŏk* 高麗日曆. See *Zhang Shinan Youbuan jiuwen* 張世南游宦紀聞 in *SYCC*, pp. 440-441.

<sup>114</sup> *Zhang Shinan Youbuan jiuwen* in *SYCC*, pp. 440-441.

<sup>115</sup> This was not always easy for Koryŏ envoys in the Song, given the distrust toward Koryŏ that was a constant presence in Koryŏ-Song relations, in particular after the second half of the eleventh century. Socializing with Song scholars was for instance not permitted to the visiting Koryŏ envoys. See for example Lu You, *Jiasbi jiuwen* 陸游家世舊聞 in *SYCC*, p. 192.

<sup>116</sup> Their collection of poems was called *Sobwajip* 小華集.

<sup>117</sup> Lu You, *Jiasbi jiuwen* in *SYCC*, p. 192.

subject is portrayed as a medieval *mission civilisatrice* on the part of the Song, which was to the benefit of Koryŏ. As shown above, this was partly true, but although with regard to the exchange of Sinitic cultural achievements Koryŏ was not exactly equal to the Song, it was not in a completely passive position either. In particular with regard to Buddhist knowledge, Koryŏ had much to offer. These exchanges, however, were formal and official. Even if Ŭich'ŏn's visit to the Song was not officially sanctioned by the Koryŏ court, his status as prince of the blood and his rather visible presence in the Song precluded his visit from being anything but formal, a fact that was reinforced by the generous financial donations the Koryŏ court made to the Koryŏ monastery in Hangzhou. Formal contacts (that is, contacts on state level or below sanctioned by both state bureaucracies) were perhaps more visible than informal contacts, but they were also less frequent, less long-lasting and ultimately less important than the informal contacts between the two states. Informal contacts continued when formal diplomatic ties were cut off; while Koryŏ envoys were received in an atmosphere of distrust and prejudice, Koryŏ and Song merchants exchanged their goods freely.

Trade formed an essential component of the informal contacts between Koryŏ and the Song. Trade with the Song existed from the establishment of the Song in 960 onwards, fitting into the maritime mercantile patterns of Koryŏ merchants, who had actively traded in the Yellow Sea area for several centuries. Interestingly, Koryŏ-Song trade seems to have increased in volume after official relations between the two states had been broken off in the last decade of the tenth century. From the 1030's onwards regular Song trading parties reached the Koryŏ court. The size of these parties often appears unspecified, but the fact that one such a party in 1038 consisted of 147 persons, another one in 1039 of 50 persons, and two parties in 1049 of 71 and 62 persons each, demonstrates that these parties were not insignificant.<sup>118</sup> The fact, too, that the members of these parties were received at court, although not necessarily by the ruler or other high dignitaries, corroborates this. It should further be mentioned that these Song merchants brought a form of tribute to Koryŏ, usually described as 'indigenous products' (*t'osanmul* 土產物). The *Koryŏsa* records the arrival of Song merchants in the eleventh and twelfth centuries seemingly independent from the political circumstances on the peninsula and in northeast Asia.<sup>119</sup> Song sources confirm the importance and the considerable volume of the Song-Koryŏ trade. Traded goods, which naturally differed across different periods, included ginseng, silver, safflower, fu ling 茯苓 (*wolfiporia cocos*), wax, deer musk, cloth, pine apples and pine flowers, grains, silk, buckthorn fruit, hazelnuts, and fang feng 防風 (*Ledebouriella seseloides*).<sup>120</sup> According to the *Songsbi*, trade with Koryŏ consisted mainly of cereals and hemp cloth.<sup>121</sup> It was further prohibited to trade copper cash with Koryŏ.<sup>122</sup>

The importance of the Koryŏ-Song trade is evinced by the number of visits by Song

<sup>118</sup> *KS* 6: 15b; *KS* 6: 18b; *KS* 7: 15b.

<sup>119</sup> See the *Koryŏsa*. Interestingly, Koryŏ guarded its trade with the Jurchen closely by making sure that Song merchants did not have access to the Jurchen trade. Jurchen traders only gained access to the Song court by accompanying Koryŏ embassies. See *KS* 95; 11b-12a.

<sup>120</sup> Lou Jun 羅濬, *Baokang shimingzhi* 寶慶四明志 6, in *SYCC*, pp. 117-120

<sup>121</sup> *SS* 487: 9a; *SS* 487: 12a.

<sup>122</sup> *SS* 37: 13a.

merchants to the Koryŏ court and by the fact that apparently specialized merchant houses came into being whose members traded with Koryŏ during the course of several generations.<sup>123</sup> At times, Koryŏ treated the Song merchants as de facto envoys; merchants were invited to the celebration of the P'algwanhoe (together with envoys of other states).<sup>124</sup> In 1055, “the 87 Song merchants among whom Xie Dechong 葉德寵 were lodged in the Obin'gwan 娛賓館, 105 Song merchants among whom Huang Za 黃拯 in the Yŏngbin'gwan 迎賓館, 48 Song merchants among whom Huang Zhu 黃助 in the Ch'ŏngha'gwan 清河館, and 150 persons among whom T'amna commander Ko Han 高漢 were lodged in the Chojonggwan 朝宗館 and all were treated to food.”<sup>125</sup> This not only shows the sizeable numbers of the Song merchant parties, but also their official status in Koryŏ. Their lodgings were the lodgings for official envoys. It should not pass unnoticed that this was during the period that Koryŏ and the Song did not maintain official contacts. Other merchants chose to permanently settle in Koryŏ, as shown in the case of one merchant who requested for his youngest son to be allowed to return to the Song permanently to care for his ailing mother.<sup>126</sup>

Given the position of the Song merchants in Koryŏ, it stands to reason to assume that they played a de facto role of diplomats or at the very least of messengers between the two states. The available evidence supports this assumption: messages between the two states travelled through the merchants.<sup>127</sup> Communication through merchants was not limited to messages passing between the Song and Koryŏ in one of the concerned states. As important were meetings at the Liao court, where both Song and Koryŏ merchant were regular visitors.<sup>128</sup> Through such a meeting, Munjong's wish to restore relations with the Song was conveyed to the Song emperor. In 1090, Song merchants even pleaded Koryŏ's case at the Song court, when Koryŏ wanted to send an embassy to the Song.<sup>129</sup>

The Song presence at the Koryŏ court was important, but as important was the Koryŏ presence in the Song, in particular in the trading ports of Mingzhou (modern Ningbo 宁波, Zhejiang), Hangzhou, and Dengzhou 登州 (modern Penglai). In 1117, a government office to deal with Koryŏ merchants and envoys was established there, interestingly by the name of Laiyuan-ju 來遠局, Bureau for Laiyuan, the name of a Liao frontier post at the northern bank of the Amnok and site of contention between Koryŏ and the Liao. Agricultural fields to finance the reception of Koryŏ envoys were established there and a shipyard was moved there to build ships for the Koryŏ-Song trade. Finally, a lodging for Koryŏ envoys, the *Gaoli sbixingguan* 高麗使行館 was built.<sup>130</sup> According to one account, the Samhan were visible from the summit of Puduo-shan 補陀山 near Mingzhou; prayers were offered there for the safe return of the city's

<sup>123</sup> The often long periods (several decades) that individuals traded with Koryŏ and the frequency with which a limited number of family names appear in the sources point at this phenomenon.

<sup>124</sup> *KS* 6: 11a.

<sup>125</sup> *KS* 7: 30a.

<sup>126</sup> *KS* 7: 35b.

<sup>127</sup> Lou Jun 羅潛, *Baokang sbimingzhi* 寶慶四明志 6, in *SYCC*, pp. 117-120; *Ti Gaoli xingkanzi* (Lou Yao gongbiji) 題高麗行看子: 樓鑰 攻婢集 3, in *SYCC*, p. 345.

<sup>128</sup> *Ti Gaoli xingkanzi* (Lou Yao gongbiji) 題高麗行看子: 樓鑰 攻婢集 3, in *SYCC*, p. 345.

<sup>129</sup> Su Shi 蘇軾, *Dongpo guanji* 東坡全集 103, in *SYCC*, p. 198.

<sup>130</sup> Lou Jun 羅潛, *baokang sbimingzhi* 寶慶四明志 6, in *SYCC*, pp. 117-120.

merchants from Koryŏ. Prayers were also offered by Koryŏ merchants in Mingzhou; the bells and brassware in the temple on top of the mountain had all been donated by merchants from the peninsula and were engraved with peninsular reign names.<sup>131</sup> The same account remarks that the inscriptions left by foreign merchants on the mountain summit were 'relatively well-crafted'. Another source dwelled on the quality of Koryŏ artefacts, in particular a Koryŏ scroll left in Mingzhou by a Koryŏ merchant.<sup>132</sup>

The importance of Mingzhou, Hangzhou and Dengzhou in relations with Koryŏ must to a certain extent be seen as separate from the Song; the role of these ports as trading ports predated the Song and as such was more or less independent from the Song. Shilla and Paekche envoys and traders had already established relations with these trading ports.<sup>133</sup> It cannot be emphasized enough that a decentralized perception of Koryŏ-Song relations is extremely important to understand its mechanics. To a large extent, the stimuli to engage in foreign trade and as a result in 'localized' foreign diplomacy did not come from the capital, but from the periphery. This was also the case for Shilla and Paekche envoys and merchants. Local Shilla powers, and not the state, sent envoys to the Five Dynasties in the tenth century on their own behalf; some of these later turned up as members of Koryŏ embassies to the Five Dynasties, suggesting that local initiative remained important.<sup>134</sup>

In all, it must be concluded that Koryŏ-Song trade was long-lasting, not interrupted by political disagreements, of sizeable volume and that it went both ways. Trading often took place in a distinct anti-Koryŏ atmosphere or in Koryŏ in an equally distinct pro-Liao atmosphere. The profitability of trading and the advantages these informal lines of communication inherently possessed ensured the continued existence of the trade. An account of 1170 shows how large the Song-Koryŏ trade was, as well as the apparently inevitable sense of paranoia or distrust that surrounded foreign merchants. When in 1170 there were rumours that the Jin would attack the Song, panic broke out when a fleet of several hundred ships was sighted. The panic only subsided when an astute official realized that it was not a Jin invasion fleet sailing towards the Song, but a Koryŏ merchant fleet.<sup>135</sup> Although the number of ships is probably an exaggeration, this event does show the strength of Koryŏ maritime trading ties with the Song.

The sense of distrust surrounding foreign merchants (or foreign visitors in general) was in effect understandable. When two Song emperors had been captured by the Jin in 1126, an important means by which the Song could gauge Koryŏ's willingness to help the Song was oral communication through established merchants.<sup>136</sup> As shown above, information travelled through these informal channels.<sup>137</sup> Of course, in some cases the availability of informal means

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<sup>131</sup> Zhang Bangji 張邦基, *Mozhuang manlu* 墨莊漫錄 5, in SYCC, p. 243.

<sup>132</sup> *Ti Gaoli xingkanzi* (Lou Yao gongbiji) 題高麗行看子: 樓鑰 攻婢集 3, in SYCC, p. 345.

<sup>133</sup> Wang Jinre 王欽若, *Cefu yuanqui* 冊府元龜 965-999, in SYCC pp. 68-71.

<sup>134</sup> Wang Jinre, *Cefu yuanqui* 965-999, in SYCC pp. 68-71.

<sup>135</sup> Yang Manli 楊萬里, *Cengqiji* 誠齋集 120 (碑 bi), in SYCC, p. 347.

<sup>136</sup> KS 16: 14b-15a.

<sup>137</sup> Another instance of the importance of informal means of communication dates from the years between 1067 and 1085, when a Song physician who had been in Koryŏ brought back a copy of a book (*Dongguan Hanji* 東觀漢記 by Liang Zhen 劉珍) sorely needed for a revision of *Hou Hanshu*, which was then being undertaken in the Song.



of communication could be harmful to the Song or to Koryŏ. In 1095, for instance, a Song monk visiting Koryŏ was not allowed to travel freely for fear of spying.<sup>138</sup> The Song employed a ‘person from Shilla’ to gather information from the Liao.<sup>139</sup> Koryŏ tried to do the same between 1068 and 1077, by instructing its envoys to the Song to buy maps from the regions they passed through and to make notes of the roads, mountains, streams and places which were particularly hard or particularly easy to navigate. The Koryŏ envoys would have succeeded, had it not been for one observant provincial official who took away their maps and informed the court.<sup>140</sup> Interestingly, this observant official was said to have taken as his example an early Song official who had gone to the Southern Tang with exactly the same goal of gathering information. A decree was subsequently issued that forbade people from selling maps and the like to persons from Koryŏ.<sup>141</sup>

Other channels of informal communication were maintained by Song émigrés, of whom there were a great many. From the late tenth century to the twelfth century, there was a constant arrival of Song émigrés.<sup>142</sup> It was official Koryŏ policy to bar Song émigrés from entering the country unless they were deemed of exceptional use, but the *Koryŏsa* shows that in practice Song persons were easily admitted into Koryŏ, because most of those who applied for residence in Koryŏ were deemed valuable.<sup>143</sup> Given the fact that most of the Song émigrés (or at least the leaders of a particular group) are mentioned by name in the *Koryŏsa*, it may be assumed that they consisted mostly of literate persons. Some of these émigrés rose to high positions within the central bureaucracy and most of them seem to have done reasonably well. Chu Chŏ, who had arrived in Koryŏ in 1005, rose to the position of confidant of Hyŏnjong.<sup>144</sup> In 1052, when Zhang Ting 張廷, a literatus from a well-known Chinese family, arrived in Koryŏ, Munjong even issued an edict, welcoming him and showering him with gifts and an appointment. In the edict, Munjong remarked that fate had been kind to Zhang, for it had let him to a ‘country of gentlemen’ and that, although his country of birth was different, he expected him to work hard for his new country.<sup>145</sup> Both generalist and specialist knowledge was appreciated by Koryŏ, judging from the reasons given for accepting Song literati as part of

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Instead of going through the official diplomatic channels, which were available at this time and were used in similar cases involving other requests, a private communication was sent to the physician: Shao Bo 邵博, *Henam Shao-shi wenjian boulu* 河南邵氏聞見後錄 9, in SYCC, p. 432.

<sup>138</sup> KS 10: 35b.

<sup>139</sup> Li Chou 李燾 *Zizhi tongjian zhangbian* 續資治通鑑長編 3-506, in SYCC, pp. 137-166.

<sup>140</sup> Shen Gua 沈括, *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談 13, *quanzhi* 權知, in SYCC, pp. 195-196

<sup>141</sup> Qian Shuoyou 潛說友, *Xianxiang linanzhi* 咸亨臨安志 40, *Zhaoling* 詔令 1, in SYCC, p. 197

<sup>142</sup> For an estimation of the number of Song émigrés and for the general background, see Pak Okkŏl, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi kwihwain yŏn'gu*.

<sup>143</sup> Able Song persons were welcomed in Koryŏ. One instance in 1081 shows that Koryŏ sometimes sent back persons from the Song who were deemed to be useless. An aspiring Song literatus had arrived in Koryŏ on a merchant ship, but after he admitted he had failed the Song state examinations several times, he was sent back to his own country. Apparently, Koryŏ could use able Chinese literati, but not failed ones. See KS 9: 31b. Another instance from 1071 tells of a Song émigré who was accepted into the Koryŏ bureaucracy, but who, on account of his greed and corruption, was relieved of his duties, had his property confiscated and was sent back to the Song. See KS 8: 37a.

<sup>144</sup> Song émigré Sin Su 慎修 died in 1101 after a career that had led him to the post of assistant executive in political affairs. He also received a posthumous name from the ruler. See KS 11: 26a.

<sup>145</sup> KS 7: 23a.

the Koryŏ bureaucracy.<sup>146</sup> The attraction such literati held for Koryŏ is rather obvious; in particular in the tenth century when the administrative apparatus was still being developed, the experience, knowledge and insights of these men were extremely valuable. Diplomatically, too, these Song émigrés could play important roles; not only did they speak the language (which most Koryŏ officials did not, even if they wrote it fluently), they could also rely on networks Koryŏ envoys had no access to.

Koryŏ's network of informal relations mainly consisted of the exchange of knowledge, the funding of a Chinese monastery, the employment of émigrés and most importantly, the maintenance of extensive trade relations. These informal relations were at the background of the political history of the Koryŏ-Song relationship, which is usually seen as defining all contacts with the Song. I hope to have shown in the above that this was most certainly not the case; these informal contacts lasted longer and were overall more important to Koryŏ than Koryŏ's official contacts with the Song. The diplomatic history of Koryŏ-Song relations is obviously not unimportant, but it should not pass unnoticed that in most respects it was less significant and less influential than two centuries of unbroken, intensive and multifaceted informal relations. The main importance of the official Koryŏ-Song relationship must be located in its ideological dimensions; in the influence it exercised on the stability in northeast Asia and, paradoxically perhaps, as a means of expressing Koryŏ-Song competition with regard to international power and prestige.

Relations with the Song were established from the inception of the Song dynasty in 960.<sup>147</sup> From the beginning, however, the Liao dynasty was an important factor in the relation between Koryŏ and the Song. It has often been portrayed as if the expansion of the Liao empire in a way disturbed the Koryŏ-Song relationship,<sup>148</sup> but in fact it was the other way

<sup>146</sup> Chu Chŏ 周佇 was admitted into Koryŏ in 1005 because he was a licentiate (KS 3: 35b). In 1057, a Song émigré was admitted because of his specialist knowledge in techniques of prophesying the future (KS 8: 6a-b). Three years later, another person was given an official appointment because of his literary skills (KS 8: 15b). The following year (1061), three Song scholars were directly given official appointments on the basis of their noted literary skills (KS 8: 16b-17a). Not everybody was accepted on faith; in 1068, the heir apparent himself supervised an examination of the literary and poetic qualifications of three Song scholars (KS 8: 32b). In 1101 and 1106, the ruler personally presided over a similar examination and awarded the successful candidates (KS 11: 25a; KS 12: 25a). In 1102, a recently arrived Song scholar was given a special examination and was awarded a special first place (*pyŏltu*) in the examinations. (KS 11: 34a).

<sup>147</sup> KS 2: 29a.

<sup>148</sup> An extreme opinion in this regard is presented in No Kyeŏn 盧啓鉉, "Koryŏ oegyosa sŏsŏl: Koryŏ cho'gi (Kwangjong-Sŏngjong-dae)-ŭi pukpang chŏngch'aek-gwa yŏngt'o hwakchang 高麗外交史序說; 高麗初期(光宗-成宗初)의 北方外交政策과 領土擴張," in *Han'guk pangsong t'ongsbindaebak nonmun* 한국방송통신대학 논문 9 (1988): pp. 291-310. In this study, Koryŏ's relations with the north are equated with the expansion of Koryŏ territory and its relations with the south with cultural exchange. This particular articulation of this point of view in this article is extreme and somewhat exaggerated and as such not representative for historiography on Koryŏ diplomacy. Nonetheless, it expresses a widely held assumption that underlies many other, infinitely more nuanced studies of the same period and subject. For the general background of these early relations, see Yi Chŏngshin, "T'aejo-ŭi tae-Kŏran chŏngch'aek-kwa Koryŏ kŏn'guk inyŏm-ŭi hyŏngsŏng 태조의 대거란 정책과 고려 건국이념의 형성," in Yi Chŏngshin, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi chŏngch'i pyŏndong-gwa taeoe chŏngch'aek* 고려시대의 정치변동과 대외정책 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa 景仁文化社, 2003), pp. 9-50. An earlier version of this article appeared in 2002 in *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 118, pp. 35-74 under the title "Koryŏ T'aejo-ŭi kŏn'guk inyŏm-ŭi hyŏngsŏng-gwa kungnae-oe chŏngse 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내외 정세"; Kang Taeryang (later known as Kang Chinch'ŏl 姜晉哲), "Koryŏ ch'ogi-

round. The Liao empire was established earlier than the Song and its contacts with Koryŏ also go back further.<sup>149</sup> Given the earlier Liao presence, it can be argued that the emergence of the Song as the unified Han Chinese dynasty disturbed the balance in Koryŏ-Liao relations. To be sure, this is exactly what happened. Threatened by the rapid expansion of the Liao empire, Koryŏ quickly allied itself with the Song during the reign of Kwangjong. Given the rather overt nature of Kwangjong's assertive imperial ambitions, it is hard to see this approach purely in the light of cultural rapprochement, although access to the Sinitic cultural resources was highly desired by Kwangjong.<sup>150</sup> The cultural exchange associated with the Song was from the beginning characterized by the juxtaposition with the Liao, both politically and culturally. While Sinitic cultural resources were imported by Koryŏ (and subsequently either adapted according to taste and necessity or discarded), there was a strong sense of suspicion with regard to the Song. When for instance in 992 a Koryŏ official visiting the Song unwittingly told the Song court too much about Koryŏ's domestic affairs, his fellow envoys denounced him for having leaked state secrets.<sup>151</sup>

Koryŏ-Song relations were defined by the presence of the Liao. The Song asked Koryŏ military assistance in 985 or 986, but Koryŏ declined, although according to one Song source, Sŏngjong did mobilize an army of 25,000 soldiers and had them cross the frontier before pulling them back.<sup>152</sup> The Liao pressure at Koryŏ's borders both prevented Koryŏ from joining in the Song attack and urged Koryŏ to find a way to withstand the pressure. An alliance with the Song was always a possibility, as is shown by the 992 visit to Koryŏ of Song envoy Liu Shi 劉式, who had been sent to Koryŏ in response to Koryŏ intimations that it wanted to re-establish ties with the Song.<sup>153</sup> This attempt was short-lived, for in 994 Koryŏ broke off its

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üi tae-Kŏran kwan'gye 高麗初期의 對契丹關係,” *Sahae* 史海 1 (1948); Yi Yongbŏm 李龍範, “10-12segi-üi kukche chŏngse 10-12世紀의 國際情勢,” in *Han'guksa* 韓國史 4 (Seoul: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1981); Sŏ Sŏngho 서성호, “Koryŏ T'aejodae tae-Kŏran chŏngch'aeg-üi ch'u'i-wa sŏngkyŏk 고려 태조대 대거란정책의 추의와 성격,” *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnshil* 34 (1999): pp. 16-49; Kim Chaeman, “契丹, 高麗國交前史,” *Inmun sabak* 人文科學 15 (1986): pp. 99-136.

<sup>149</sup> Contacts with the Liao date back to the period when Koryŏ had not yet unified the peninsula. See Han Kyuch'ŏl, “Hu Samguk shidae Koryŏ-wa Kŏran kwan'gye 後三國時代 高麗와 契丹의 關係,” in *Pusan sach'ong* 富山史叢 1 (1985): pp. 1-46.

<sup>150</sup> See chapter six.

<sup>151</sup> *KS* 3: 24a. The official in question, Chang Injŏn 張仁詮, was spared punishment after a personal intervention of the Song emperor. The incident shows, however, the inherent distrust between the two states and their competition to know as much about each other as possible.

<sup>152</sup> *Beifa shiyi Gaoli zhao* 北伐遣使諭高麗詔 (*Song daxbaolingji* 宋大詔令集 237, *zhengshi* 政事 90, *shiyi* 四裔 10, *Gaoli* 高麗), in *SYCC*, p. 204. Song envoy Han Guohua 韓國華 went to Koryŏ to ask for military support for the conquest of the Liao. Song sources specify 986 as the date for this event, while the *Koryŏsa* has the events take place in 985. Also see *Han gong Guobua muzhiming* 韓國華墓誌銘 in *SYCC*, pp. 444-445, where it is mentioned that Sŏngjong dispatched an army led by *taesang* Han Kwang 大相韓光元 and *wŏnbo* Cho Hang 元輔趙抗. Neither of these names appears in other sources, but both titles are titles for local nobles which were also often used by Jurchen chieftains. This raises the interesting possibility that Sŏngjong used Jurchen to nominally comply with the Song request to provide military assistance. See *KS* 75: 45a. This interpretation is lent support by the assertion, found in several Song sources but unattested in Koryŏ sources, that Jurchen troops fought alongside Koryŏ troops against the Khitan in 1010. Xie Longli 葉隆禮, *Qidan guozhi* 契丹國志 7, Zhenghe 政和 28, eleventh month, in *SYCC*, pp. 542-543; Chen Jun 陳均, *Huangchao biannian gangmu beiyao* 皇朝編年綱目備要 3-28, in *SYCC*, pp. 175-177.

<sup>153</sup> Liu Chang 劉敞, *Gongsbiji* 公是集 51, *jiachuan* 家傳, p. 448

relations with the Song, after the Song had refused to send military support to Koryŏ to fight the Liao.<sup>154</sup>

The breaking off of official relations was to a certain extent expected by Koryŏ. The Koryŏ court knew fully well that the Song were not in a position to offer military assistance.<sup>155</sup> Also, as the sources clearly show, informal relations continued; trading went on as usual and Song émigrés kept coming to Koryŏ. Unofficial contacts on state level also continued. A Koryŏ embassy visited the Song in 999 and explained the circumstances in Koryŏ, the difficult relations with the Liao and Koryŏ's desire to emulate the Song.<sup>156</sup>

The 1010 Liao invasion of Koryŏ and the tense international situation that emerged on account of it in the first three decennia of the eleventh century offered new changes for Koryŏ-Song rapprochement. The Song court followed the course of events in Koryŏ closely and emperor Zhenzong 眞宗 even asked his councillors for advice when Koryŏ was invaded. Wang Dan 王旦 persuaded the emperor to refrain from helping Koryŏ and it was decided that Song support would stop at receiving Koryŏ refugees.<sup>157</sup> The reasons for not sending troops to Koryŏ were twofold; the amelioration of relations with the Liao after the 1005 treaty of Shanyuan and Koryŏ's negligence as a vassal state. The same situation also offered chances for Liao-Song rapprochement; various Song sources mention a Liao initiative to invade Koryŏ together with the Song. The Liao envoy stated that Koryŏ was a negligent Liao vassal, that the Liao court had heard Koryŏ was now a Song vassal and explained Koryŏ's circumstances to the Song court, proposing that the Liao and Song should attack Koryŏ together. This proposal was made somewhere between 1022 and 1032 and although the regentess Mingsu taihou 明肅太后, the widow of Zhenzong, was strongly in favour of it, Lu Yijian 呂夷簡 (979-1044) advised against it.<sup>158</sup> Against the background of the crushing defeat inflicted upon the Liao armies in 1018 by Kang Kamch'an and the continued tense relation between the Liao and Koryŏ, this proposal is understandable. If the Song had agreed to cooperate, at the very least the Liao would have been able to field more troops and use more resources otherwise committed to the Song border. Nothing, though, came of the plan.

Unofficial relations with the Song on the state level continued after the 1010 invasion. In 1014, during a visit of Koryŏ envoys, the Song court decided to establish a lodging place for Koryŏ envoys in Dengzhou.<sup>159</sup> This, however, did not mean that the Song tried to support Koryŏ against the danger of a new Liao invasion.<sup>160</sup> Nonetheless, Koryŏ used Song reign period names in 1016 and 1018, perhaps giving rise to the Liao suspicion that Koryŏ was now

<sup>154</sup> KS 3: 27b; Chen Jun, *Huangchao biannian gangmu beiyao* 3-28, in SYCC, pp. 175-177.

<sup>155</sup> Twitchett and Klaus Peter Tietze, "The Liao", pp. 84-91.

<sup>156</sup> KS 3: 32b-33a. During the late tenth century, Koryŏ was not yet considered hostile in the Song. It was on the contrary considered to be the successor state of Mahan and as such a "country of gentlemen". *Chai gong Chengwu mu zhiming* 柴公成務墓誌銘 in SYCC, pp. 446-447

<sup>157</sup> Zhu Yi 朱翌, *Yijueliao zaji hsia* 猗覺寮雜記下, in SYCC, p. 182.

<sup>158</sup> Chen Jun, *Huangchao biannian gangmu beiyao* 3-28, in SYCC, pp. 175-177; Zhu Hsi 朱熹, *Er Cheng yishu 2 hsia* 二程遺書 2下, *Fudongjianlu hou* 附東見錄後, in SYCC, pp. 183-184; *Zhu His wuchao mingchen yanxinglu* . 4朱熹五朝名臣言行錄 6-1, *Chengxiang xuguo Lu Wenjing gong* 丞相許國呂文靖公, in SYCC, pp. 184-185.

<sup>159</sup> KS 4: 16b.

<sup>160</sup> KS 4: 19a-b. In 1015 a Koryŏ request for support was refused. Instead of troops, Koryŏ received the advise to devise a way to save themselves.

again a vassal of the Song, and an entry in the *Koryŏsa* of 1019 suggests that Song envoys, despite their lack of official status, were treated as official envoys.<sup>161</sup> After 1018 there seems to have been no official contact with the Song; the defeat of the invading Liao armies had significantly lessened the dangers Koryŏ had to face and subsequently little effort was made to draw the Song into the conflict. As was shown above, Koryŏ was perhaps lucky that the Song were not interested in entering the conflict on the side of the Liao.

The absence of official contacts did not interrupt unofficial relations from blossoming. From the third decade of the eleventh century onwards, the *Koryŏsa* records the arrival of hundreds of merchants each year and tens of well-educated Song émigrés, which continued until the twelfth century. Relations between Koryŏ and the Song, then, from the 1030's to the 1080's were intensive and fruitful, except on the level of the state. The presence of Song and Koryŏ merchants and their trade was one of the reasons the Secretariat-Chancellery gave for their opposition to Ūich'ŏn's proposed visit to the Song: it was not necessary "since merchant ships bring us rare treasures every day, without fail".<sup>162</sup>

The middle of the eleventh century was a period for Koryŏ to recover from the century's devastating beginning, both internationally on account of the Liao invasions and domestically with regard to the irregular accession to the throne of Hyŏnjong and the murder of Mokchong. There were intermittent discussions about re-establishing contacts on state level with the Song, but there were two important reasons why this did not happen. Koryŏ had recognized the Liao Son of Heaven and benefited much from its relationship with the Liao. The military threat the Liao had posed was not mentioned in these discussions. Indeed, it seems that the 1018 defeat of the Liao had given the Koryŏ court sufficient confidence in their military abilities to be able not to worry about Liao military power. The second reason was simply that Koryŏ stood little to gain from renewed official contacts with the Song given the intensity of their informal contacts.<sup>163</sup>

There is a very intriguing Song policy memorial extant that reflects how Koryŏ was looked upon by a large part of the Song officials. It dates from 1044 and highlights some of the defining points of the Koryŏ-Liao and Koryŏ-Song relationships, points which modern historians have sometimes overlooked. The factuality of the memorial may be doubted, for it errs more than once on dates and events, but it displays a crucial understanding of Koryŏ and the Song's position with regard to Koryŏ. It is important that an understanding such as this was formed during decades of intensive contact with Koryŏ and that the sometimes radical ideas articulated in it should be seen against the background of the less than tranquil northeast Asian international situation during the first half of the eleventh century. The memorial was written by Fu Bi 富弼, a high Song official and the part dealing with Koryŏ was item ten in a list of thirteen. The basic point of departure was the time-tested policy of fighting fire with fire, or having barbarians fighting other barbarians. In this regard, it is noted that Koryŏ was the only state not to have been conquered by the Liao. Koryŏ was furthermore a civilized state, for

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<sup>161</sup> *KS* 4: 23a; *KS* 4: 28b; *KS* 4: 31a.

<sup>162</sup> *KS* 8: 11a.

<sup>163</sup> *KS* 8: 11a.

people read books there and it had not given in to Liao demands without a fight, even though in the end it had recognized the Liao Son of Heaven as its suzerain. The writer argues that “the Khitan knew that this [submission] was not what Koryŏ truly wanted” and that “as was to be expected, Koryŏ in the end retained the wish to come and submit to the [Song] court”. To support this claim, the writer referred to Sŏngjong’s request for military aid in 994 (although he did not care to repeat the Song request for Koryŏ military aid in 985 or 986 which had been rejected by Koryŏ). The writer’s understanding of the history of Koryŏ-Song relations seems a bit muddled,<sup>164</sup> but what matters here is the plan he unfolded to deal with Koryŏ. Fu proposed to send an envoy to Koryŏ to instigate trouble with the Liao and to promise Koryŏ the return of its old territory now in possession of the Liao (or perhaps Fu meant Koguryŏ’s old territory, this is not completely clear) and all the people and goods it captured, if it agreed to attack the Liao together with the Song. The rationale for this proposal was fundamental distrust of Koryŏ, which despite its civilization was nonetheless essentially a barbarian nation in Fu’s estimation. The writer was convinced that the Liao planned an attack with Koryŏ on the Song and that both states would split the territory. There are no documents in either Liao or Koryŏ sources that support this allegation, but Fu took this possibility seriously; in a note, he remarks that given Koryŏ’s geographical location it would be difficult to maintain its continental possessions, so that Koryŏ planned to completely plunder and lay waste the Song territories. He further mentions that ever since Koryŏ’s armies had routed the Liao armies in 1018 (he mistakenly places this battle in 1025), the Liao were afraid of Koryŏ, even though nominally Koryŏ was the Liao’s vassal. The solution for the predicament of the Song was to stay close to Koryŏ to prevent it from joining up with the Liao and let Koryŏ do the Song’s dirty work.<sup>165</sup>

This understanding of Koryŏ, a mixture of recognition of its internalization of Sinitic cultural resources, its military strength, its diplomatic unreliability and its position as the state that could give either the Song or the Liao military ascendancy, was typical of the majority of Song officials during the eleventh century. When in the 1070’s Ŭich’ŏn went to the Song and Munjong actively tried to re-establish relations with the Song, the Song reaction was not unequivocally positive.<sup>166</sup> Relations with Koryŏ were not desirable, because there was little to

<sup>164</sup> He states that four consecutive Koryŏ envoys pleading for admittance as a Song vassal were turned away in 1024, who were “like a thirsty person looking at a drink, like a starving person looking at food”. There are no records of Koryŏ envoys going to the Song during the 1020’s, but it seems the writer actually meant the year 1017, one year before the Liao invasion and subsequent Liao defeat of 1018, which he had mistakenly placed in 1025. In 1016, Koryŏ envoy Kwak Wŏn 郭元 went to the Song to ask for assistance, returning in 1017. His plea was as mentioned before ignored by the Song court.

<sup>165</sup> Fu Bi, *Hsiang Renzong Hebei sbouyu sbisance* 上仁宗河北守禦十三策 (originally in Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚, *Song mingchen zouyi* 宋名臣奏議 135) in SYCC, pp. 292-293.

<sup>166</sup> For some other instances, see Zhao Bowen 邵伯濶, *Henan Shao-shi wenjian qianlu* 河南邵氏聞見前錄 4, in SYCC, p. 295; *Su Shi Dongpo guanji* 蘇軾東坡全集 103, in SYCC, p. 297; Lu You, *Jiashi jiuwen* in SYCC, p. 192. Given the distrust of the Song, private socializing with Song scholars by Koryŏ envoys was also discouraged or even prohibited. Nonetheless, in particular Pak Illyang 朴寅亮 was a popular figure whose poetry was much admired by his Song peers; see Zhu Mu 祝穆, *Fangyu sbenglan* 方輿勝覽 45, in SYCC, p. 245. The use of the proper reign names also was a contentious issue. To avoid problems, Koryŏ used the stem and branches system and avoided the Song reign names. This, however, frequently caused problems. See Su Shi, Zhu Mu *Fangyu sbenglan* 1, in SYCC, p. 266; *Wangxiongzi zhanduanming Su Shi muzhiming* 亡兒子瞻端明(蘇軾)墓誌銘 in SYCC, p. 266; Zhu Mu, *Fangyu sbenglan* 4 5, in SYCC, p. 245. In 1092, envoy Yi Chaüi 李子威 made an enormous mistake by using the current Liao reign name

gain and much to lose, in particular if the Liao would suspect the Song of trying to forge an alliance with Koryō. Representative of this negative view of Koryō was Song official Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), who opposed the reception of Koryō envoys numerous times, an act that was emulated by lower-ranking officials as well.<sup>167</sup> The Koryō envoys did after all not possess the proper credentials in the Song view of the world to be accorded full honours as foreign ambassadors. Despite the mistrust, though, Koryō's strength as a potential ally brought the two states closer at the end of the eleventh century. In 1078, the Song emperor's birthday was celebrated in Koryō and a Song embassy was received at court.<sup>168</sup> Responding to Munjong's health problems, 88 members of a Song medical delegation arrived in Koryō in 1079 to treat the Koryō ruler. The list of medicinal herbs they brought with them was incredibly long.<sup>169</sup> Regular contacts were re-established and Koryō envoys were sent to the Song in 1085 and 1090.<sup>170</sup> Relations between the Song and the Liao determined the reception of the Koryō envoys to some extent; Koryō envoys enjoyed a lesser reception than the Liao envoys in general and also than the Xi Xia envoys.<sup>171</sup> During the decline of the Liao in the early twelfth century, the Song cultivated relations with Koryō<sup>172</sup>, but after Koryō had recognized the Jin as successor of the Liao, the status of Koryō envoys was again demoted.<sup>173</sup>

While the decline of the Liao had somewhat relaxed the habitual strain on Koryō-Song relations, the rise of the Jin created considerable tension. Above, I have discussed the Jurchen rise to the position of the northern dynasty; here I shall restrict the discussion to the Song response to it with regard to Koryō. After the Song emperor's gift of the Song ritual music to Koryō in 1114 and 1116, communication channels were wide open and Yejong warned the Song emperor not to deal with the Jurchen in the conquest of the Liao, because the Jurchen "were like tigers and wolves".<sup>174</sup> The Song nonetheless did, only to be attacked by the Jin and having two emperors captured in 1126. In the same year, Koryō officially recognized the Jin as the new northern dynasty.<sup>175</sup> It defended its actions towards the Song with the argument that Song envoys had visited the Jin and had treated the Jin as they had the Liao

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on a document for the Song emperor. A diplomatic row ensued. *KS* 10: 29b. At other times, Song officials simply refused to receive Koryō envoys on the formal grounds that the difference in rank between a high Song bureaucrat and an unofficial Koryō envoy was too big to allow a meeting. See Wang Gong 王鞏, *Jianwen jinlu* 聞見近錄, in *SYCC*, p. 268.

<sup>167</sup> Su Shi 蘇軾, *Dongpo guanji* 東坡全集 103, in *SYCC*, p. 297.

<sup>168</sup> *KS* 9: 18a; *KS* 9: 18a-22ba. The Koryō court was ecstatic over the Song visit, but disappointed by the greed of the envoys themselves. In 1081 the Song emperor's birthday was again celebrated (*KS* 9: 31b).

<sup>169</sup> *KS* 9: 24a-26b. Another physician was sent to Koryō in 1080 (*KS* 9: 30a). Judging from the fact that he was recorded in the *Koryōsa* with his name, Ma Shian 馬世安 and from the fact that this was his second visit (*KS* 9: 11b), he probably was a well-known practitioner of the medical arts.

<sup>170</sup> An embassy was sent in 1085 to congratulate the new emperor (*KS* 10: 6a-b) and another one was sent in 1090 (*KS* 10: 21a-b). As mentioned before, this time there was significant opposition, most notable by Su Shi, but Song merchants intervened successfully on Koryō's behalf. Su Shi 蘇軾, *Dongpo guanji* 東坡全集 103, in *SYCC*, p. 198.

<sup>171</sup> *Gaoliguo jinfengshi jianciyi* 高麗國進奉使見辭儀 155, in *SYCC*, pp. 199-189.

<sup>172</sup> *KS* 13 1109; also see chapter seven

<sup>173</sup> Xie Mengde 葉夢得, *Shilin yanyu* 石林燕語 7, in *SYCC*, p. 190.

<sup>174</sup> Zhang Duanyi 張端義, *Guierji hsia* 貴耳集 下, in *SYCC*, p. 180.

<sup>175</sup> *KS* 15: 10b-21a. The entire year 1126, the question whether or not to recognize the Jin was constantly debated. The question was also put to the royal ancestral shrines. In the end, it was decided that Koryō should recognize the Jin as the successor state to the Liao.

before, befriending and appeasing them. Why then should a small and weak country like Koryŏ not follow that example and treat the Jin as they had the Liao, now that the Liao had been replaced by the Jin?<sup>176</sup>

At approximately the same time, a large Koryŏ embassy, consisting of 292 people among whom was Kim Pushik, was stuck in Mingzhou, not able to proceed to the Song court because of the Jin attack on the Song.<sup>177</sup> The embassy returned without having been able to visit the Song court, but not long afterwards a Song envoy visited Koryŏ to convince it of giving the Song direct access over land to go the Jin and negotiate the release of the Song emperors.<sup>178</sup> Koryŏ refused to help the Song and did not permit its envoys to pass through Koryŏ. Koryŏ sources are silent on the particulars of this refusal, but it is noteworthy that according to a Song source, the decision to refuse the Song was in effect taken by erstwhile envoy to the Song Kim Pushik, his elder brother Kim Puil and Ch'oe Hongjae 崔弘宰.<sup>179</sup> This refusal was consistent with Koryŏ's policy towards the Song. Koryŏ was always observant with regard to its own safety and profit and the proper place of the Song in Koryŏ's worldview: second to the northern dynasty. It is, then, not the refusal itself that is of interest here, but the fact that Kim Pushik was behind it. His decision to refuse the Song quite clearly demonstrates the distance a figure like Kim felt with regard to the Song as well as, once again, the ease with which scholars such as him approached the Jin.

After Koryŏ's refusal, official relations with the Song deteriorated and remained low-key.<sup>180</sup> Trade, of course, was as brisk as ever. Significant official contacts took again place when Myoch'ŏng rebelled in Sŏgyŏng in 1135. The Song offered an army of 100,000 soldiers to put down the rebellion, but Koryŏ refused, citing its own successful repression of the rebellion (which was a lie), so that Song assistance was not necessary, and that it would be too far away for Song troops anyway.<sup>181</sup> Another, somewhat enigmatic incident dates from 1148, when Koryŏ uncovered something that was apparently a conspiracy to conquer Koryŏ.<sup>182</sup> After that, official contacts again decreased in intensity.

The Koryŏ-Song relationship covered a period of more than two centuries. After reviewing the sources, it may be concluded that the emphasis, found in most modern studies on this subject, on the desirability on the part of Koryŏ of intimate relations with the Song and the cultural-political influence of this relationship on Koryŏ is not justified. Far from the idealized relationship between the paradigm of Sinitic culture and its most talented and avid student, the historical Koryŏ-Song relationship was one marred by deep-rooted mutual distrust (both on the state level and on the personal level), frequent reluctance to deal with

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<sup>176</sup> *KS* 15: 17a-b

<sup>177</sup> *Jingkang yaolu* 靖康要錄 9, in *SYCC*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>178</sup> Xiong Ke 熊克, *Zhongxing xiaoji* 中興小紀, in *SYCC*, pp. 133-135; *KS* 15: 29a-32b.

<sup>179</sup> Xiong Ke, *Zhongxing xiaoji*, in *SYCC*, pp. 133-135.

<sup>180</sup> A request by Injong in 1129 to send an embassy was denied and an embassy that set sail for the Song in 1132 was shipwrecked. Xiong Ke, *Zhongxing xiaoji*, in *SYCC*, pp. 133-135.

<sup>181</sup> *KS* 16: 35a.

<sup>182</sup> Two men from Koryŏ and one from the Song who was in Koryŏ had made plans to have Koryŏ invaded by the Song and stir up domestic troubles to make the conquest easier. They sent along their plans and the maps they had procured with a Song merchant, but another merchant saw the plans and the maps and informed on them. The three disappeared into Koryŏ's dungeons and were killed. See *KS* 17: 26a-b.



each other, and unreliability. On the positive side there was sincere admiration for both individuals and the culture they represented and impressive resourcefulness to continue relations amidst adverse circumstances. The only constant in this relationship was the presence, continuity and volume of informal contacts in the form of bilateral trade, information exchange and the small but steady trickle of Song émigrés to Koryŏ. Combined with the neglected role of the northern dynasty in Koryŏ history, discussed earlier, this prepares the ground for a different kind of understanding of Koryŏ's diplomatic relations and its worldview as expressed in these relations. Perhaps the most important thing to be learned from an analysis of the Koryŏ-Song relationship is that this relationship should be examined while looking at Koryŏ's other relations and that it for an important part consisted of a long and predominantly informal series of non-exclusive contacts. The following entry in the *Koryŏsa* may be said to represent Koryŏ's worldview with regard to international relations:

In 1020 Ch'oe Chean 崔齊顏 was dispatched to the Khitan to congratulate the Liao emperor on his birthday and Kim Maeng 金猛 was sent to the Song.<sup>183</sup>

It may be argued that this instance of simultaneously dispatching envoys to different countries was occasioned by the special circumstances at the time. This was undoubtedly the case, but such circumstances were always present. In essence, Koryŏ diplomacy was pluralist, which meant that through its entire existence (until the Mongol conquest) Koryŏ had to navigate between different international demands and needs; not only politically (that is the nature of international relations after all), but also ideologically. Koryŏ always struggled to give the Song a place next to the Liao and the Jin, which at times was expressed in rapprochement, at other times as distancing. In this regard it is instructive to listen to what Koryŏ commentators, historians themselves, had to say about the subject. Yi Chehyŏn 李齊賢 wrote a commentary on Munjong's reign, part of which reads as follows:

Each year letters that praised the king arrived from the Song and in the Liao rituals were held each year in honour of the birthday of the king. The Wae in the east crossed the sea and offered treasure and the barbarians in the north crossed our borders and received land and houses. For these reasons Im Wan called Munjong our country's wise and sagacious ruler.<sup>184</sup>

Another historian's comment on Yejong's reign is in a similar vein, although less positive. According to the Koryŏ historian that appraised Yejong's reign, Yejong was too much centred on the Song and too little on the Liao:

But [Yejong] wanted to enlarge Koryŏ territory and expected to succeed in this by merely depending on good fortune, so there came no end to the bad relations [with the tribes at the border]. He worshipped Sinitic culture and appointed Hu Zongdan 胡宗旦 [to various posts]. Seduced by Hu's words, Yejong was not able to avoid mistakes. But

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<sup>183</sup> *KS* 4: 34b.

<sup>184</sup> *KS* 9: 37b. Note incidentally the distinction made here between the Liao and northern barbarians.

since he knew that it was not an easy task to mobilize an army, he swallowed his pride and established friendly ties [with the north], by means of which he impressed the frontier people who came to submit to him.<sup>185</sup>

This appraisal is right on the mark.<sup>186</sup> Yejong leaned more towards the Song than towards the by then declining Liao. Nonetheless, even with his proclivity for things Chinese, Yejong knew that relations with the north were of supreme importance for Koryŏ, even though his policy towards the north was aggressive. The criticism on his reign, however, shows that this was not expected from and not to be condoned in a Koryŏ ruler. His father Sukchong had endeavoured to steer a course that appreciated Koryŏ's position with regard to the Song and the Liao:

Since I was entrusted with the affairs of the state, I have always endeavoured to cautiously maintain diplomatic ties with the Liao in the north and serve the Song in the south, while these days the Jurchen in the east have become enemies to be reckoned with. Making the people comfortable is the first imperative of military and political affairs, so all unnecessary *corvée* duties must be abolished in order for the people to live comfortably!<sup>187</sup>

The understanding of Koryŏ's position in northeast Asia and the realization that pluralist diplomacy was a necessity in order to survive for Koryŏ was not limited to Koryŏ. Song envoy An Chou 安燾 visited Koryŏ in 1078, at the height of its relations with the Liao and at the very moment when official relations with the Song were re-established. In his estimation, Koryŏ was right to "serve the Liao as the greater country", while looking toward the Song as the embodiment of Sinitic civilization. Received by Munjong, An Chou took a different approach than most Song envoys by stressing that revering Sinitic culture was equivalent to serving the greater country and that it was important to treat each state according to what was needed. For An, the Liao needed to be recognized as Koryŏ's suzerain. He conceded at bottom that Koryŏ's adoption of Song culture need not be accompanied by Koryŏ's recognition of the Song as its suzerain. An Chou, in other words, recognized the validity of Koryŏ diplomacy. He may have expressed a minority opinion among Song officials, but according to his biography, many people back home thought that this was a prudent approach, showing his grasp of this intricate problem.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> *KS* 14: 42b-43a.

<sup>186</sup> As explained in chapter twelve, Yejong tried to use the introduction of Song ritual music as a means to shore up royal authority and to defend Koryŏ against the emerging Jurchen: "[Proper administration] should not do away with or incline too much to either one side of diplomacy or warfare. Lately, however, the brigands of our vassal territories are becoming increasingly restless. I deem it to be [an] urgent [task] for our civil and military officials to mend their suits of armour and drill their troops. I remember with longing how emperor Shun used to propagate civilized virtue and have both the dances of the military and of the civilians danced at both of these two branches. He thus appeased the Yumo barbarians in no more than seventy days. Now that the Song emperor has specially bestowed the gift of *taesŏngak* upon us, the dances of the civilian and military branches should first be performed at our ancestral shrines and then also at banquets and during memorial services." See *KS* 70: 13b-14a.

<sup>187</sup> *KS* 11: 13b.

<sup>188</sup> "An Chou 安燾" (originally in Wang Cheng 王稱, *Dongdu shilue* 東都事略 96, liechuan 列傳 79) in *SYCC*, p. 449. Song mainstream opinion was represented by the view that Koryŏ rather served the Song than the Liao, but was

There is a certain amount of realism or pragmatism to be discerned in Koryŏ's relations with the Song, Liao and Jin, which does not mean that this pragmatism was divorced from ideological concerns. On the contrary, as William James has argued, pragmatism is "the doctrine that the whole 'meaning' of a conception expresses itself in practical consequences, either in the shape of conduct to be recommended, or of experiences to be expected, if the conception be true."<sup>189</sup> With this in mind, Koryŏ's foreign affairs may be thought of as the "practical consequences" of its pluralist conception of the world surrounding it. Practical also in the sense that this pluralism made it easier to accommodate change. At the risk of stating the obvious, I am not referring to pragmatism in the reductionist sense that it is often used, namely a mode of analysis that only looks at social, political and perhaps economic circumstances. This would not suffice to explain Koryŏ foreign policy, or, I would add, any foreign policy at all.

James' idea of pragmatism seems to hold true for Koryŏ, largely because in James' estimation, ideas and beliefs are important in reaching conclusions and deciding on actions to be taken. Although consistency with regard to Koryŏ attitudes to its neighbours is not always easily located, seen over the *longue durée* and from an ideological perspective, Koryŏ diplomacy was quite consistent in the sense that it never became exclusive, relying on neither Liao, Song or Jin to protect itself. Sŏ Hŭi's memorials to Sŏngjong reflect this precarious but effective balancing act between Koryŏ's neighbours, which heavily relied on Koryŏ's military self-sufficiency:

If provisions are sufficient, then a fortress can be defended and war can be won. Whether troops win or lose does not depend on their strength, but only on whether they can take advantage of rifts and move quickly. [...] [The Khitan] vow to take the former Koguryŏ territory stems from their fear of us. It is not a good strategy therefore to cut off the land north of the Western Capital and give it to [the Khitan], for as we see, their military strength is already too great. [...] It is my hope that Your Majesty will return to the capital and let us, your officers, wage one more battle. Even then, it will not be too late to discuss our peace offer....<sup>190</sup>

The advice given to the heir apparent, the future Injong, by Kim Puŭi, almost 150 years later echoes the same concerns and a similar perception of Koryŏ's position in the international world:

The king asked [Puŭi] about the border defence policy and he answered him as follows: When Du Mu of the Tang answered an inquiry about current affairs, he wrote that there is no better policy than self-government and when emperor Zhenzong of the Song discussed the border defence policy with Wen Yanfu, [Wen] answered that the first

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prohibited from doing so by the strong Liao state on its northern border. This understanding was not unambiguous; while on the one hand, it recognized that Koryŏ was to a certain extent sinified, Koryŏ was clearly understood as belonging to the northern peoples, including Parhae, Liao and Jin. This understanding testifies of a rather typical central perspective on international relations. See Chao Shuozhi 晁說之, *Songsban wenji xuyi* 嵩山文集 2 奏議, in SYCC, p. 547.

<sup>189</sup> William James, "Pragmatic and pragmatism," in *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (Macmillan, New York, 1901-1905), edited by J.M. Baldwin, vol. 2 (1902), pp. 321-322.

<sup>190</sup> KSC 2: 49b-52b. I have borrowed the translation from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, pp. 298-299.

priority is to govern oneself, not to invade other countries and not to help distant countries. Wang Anshi evaluated this opinion as proper and further said that if one governs oneself well, even in a small country of only 70 *li* one can be ruler of a realm. Mencius said that a country of 1000 *li* does not have to be afraid of other countries, but the reason that we, while our realm covers a 1000 *li*, are afraid of others, is because we do not govern ourselves. At present, Koryŏ occupies the old territories of the Three Han and how could that be no more than 70 *li*? Nonetheless, we fear other countries and this must be undoubtedly so because we do not make it our priority to govern ourselves. [...]

Using one's strong points and observing the changes in the situation of the enemy is precisely what Liang Shang suggested and this is extremely appropriate for our present situation. We should have the walls of the capital and of the garrisons of each province made higher and the moats dug deeper. We should keep in stock powerful arrows, poisoned arrows, cannon and flare rockets and we should dispatch people to supervise and manage this by meting out appropriate rewards and punishments.<sup>191</sup>

The history of Koryŏ diplomacy has amply demonstrated that the essence of Kim Puŏi's advice to Injong and Sŏ Hŭi's advice to Sŏngjong, Koryŏ's nurturing of its capability to rely on its own strength, was implemented as policy and usually worked.<sup>192</sup> From the establishment of the dynasty until its surrender to the Mongols at the end of the thirteenth century, this awareness functioned as the guiding principle in establishing, maintaining and breaking off diplomatic relations. Sŏ's advice was directly inspired by the invasion of the Khitan army and as such was practical and particular, while Kim's more general exposition can be seen as an abstract elaboration of the same principle. Although it may be obvious that the maintenance of this principle brought with it a certain stability in Koryŏ's foreign relations, it will be immediately clear that the positioning of Koryŏ at the centre of the international world also implied an inherent instability in the choosing of its diplomatic partners. If pluralism is discussed in Koryŏ foreign relations, the changeability of Koryŏ's most important diplomatic partner and Koryŏ's simultaneous maintenance of relations with other states that could lay claim to this position are its most important ingredients. Another pluralistic dimension is found in the relations themselves. The Koryŏ-Liao relationship is perhaps the most

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<sup>191</sup> *KS* 97: 3b-4b. Kim Pushik argued an identical case, also referring to Du Mu and arguing that governing oneself is the best way of not being dependent on others (*TMS* 43: 6b-7a). In a similar vein, Kim Yŏn (also known as Kim Injon) argued an often-heard argument, advancing the dominant non-expansionist notion of land and territory (here in the context of the conquest of the Jurchen lands on Koryŏ's frontier), which more often than not won out in policy debates about concrete problems: "Land is meant for the people to cultivate. If we were to fight for the fortifications now, we would only suffer casualties. It would be better to just return the lands to the Jurchen and let the people be at ease." See *KS* 96: 4b-5a.

<sup>192</sup> Military officials as well as civilian officials with military experience would not let the court and bureaucracy forget the importance of strong borders and strong armies. See for example the next document: "In general, if war is forgotten, the normal situation of the realm will be disastrous. The first duty of a ruler is to prepare [against troubles] during quiet times. That is why weapons should not be discarded and why appointing a general is regarded as difficult. Especially now, when there are many reasons for unrest and stability is not yet realized, the talents of a rare person must be sought and he must be burdened with this weighty task. You, my lord, are illustrious and well-versed in both civil and military virtues. Your abilities are well used in determining the state of affairs of phenomena and your wisdom can pacify troubles over a distance of a thousand *li*. With this, you are selected from among the soldiers and invested with the authority of a general on a campaign, as the voice of the people wants it and as decided by the bidding of the ruler. [...] *TMS* 29: 18a.

conspicuous in this respect, the contradictory principles that constituted the Koryŏ-Liao relation created an inherently ambiguous relationship, which makes it hard to characterise it in a consistent manner. Instead, its contradictory nature and the incongruous effects it had must be recognized. The Koryŏ-Liao relationship greatly contributed to the cultural renaissance of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries in Koryŏ, because the Koryŏ frontier had become relatively stable and, more importantly, because of the great influx of Liao cultural and religious achievements. On the other hand, the destructiveness of the Liao invasions of the early eleventh century had firmly entrenched the Liao Khitan as Koryŏ's alien other, responsible for the pillaging of the frontier towns, the ransacking of the capital, and the destruction of most of Koryŏ's historical records and much of its cultural heritage. This particular ambiguity functioned within the confines of the larger ambiguity of Koryŏ's diplomatic relations and the uncertainty principle Koryŏ pursued in its ties with its direct and indirect neighbours: in the estimation of its neighbours, Koryŏ's ties to its neighbouring states could often not be precisely and simultaneously known and as one of those ties came to be more exactly defined, the other usually became more uncertain.

Koryŏ diplomacy was pluralist in the sense that it maintained simultaneous ties with states that in general expected to be able to monopolize Koryŏ's international relations. In order to deal with this, both politically and ideologically, and to harmonize it with Koryŏ's own claim towards the possession of a Koryŏ Son of Heaven, Koryŏ devised a highly flexible policy, that allowed it to form relationships with different counterparts and give their influences (political, ideological, cultural, intellectual and religious) a place in the Koryŏ worldview. In this sense, it is important to note that all states (Song, Koryŏ, Liao, Jin) built on a body of partially shared cultural resources: Koryŏ considered itself to be in a race against the Song, against the Liao, against the Jin to prove that it was as adept in building and maintaining a state as those states had been. Koryŏ foreign relations represented a fluid mixture of reactions to and anticipation of the international situation, identity formation with regard to the foreign others, state building aspirations and consolidation of the Koryŏ state.

## CHAPTER TEN

### PLURALIST LITERATI IN KORYŎ

The reign periods of Sukchong, Yejong and Injong are usually seen as the height of Koryŏ Daoism.<sup>1</sup> The same period is also seen as the apex of Koryŏ Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> And the same period is considered as the zenith of Koryŏ Confucianism.<sup>3</sup> Nativism, also, experienced a period of growth in the late eleventh century and middle of the twelfth century, culminating in the rebellion of nativist leader Myoch'ong 妙清 in 1135.<sup>4</sup> Geomancy, furthermore, was as strong as ever; the idea that the unique landscape of the Three Han was an essential part of Koryŏ's well-being was commonly held. Local spirits were worshipped all through the country and were enfeoffed to become part of the officially recognized pantheon of protecting spirits.<sup>5</sup> Despite the dividing lines that modern historiography has for the most part drawn between

<sup>1</sup> Kim Ch'orong 金澈雄, "Koryŏ kukka chesa-ü ch'eje-wa kü t'ükching 고려 國家祭祀의 體制와 그 특징," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 118 (2002): pp. 135-60; Kim Ch'orong, "Koryŏ chunggi togyo-üi sönghaeng-gwa söngkyök 高麗中期 道敎의 盛行과 그 性格," *Sabakchi* 史學志 28 (1995): pp. 97-133; Ch'a Chuhwan 車柱環, *Han'guk togyo sasang* 韓國의 道敎思想 (Seoul: Tongwa ch'ulp'ansa 同和出版社, 1984); Kim Pyöngin 金炳仁, "Koryŏ Yejong-dae togyo chinhung-üi pae'gyöng-gwa ch'ujin seryök 高麗 睿宗代 道敎 振興의 背景과 추진세력," *Chönnam sabak* 全南史學 20 (2003): pp. 1-22; Song Hangnyong 宋恒龍, "Han'guk togyo sasang-üi palchön ch'ui 韓國 道敎思想의 展開推移," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 45 (1993): 1-28; Yi Chongün 李鍾殷, Yang Ünyong 梁銀容 and Kim Nakpil 金洛必, "Koryŏ chunggi togyo-üi chonghapchök yŏn'gu 高麗中期 道敎의 綜合的研究," *Han'gukhak nonjip* 韓國學叢 15 (1989): pp. 43-124; Yang Ünyong, "Togyo sasang," in *Han'guksa* 16 (Kwach'ön: Kuksa p'yöngch'an wiwönhoe, 1995), pp. 279-301.

<sup>2</sup> Hŏ Hüngshik 許興植, *Koryŏ pulgyosa yŏn'gu* 高麗佛敎史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak 一潮閣, 1986); Hŏ Hüngshik, *Koryŏ munhwa chönt'ong-gwa saboe sasang* 고려의 文化전통과 사회사상 (Seoul: Chimmundang 집문당, 2004); Ch'oe Pyönghön 崔柄憲, "Koryŏ chunggi Yi Chahyön-üi Sön-gwa kösa pulgyö-üi söngkyök 高麗期 李資玄의 禪과 居士佛敎의 性格," in *Kim Ch'ölchun paksa hwagap kinyöm sabak nonch'ong* 金哲 峻博士 華甲紀念 史學論叢 (Seoul: Chishik sanopsa 知識産業社, 1983), edited by Kim Ch'ölchun paksa hwagap kinyöm sahak nonch'ong kanhaeng chunbi wiwönhoe 峻博士 華甲紀念 史學論叢 刊行準備委員會, pp. 941-960; Ch'oe Pyönghön, "Koryŏ chunggi Hyönhwasa-üi ch'anggön-gwa Pöpsangjong-üi yungsöng 高麗中期 玄化寺의 創建과 法相宗의 隆盛," in *Han Ugün paksa chöngnyön kinyöm sabak nonch'ong* 韓 沆 博士 停年紀念 史學論 (Seoul: Chishik sanopsa 知識産業社., 1981), edited by Han Ugün paksa chöngnyön kinyöm sahak nonch'ong kanhaeng chunbi wiwönhoe 韓 沆 博士 停年紀念 史學論叢 刊行準備委員會, pp. 239-260. Hŏ Hüngshik 許興植, *Koryŏ pulgyosa yŏn'gu* 高麗佛敎史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak 一潮閣, 1986); No Kwönyöng 魯權用, "Koryŏ pulgyo sasang-üi chön'gae-wa söngkyök 高麗佛敎思想의 展開와 性格," in *Han'guk chonggyosa yŏn'gu* 韓國宗敎史研究 4 (1996): pp. 130-166.

<sup>3</sup> Ch'oe Yöngsöng 崔英成, *Han'guk yubak sasangsa: kodaie, Koryŏ p'yön* 韓國儒學思想史; 古代·高麗篇 (Seoul: Asea munhwasa 亞細亞文化社, 1994); Yi Hüidök 李熙德, "Yuhak 유학," in *Han'guksa*, volume sixteen, pp. 223-275, p. 226.

<sup>4</sup> Ch'oe Ch'angjo 崔昌祚, "P'ungsu chiri, toch'am sasang 풍수지리, 도참사상," in *Han'guksa*, volume sixteen, pp. 301-331.

<sup>5</sup> Hŏ Hüngshik, "'Koryösa' chiriji-e shillin myöngso-wa sanch'ön tanmyo-wa-üi kwan'gye '高麗史' 志理志에 실린 名所와 山川壇廟와의 關係 *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 117 (2002): pp. 63-90.

these different belief and thought systems, their respective borders were during most of the time and in most of the cases fluid and easily crossed. Not all belief and thought systems were available to everyone in Koryŏ society, but those who did have access to the different worlds of learning and believing, due to their social position and individual talents, in general freely roamed these different realities. Borders were fluid, but did exist and at times, as will be demonstrated in the last chapter on Myoch'ŏng's rebellion, could harden to virtually bar any crossing over.

Earlier studies have characterized the intellectual climate of the period during the reigns of Sukchong 肅宗, Yejong 睿宗 and Injong 仁宗 in dichotomous terms mixed with a usually not very clearly articulated evolutionary approach. Inconsistencies or unclarity within a thought system are explained by referring to the incomplete digestion of foreign cultural elements.<sup>6</sup> Dichotomies are introduced (such as the strong association of Koryŏ Confucianism with political conservatism and of Koryŏ nativism with political progressiveness) that tell more about present-day preoccupations of historians than of the contemporary Koryŏ situation. The discussion of Koryŏ diplomatic relations has amply shown that the daily reality of Koryŏ with regard to its international contacts was far removed from the idealized picture often presented in the historiography of the subject. Koryŏ's diplomatic relations were often muddled, ambiguous, and inconsistent, but served clear goals (reactions to and anticipation of the international situation, identity formation, state building and consolidation) and in general with success. The daily reality of Koryŏ literati was as muddled, ambiguous and inconsistent, if not more. But like Koryŏ diplomacy it was geared to provide the best possible ways to deal with the Koryŏ literati's surroundings. Here I shall argue that Koryŏ's realities were scattered, inconsistent, plural and full of treasured anomalies; treasured, because although the word 'pluralism' is a modern word, the concept was known and articulated in Koryŏ.

Early to middle Koryŏ was a dynamic society; in this period, the dynasty was domestically transformed from a military confederacy into an increasingly centralized bureaucracy. Internationally, Koryŏ went from establishing contacts with the Five Dynasties to full-scale war with the Liao, then to a long-term profitable relation with the Liao and brisk informal trade with the Song. Despite these and other far-reaching changes, the measure of internal stability Koryŏ maintained was in no small part due to the durability and usability of the views on reality of the Koryŏ literati. These views were often internally contradictory, inconsistent and changeable and precisely because of these characteristics they lasted. And, most importantly, these views, contradictory and inconsistent, were simultaneously present in the average Koryŏ literatus. Pluralism is a concept that due to its very nature is hard to define; the moment it is defined, it can turn into something else. Nonetheless, a usable working definition is needed for this phenomenon that is fundamentally different to either synthesis or relativism.

I define pluralism as an ideology that allows the existence of contradictions and inconsistencies between its constituent parts. Thus defined, pluralism accepts the alternative or

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<sup>6</sup> Chŏng Kubok 鄭求福, *Han'guk chungse sabaksa* 韓國中世史學史 (Seoul 서울: Chimmundang 集文堂, 2000), p. 189; Ch'oe Yŏngsŏng, *Han'guk yuhak sasangsa: kodaie, Koryŏ p'yŏn*, pp. 278-298. Ch'oe's study is particularly reductionist with regard the role he perceives Confucianism to have played in Koryŏ.

simultaneous presence or use of contradictory and incommensurable approaches and, to put it bluntly, it lines them up, next to each other; it maintains an aggregative instead of synthesized worldview. A worldview, if you will, that exists of simultaneously present but not necessarily simultaneously used partial worldviews. The comparison with relativism lurks in the vicinity, but it is imperative not to confuse pluralism with relativism. Whereas pluralism in the sense that I define it acknowledges and allows contradictions to exist, it refrains from relativizing their fundamental differences. Instead, it utilizes the bandwidth of possible changes that an aggregative worldview, differences and all, presents. I shall argue that the majority of Koryŏ literati of early to middle Koryŏ can and should be considered as pluralists; they possessed an aggregative worldview that offered them leeway otherwise unavailable. Contrary to modern historiography, Koryŏ literati on the whole felt little resistance to the idea of leaving contradictions unsolved; a Confucian scholar retiring to a Buddhist monastery or a literatus inclined towards the exclusive Koryŏ-centrism usually labelled as nativism who was known as ‘the Confucius of Korea’ are such contradictions and modern historiography has felt compelled to solve them and explain them in terms of wrong and right, politically conservative or progressive, or in terms of correct and incorrect applications of belief and thought systems. I hope to leave behind me such crude dichotomies, easy abstractions and retrojections of contemporary notions upon Koryŏ.

Yi Chahyŏn 李資玄 (1061-1125), scion of one of the most influential lineages of mid-Koryŏ, licentiate of the state examinations, successful capital bureaucrat, revered Sŏn 禪 master and secluded hermit with strong Daoist leanings, responded to a request by Yejong to come to the palace by pointing out the following notion that different people are and need to be different things:

Your servant has always heard that the pleasure of birds is in the deep forest and that the pleasure of fishes is in the deep waters. It would not do, citing the fishes’ pleasure to move birds to deep waters. Neither would it do, citing the birds’ pleasure, to move fishes to the deep forest. A bird must be raised as a bird and be left to enjoy the forest as it pleases. If you observe a fish, you will know it; it must be thrown into the pleasure of its rivers and lakes. To make sure that not one thing loses its proper place and that each person may obtain that which he should obtain, that is truly the profound benevolence of a sagely ruler, the sacred gift of the wise king.<sup>7</sup>

Yi’s plea for the recognition and protection of difference is in essence a plea that recognizes ontological differences between persons. Birds and fish do not transform into one another, which clearly signifies the fundamental nature of the differences Yi was trying to express. Speaking metaphorically about fish that should be treated as fish and birds that should be treated as birds, Yi concludes that it is the ruler’s sacred duty to safeguard this ontological diversity. The beginning of his plea is abstract, but he continues in a more personal manner:

A person like your servant is one of those dispersed in the mountains and plains, a tiny

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<sup>7</sup> *TMS* 39: 4b.



shard of good in the wasteland. My seeking out of the hidden and performing of the weird is the laughing stock of the ancient classics, my keeping away from serving the state in order to stay immaculate will not evade the rebuke of the ancients. [...] What others consider as comfortable, I do not consider comfortable; I consider what I find comfortable to be comfortable. What others consider as pleasurable, I do not consider pleasurable; I consider what I find pleasurable to be pleasurable.<sup>8</sup>

In a humble tone, Yi makes an eloquent statement about his idiosyncrasy. Playing puns on quotations from *The doctrine of the mean*, he asserts his difference. He does not disdain the socially and traditionally more accepted ways of living (by not seeking out the hidden and performing the weird), but posits the viability of his own idiosyncrasy alongside it. Yi's career was as diverse as was possible in eleventh-twelfth century Koryŏ. Well-versed in everything that Koryŏ had to offer, he decided to cut short a promising career in the capital bureaucracy, renounce his entitlements as an heir of the Kyŏngwŏn Yi 慶原李 lineage and live in a hermitage far away in the country. Yi is said to have attained spiritual enlightenment when he read the following statement of a Chinese Ch'an master: "When truth is everywhere, why do you look for it in only one place?"<sup>9</sup> To be sure, this seems an appropriate motto for the run of the mill Koryŏ literatus as well. Truths were everywhere, overlapping, contradictory or completely different from each other. The career of Yi Chahyŏn shows the availability of different belief and thought systems; modern historiography has analyzed these different systems exhaustively. In doing so, the differences between the different systems have received ample attention and the labels attached to the systems themselves received clear and unambiguous confirmation: Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, geomancy, nativism and so forth.<sup>10</sup> These labels are correct to the extent that they each unite under them a series of ideas, beliefs, practices, and texts that adhere to shared principles. As such, these labels refer to discursive fields with broadly defined boundaries and sections that overlap with other discursive fields. They are incorrect to the extent that they exclude meaningful exchange or borrowing and that they wrongly suggest that their borders were hard and impermeable. As these labels are useful, I shall retain them, but with the caveat that the boundaries between the

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<sup>8</sup> TMS 39: 4b

<sup>9</sup> His life was recorded in *The disciplined life of Yi Chahyŏn*, included in the *Tong munŏn* 東文選, and was written by Kim Puch'ŏl 金富轍 (also known as Kim Puŏi 金富儀 and younger brother of Kim Pushik 金富軾); for the translation see Peter Lee, *Sourcebook* pp. 314-318.

<sup>10</sup> The multi-volume history on Korea, *Han'guksa* (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1992-present) is a good example of this. The treatment of the different thought and belief systems during the different periods of the Koryŏ period in itself makes sense, although perhaps the division in the *Han'guksa* is rather strict. What is less fortunate about such an arrangement of research topics is that it in a way anticipates the research. By treating the different thought and belief systems separately, little appreciation is possible of the fact that these systems co-existed in most of the people discussed in the same history. It is important not to suggest here that there is something fundamentally wrong with monographs on for instance Confucianism in Koryŏ. There is not. What might be addressed, though, is the question (to stay with the example) what Confucianism in Koryŏ meant for an official who had been studying it since childhood, had brothers in Buddhist monasteries, attached credence to the influence of the landscape and retired to a Buddhist hermitage. Such questions, which challenge the validity of absolute belief systems as they are accepted by individuals, have rarely been asked with regard to Koryŏ. I am, then, not pleading to revise existing historiography *in toto* and certainly not the generally balanced monographs that make up the *Han'guksa*, but to add to it and to put it, when necessary, in another perspective.

different thought and belief systems are blurred and changeable. Nonetheless, I shall not treat the different belief and thought systems available in Koryŏ separately. Apart from the fact that good monographs exist that already do this (as long as it is kept in mind that the boundaries between the different systems were never absolute and unambiguous), this would only reinforce the dominance of the separate systems as such. Instead, I shall focus on literati such as Yi Chahyŏn and demonstrate their intellectual proclivities in their proper historical context.

An important consideration in the discussion of the realities of Koryŏ literati is the obviousness of some of the characteristics of what I have labelled pluralism. Koryŏ literati were as a rule trained in the Chinese classics, most notably the Confucian classics but also Laozi 老子 and Zhuangzi 莊子, and were with respect to religion raised as Buddhists. This phenomenon was so wide-spread, it is argued, that to label it pluralism is meaningless. I think exactly the opposite is true: the very obviousness of the co-existence of different thought and belief systems in Koryŏ has prevented this co-existence from having been problematized before in a meaningful way. As I shall argue, the concepts, practices and texts associated with Confucianism often served different purposes from those associated with Buddhism, Daoism or geomancy. There was considerable overlap, but at the same time it should not pass unnoticed that different sets of commonly associated concepts, practices and texts were used in different contexts for different purposes and relied on different principles. It should also not pass unnoticed that despite these differences, it could be the same person who would apply concepts, execute practices and interpret texts of different ideological backgrounds. This phenomenon, the realization and maintenance of fundamental differences, is what I have labelled pluralism. It is in this sense that a Koryŏ literate versed in the Confucian classics, praying in Buddhist temples and appreciating geomantic interpretations is in his own context perhaps a paragon of obviousness, but historically rather a figure of exception.

Yi Chahyŏn was perhaps Koryŏ's most famous *kōsa* 居士, but his friend and contemporary Kwak Yŏ 郭與 (1058-1130) was more accessible. Kwak was a Confucian scholar, widely read in the histories and classics, conversant with the medical arts and the theories of *ūm* and *yang* 陰陽, known to have Buddhist leanings, but went around dressed as a Daoist hermit after his retirement. According to Yi Illo 李仁老, however, he was not only a Daoist hermit, but also somebody blessed with a talent for literary composition.<sup>11</sup> Yejong invited him to the palace and fêted him frequently, exchanging poems and asking advice. Yi Kyubo 李奎報 later commented that the presence of mystics and recluses such as Kwak Yŏ was one of the signs of the extraordinary nature of the reign of Yejong.<sup>12</sup> Persons such as Kwak Yŏ and Yi Chahyŏn were considered to help the country, because they are in a way extreme instances of virtues considered necessary and normal, extreme magnifications of the characteristics of Koryŏ's literati. Nonetheless, such persons were exceptional, even in Koryŏ. But there are many examples with regard to mainstream pluralist literati in Koryŏ. I shall limit myself here to some of them. A good starting point is Pak Illyang 朴寅亮 (?-1096), whose fame as a diplomat

<sup>11</sup> *KS* 97: 8b-9a. Kwak was also on intimate terms with two famous contemporary Confucian scholars, Kim Hwangwŏn 金黃元 and Yi Chungyak 李仲若. *PHJ* 2: 22-23. According to the *P'abanjip*, the character for Kwak Yŏ's given name is 輿.

<sup>12</sup> *TMS* 102: 3a-b; *TYSC* 21: 16a-b.

and writer survived well into the Chosŏn dynasty.<sup>13</sup> His poetry was sinicized to the extent that, together with the father of Kim Pushik, he published an acclaimed collection of poems in the Song when he was there as an envoy.<sup>14</sup> His pleas for the integrity of the Koryŏ boundaries were famous. Pak argued that Koryŏ, even though it was the vassal of the Liao Son of Heaven, had a right to its own territory and to its own vassals.<sup>15</sup> I have pointed out the ontologically pluralist conception of the world which resounds in Pak's diplomatic writings elsewhere.<sup>16</sup> Here, I want to draw attention to his perfect command of Sinitic cultural technologies, in particular that of Confucianism (a command which was incidentally shared by the Liao emperor who acknowledged the viability of Pak's protests). At the same time, Pak's ties to Buddhism were intimate. His second son Ch'ŏngso 聰諤 became abbot of the Hŭngwŏn-sa temple 洪圓寺; another son, Kyŏngin 朴景仁, retreated to the Soshin-sa temple 燒身寺 to die in peace.<sup>17</sup> This phenomenon to some extent was shared by most, if not all, Koryŏ literati. Ch'oe Sŏk 崔奭 (fl. early to late eleventh century) was a celebrated bureaucrat and scholar who fostered students with diverse inclinations. His Confucian credentials consisted among other things of his appointments as chief examiner of the state examinations in 1083 and 1088 and as supervising state historian in 1087.<sup>18</sup> He counselled his grandchildren with the following poem: "Our family has integrity and is pure, without possessions to bequeath/All we preserve are ten thousand Confucian books/Read much, the two of you and study hard/And establish yourselves, so that you can help the ruler to behave with dignity."<sup>19</sup> His fame as a literator was confirmed by Ch'oe Cha 崔滋, who regarded Ch'oe Sŏk as one of the people who had contributed decisively to Koryŏ's security and prosperity.<sup>20</sup> He further served as an envoy to the Liao twice; in 1059 and again in 1075.<sup>21</sup> Ch'oe Sŏk is nonetheless also on record as someone with a strong Buddhist vision of reality.<sup>22</sup> Chŏng Mok 鄭穆 (1040-1106), another eleventh

<sup>13</sup> Pak Illyang was habitually selected to be depicted as the paragon of diplomatic and literary ability in Chosŏn histories. He not only managed to stave off Liao incursions with his diplomatic correspondence, he was also recognized in the Song as an outstanding poet whose allusions proved elusive even for Song literati. See Ch'oe Hae 崔滢, "Song Chŏng Ch'ungbu sŏjang kwansŏ 送鄭仲孚書狀官序," in *Ch'ulgo ch'ŏnbaek* 拙藁千百卷之二 3: 22a; Lu You, *Jiashi jiuwen* 陸游家世舊聞 in SYCC, p. 192; Zhu Mu 祝穆, *Fangyu shenglan* 方輿勝覽 45, in SYCC, p. 245; STYS 16: 16a-b. Pak is among other works, listed in the *Tŏngsa kangmok* 東史綱目, *Shinjŏng Tŏngguk yŏji sUngnam* 新增東國輿地勝覽, *Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記, *Oju yŏnmun changjŏn san'go* 五洲衍文長箋散稿 and the *Ch'ŏngjanggwan doŏnsŏ* 淸莊館全書.

<sup>14</sup> KSC 6 1096; STYS 16: 7 a-b; See KS 95: 18a; KMC 164: 28-9.

<sup>15</sup> TMS 5b-6b; TMS 39: 5b-6b; TMS 48: 2a-3b.

<sup>16</sup> Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm". Also see chapters four and nine. The letter in TMS 28: 5b-6b reflects Pak's explicitly pluralist conception of Samhan history.

<sup>17</sup> Pak Ch'ŏngso *myojim'yŏng* 朴聰諤墓誌銘 in KMC 52:16; Pak Kyŏngin *myojim'yŏng* 朴景仁墓誌銘 KMC 69: 16.

<sup>18</sup> KS 73: 22a; KS 73: 23a; ; KS 10: 12a-b.

<sup>19</sup> POHJ 1: 66. The poem worked as intended: "Lord Munsuk Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng understood the poem as follows: 'If the ruler acts with dignity, the country will be properly governed. If the country is properly governed, one's family will be at peace. If one's family is at peace, one's body will be at peace. If one's body is at peace, there is nothing more to hope for.' Having said this, his two sons naturally attained the post of assistant executive in political affairs."

<sup>20</sup> TMS 84: 3a

<sup>21</sup> KS 8: 12b-13a; KS 9: 12b.

<sup>22</sup> TMS 12 : 9b-10a; POHJ 2: 114. "When assistant chancellor Ch'oe Sŏk worked at the Hall for Imperial Prescripts, he said the following: 'The tolling of the temple bell widely shatters the illusion of the three worlds [the worlds of greed, illusion and formlessness]/The dignity of the royal palace overwhelmed the emptiness of the five heavens in the high sky/Even if I would grind the earth and make ink out of it/It would be difficult to record entirely the great purpose of our emperor.' Because this poem celebrates the special ceremonies held in the three-storied throne hall

century example, was a scholar of repute who edited the Veritable Records for the reign of Sŏnjong. He was also someone with strong Daoist and Buddhist leanings, as his epitaph testifies, and was cremated according to Buddhist ritual.<sup>23</sup> Im Ŭi 任懿 (1041-1117), a contemporary of Chŏng Mok, shared these characteristics: he was a Confucian scholar with a reputation for innovation, but also widely read Buddhist texts and medical tracts. He died as a Buddhist, sighing that life was but a dream, but was called a Confucian gentleman.<sup>24</sup> Yun P'o 尹誦, a student of Ch'oe Sŏk, was a scholar of such repute that Injong ordered him to make an annotation of the *Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要 and to edit a selection of Tang and Song poetry and write a preface for it. Yun, however, was also an extremely pious Buddhist, who copied out sutras.<sup>25</sup>

Scholars who were predominantly known for their Confucian inclinations, also showed strong Buddhist leanings. Ch'oe Ch'ung 崔沖 (984-1068), rightly seen as one of Koryŏ's greatest Confucian scholars, started a text written in 1027 in honour of a temple with a classically Confucian explanation of the duty of the ruler, only to switch to a Buddhist plea. Interesting about this text is the strict separation Ch'oe made with regard to the duties of the Buddhist believer, salvation of sentient beings, and that of the Confucian scholar or *yusaeng* 儒生, which was the professional recording of important events, in this case the building of an elaborate Buddhist temple complex.<sup>26</sup> This idea about the duty of a Confucian scholar is echoed in a much later piece by Im Ch'un 林椿 (fl. middle to late thirteenth century), one of Koryŏ's literary greats, who wrote a text in honour of Buddhist monks of extraordinary virtue. The text ends with the following phrase: "His achievements in general deserve to be recorded and are like this. I, however, am simple and bad at composing a text and moreover, these things cannot be discussed by a Confucian scholar. But a superior man (*kunja* 君子) loves talking about the good deeds of men. I shall, then, record this for people of later generations who will live here in this place."<sup>27</sup> The way both Ch'oe Ch'ung and Im Ch'un wrote about what was expected from respectively Buddhism and Confucianism points to an understanding that both teachings were fundamentally not the same, although they did share certain aspects. Kwŏn Chŏk 權適 (1094-1147), who had studied in the Song and passed the civil examinations there, agreed. In a text describing the establishment of a Buddhist temple on Chiri-san 智異山, Kwŏn clearly distinguished between his duty as a Confucian scholar who wrote down that which could benefit later generations and as a Buddhist believer, who hoped for the redemption of mankind.<sup>28</sup> A text by Kim Pushik 金富軾, who if anything is seen as the personification of Koryŏ Confucianism, celebrating the establishment of a new temple demonstrates this idea. Confucianism was in general meant for officials and served the purpose

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in honour of Munjong's 文宗 building of the Hŭngwang-sa temple 興王寺, it can now be written down."

<sup>23</sup> *Chong Mok myojimyŏng* 鄭穆墓地銘 in *KMC* 36: 27-29

<sup>24</sup> *Im Ŭi myojimyŏng* 任懿墓地銘 in *KMC* 16: 1-29.

<sup>25</sup> *Yun P'o myojimyŏng* 尹誦墓誌銘 in *KMC* 73: 12, 16-21.

<sup>26</sup> The text incidentally also shows another duty of the *yusaeng*; supporting the monarch to rule wisely. Ch'oe did that in this text by mentioning Hyŏnjong's father by his style Anjong, a clear signal that he supported the legitimacy of Hyŏnjong (see chapter eight); *Pongsŏnbonggyŏng-sa ki* 奉先弘慶寺記 in *TMS* 64: 18a-20b.

<sup>27</sup> *Myogwangsa shimnyuk sŏngjungboesang ki* 妙光寺十六聖衆繪象記 in *TMS* 65: 1a-3a.

<sup>28</sup> *TMS* 64: 30b-33b.

of state administration, while Buddhism served religious purposes and was ideally located in the country, although as the establishment of this particular temple showed, Buddhism could at times function as a tool of state administration.<sup>29</sup> The text also mentions that other phenomenon of crossing realities, the *kōsa* or the lay monk, typically a retired scholar-official. Kim Pushik became a famous *kōsa* towards the end of his life, as did Yun Ŏni 尹彦頤 (1090-1149) and Kwōn Chōk (1094-1147).<sup>30</sup>

The reliance on both Confucianism and Buddhism by individual literati was mirrored in the way the state used both ideologies: in an discussion with Ch'oe Ŭng 崔凝 (898-932), T'aejo defended his dual policies in this respect:

When King T'aejo was still fighting to consolidate his newly founded kingdom, he resorted to the ideas of yin/yang and Buddhism. Counsellor Ch'oe Ŭng [898-932] remonstrated, saying: "The *Isa Commentary* says 'At the time of disorder, cultivate letters to gain the hearts of man.' Even during warfare, the ruler must cultivate civil virtues. I have yet to hear of anyone relying on Buddhism or yin/yang ideas to win the realm. The king said: "How could I not know it? Yet, the mountains and streams of our country are divine and extraordinary. Sitting in an out-of-the-way place, far removed from China, Koreans by nature love Buddha and spirits and expect blessings and prosperity. These days war never ceases, and peace is never certain. Day and night, the peasants are troubled and are at a loss as to what to do. I only think of the hidden help of Buddha and the spirits as well as the divine response of the mountains and streams in the hope that they may yield results through my indulgences. How could this not be the great principle of ruling the country to win the people? After we settle these conflicts and live in peace and justice, then we can change our ways and enlighten the people."<sup>31</sup>

Taejo's procrastination with regard to heeding Ch'oe Ŭng's advice is understandable given the fact that he was a ruler who singularly believed in the power of Buddhism as a legitimating device.<sup>32</sup>

Buddhism and Confucianism were part and parcel of the Koryō literatus' education, but scholars and officials who were at home in Daoism, both in its rituals and its texts, who had mastered the principles of the divinatory arts, the theories of *ŭm* and *yang*, mathematics and the medical arts were also considered exemplary figures. Ch'oe Yu, a high-ranking official

<sup>29</sup> *Hyeŏmsa shinch'ang ki* 惠陰寺新創記 in *TMS* 64: 20b-23b

<sup>30</sup> Although it was a Buddhist concept, the Koryō *kōsa* were certainly not exclusively Buddhist. Like Yi Chahyōn, the four above-mentioned *kōsa* had passed the state examinations and served as central officials. Yun Ŏni, Kwōn Chōk and Kim Pushik were moreover known for their extensive Confucian knowledge. All four were sons of influential mid-Koryō families. They distinguished themselves also by their eclectic approach to Buddhism and by the strong presence of Daoist elements in their thought.

<sup>31</sup> *POHJ* 1: 1a-b. I borrowed the translation from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, pp. 433-434. In an edict T'aejo remarked the following with regard to Buddhism and Daoism as capable of protecting the country: Relying first on the power of Buddha and then on the authority of Taoism, [...] In order to respond to the sustenance accorded by the Holy Buddha, to repay the support of the mountain spirits, I especially commanded the government offices concerned to construct a lotus palace (Buddhist monastery) and to name the mountain on which it sits Ch'ōnho 天護 (Heavenly Protection) and the monastery Kaet'ae 開泰 [...] May Buddha's authority provide protection and heaven's power sustain me. *POHJ* 1: 1b-2a (translation from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 433).

<sup>32</sup> Sem Vermeersch, "Representation of the ruler in Buddhist inscriptions of early Koryō", in *Korean Studies* 26: 2 (2002): pp. 216-250.

in the first half of the twelfth century, was praised because he excelled in literary composition, had sounded the depths of the principles of the classics, and knew the divinatory arts, the theories of *ŭm* and *yang*, the medical arts and mathematics.<sup>33</sup> In that capacity, he was considered suitable to select new officials in the state examinations, which he did twice.<sup>34</sup> He also visited the Jin as an envoy.<sup>35</sup> Another exemplary figure was a monk. Pak Kyoung 朴教雄 (1076-1153) had passed the first Ch'öntae 天台 state examinations for monks as the best candidate and was noted for his knowledge of widely divergent strands of Buddhist theology, the Confucian classics, Moism, Daoism, the medicinal and divinatory arts and the theories of *ŭm* and *yang*.<sup>36</sup> Another monk “used meditation Buddhism and doctrinal Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism horizontally and vertically, upside down and inside out. According to him, darkness and light come and go and there are thousand differences and ten thousand distinctions in things and it is impossible to fathom their borders”, although this particular monk seems to have espoused these different ideas mainly because they could be used as skilful means to explain Buddhism.<sup>37</sup>

Perhaps Koryŏ's most famous statesman is Kim Pushik, who together with his three brothers left an indelible mark on twelfth century Koryŏ. He is as a rule exclusively seen as a conservative Confucian scholar, but even a short exploration of Kim Pushik will prove differently.<sup>38</sup> The analysis of Kim's *Samguk sagi* has demonstrated that this history is grounded in a Koryŏ-centric point of departure and that Kim's perception of Koryŏ history was

<sup>33</sup> *P'yŏngjang Ch'oe Yu sa chigonggŏ pur'yun* 平章崔濡辭知貢舉不允 in *TMS* 29: 17a-b

<sup>34</sup> *KS* 73: 27b; *KS* 73: 28b.

<sup>35</sup> *KS* 9: 36b-37a.

<sup>36</sup> *KMC* 77: 12-13.

<sup>37</sup> *TMS* 84: 4a-b.

<sup>38</sup> For monographs on Kim Pushik, see chapter seven. I do not intend to claim that Kim Pushik was not a Confucian scholar. He most definitely was, as the following text clearly demonstrates, but he was much more than that: “Your servant reports. Prostrating I have observed that Your Imperial Majesty has gone to the National Academy on the thirteenth day of this month and ritually poured wine for the most holy King Munsŏn 文宣王 [Confucius]. Accordingly, you have ordered Sŏnggyun'gwan 成均館 academician Pak Sŭngjung 朴昇中 to lecture on three chapters of the *Book of documents*. The imperial carriage and the imperial colours have honoured the National Academy with a visit, while the high officials had gathered at the entrance bridge. The felicity of this occasion reaches all subjects in the country and your civilizing virtue is transmitted throughout the realm. Respectfully I submit that the study of the classics elucidates the way and that it must be undertaken by a appropriate person for it to succeed. Schools are the places where men with talent are produced. The right time must be awaited for men of talent to be employed [after their education]. The performance of important state rituals [at the National Academy] is truly something that belongs to a prospering dynasty. I humbly think that Your Imperial Majesty's way is tremendously noble and that you govern with benevolence and righteousness, which is just like the study of the exploits of Yao 堯 and Shun 舜. Embodying the civil virtues of the Shang 商 and Zhou 周 dynasties, you have performed the ceremonies relying on the ancient texts. Bowing to our sagacious teacher and ritually offering him a cup of wine, you ordered the scholars to lecture on the classics. The education of students with talent by gentlemen will lead to the composition of poems devoted to the nurturing of wise men; the presentation of the left ear of the slain enemy by the military officials will certainly equal Panshui's 泮水 's exploits. And it is furthermore not merely the beauty of this time, but it is a sacred virtue that is bestowed on ten thousand generations. I humbly think that we have been fortunate to meet this splendid era and dishonour the office of state councillor, but I gaze at Your Majesty's virtuous dignity, having served it from close by and touch the bright sacred learning with my own hands. The autumnal water [symbolizing purity] periodically comes, but it cannot be really measured by looking at the sea. I know, however, that it is an honour for the tree buds of spring to have been touched by Your Majesty.” See *TMS* 31: 19b-20a.

fundamentally pluralist (chapter two). Kim Pushik's actions as a diplomat have also shown a similar picture; Kim consistently acted from the idea that Koryŏ should depend on its own strength, as his brother Kim Puŭi counselled the young Injong.<sup>39</sup> As a historian and as a diplomat, Kim explicitly embraced a pluralist worldview. As a scholar, official and Buddhist lay hermit he did the same. Far from being a conservative reactionary (a concept that does not predate the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Korea), Kim envisioned a Koryŏ state with strong classically Confucian foundations. Contemporary scholar Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng 崔惟淸 remarked of Kim that he always tried to revive the mandate of an old country and that he tried doing so by modelling the ruler-minister relationship on the ideal relationship encountered in the Chinese classics.<sup>40</sup> Kim Pushik's zeal in reforming contemporary Koryŏ literature should be seen in a similar vein; through the reformation of literature, the country was to be reformed.<sup>41</sup> His interest in the ancient *komun* 考文 style of text composition was derived from the idea that literati would be able to renew the new through the study of *komun*.<sup>42</sup> Kim Pushik's hard stance with regard to proper politics earned him the enmity of Yi Chagyŏm 李資謙 and a battle ensued in which in the end Kim would emerge victoriously. In the controversy surrounding Yi Chagyŏm's ritual position toward Injong 仁宗, the ruler who was both Yi's son-in-law and grandson, Kim wrote a very erudite and very vehement denunciation of Yi's proposal to have Injong formally recognize him as his father-in-law, which would have had huge ritual and formal consequences. Relying on precedent from the Confucian classics, Kim defended the unique political, ritual and ontological position of the ruler, one which transcended familial ties.<sup>43</sup> His reputation as a staunch Confucianist is earned, then, although with the caveat that he was actually looking to transform Koryŏ and did not seek some kind of stasis.

Another text yet again shows Kim Pushik as the advocate of the unique position of the

<sup>39</sup> Kim Pushik also relied on the writings of Du Mu to make a convincing argument that Koryŏ's only way to be independent was to rely on its own strength. Kim Puŭi's argument was similar and relied on the same textual sources. *TMS* 43: 6b-7a; *KS* 97: 3b-4b. Also see chapter nine.

<sup>40</sup> *TMS* 29:19 a-b.

<sup>41</sup> John B. Duncan, "Confucianism in the late Koryŏ and early Chosŏn," *Korean Studies* 18 (1994): pp. 76-102. Duncan's analysis of the transition from Koryŏ to Chosŏn in terms of Confucian philosophy is illuminating, in particular with regard to the distinction he makes between neo-Confucians and *komun* 考文 adherents, whose Koryŏ lineage he traces back to mid-Koryŏ. Kim's emphasis on literature was one of the reasons Kwŏn had nothing good to say about him. Kwŏn's brand of neo-Confucianism did not trust literature as much as introspection and self-cultivation. The *Pobanjip*: "As for *saryuk* 四六 compositions, examples since old have been Han Fei 韓非, Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 and Song Qi 宋祁 but this influence did not reach the three sages. Munyŏl-gong Kim Pushik, however, can be taken as an example of it." *POHJ* 3: 143

<sup>42</sup> The *komun* credentials of Kim Pushik and other scholars such as Kim Hwangwŏn, Yi Kwe 李軌 (Chae 載), Ch'oe Yak 崔龜 and Ch'oe Cha 崔滋 expressed themselves in their fortitude which was one of the most important elements in Koryŏ policy-making during the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The ruthlessness of Kim Pushik (which is clearly illustrated by his execution of Chŏng Chisang 鄭知常, which was illegal under Koryŏ law) did not imply a strict orthodoxy, which could be found in the Song New Policies 新法 movement from roughly the same period. Whereas the Song scholars associated with this movement tried to universalize ethics and morals, Kim Pushik beheaded some of the opposition, but lacked the intention to do the same to their ideas. For the acceptance of Song New Policies ideas in Koryŏ, see Chŏng Sua 鄭修芽, "Koryŏ chunggi tae-Song oegyo-ŭi chŏn'gae-wa kŭ ŭiŭi 고려 중기 대송 외교의 전개와 그 의의," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 61 (1995): pp. 149-173.

<sup>43</sup> *TMS* 106: 18a-19b. Kim's most powerful argument was based on a precedent during Han times, in which case it had been decided that "there cannot be two suns in heaven" and that the unique position of the ruler meant that he could only be treated as a ruler and never as a son, even by his own father.

ruler. Using Confucian cosmological concepts, Kim argued that the state inevitably suffered both concretely and ritually, if the ruler and his ministers did not get along and did not behave according to propriety and in the best interest of the people. The background of this argument, however, was formed by written by Kim as a Buddhist elaboration of the idea that rulers and ministers should be close to each other.<sup>44</sup> The Buddhist side of Kim also showed in a document he wrote at the occasion of a Buddhist ritual held in honour of the victims of the rule of Yi Chagyŏm.<sup>45</sup> There is surprisingly much material that testified to Kim Pushik's Buddhist view of the world.<sup>46</sup> Texts written by Kim Pushik for Daoist court rituals have also been preserved.<sup>47</sup> Writings by his brothers, who have always been closely associated with him politically and ideologically, reflect the same tendency. Kim Puil was even praised by the Song emperor for a ritual text he wrote (*Congratulatory words in honour of the festival of the Eight Prohibitions* 八關致語口號), although the emperor also remarked that its contents were slightly blasphemous to his taste.<sup>48</sup> The text was a typical P'algwanhoe text in the sense that it united Buddhist, Daoist, geomantic and indigenous religious elements in a strong Koryŏ-centric context.<sup>49</sup> Such a celebration of Koryŏ's independence (political, ideological and ontological) as the umbrella under which the diversity of Koryŏ was made possible also appeared in another text by Kim Puil: "The filial piety of the ruler is located in the promulgation of proper administration and the dissemination of benevolence. The authority of a sage is in letting the different ways co-exist,<sup>50</sup> even if this goes against the classics."<sup>51</sup> He continued with a reference to the Tang emperor who had set up camp in his palace gardens to be able to rule the nomadic tribes in the north as well as the Han Chinese population, stressed the importance of a revitalization (*Yushin* 維新) of Koryŏ politics by proper moral attitude and ended with emphasizing the status of the ruler as the most important Buddhist in the country who occupied an ontologically crucial place in the Confucian scheme of things. It should be noted that Kim Puil did not lump

<sup>44</sup> TMS 110: 19b-20b.

<sup>45</sup> TMS 110: 22a-23a.

<sup>46</sup> TMS 49: 14a-b; TMS 64: 20b-23b; TMS 110: 17b-23b; Many of his poems also deal with Buddhist themes. See TMS 12: 10b-14a; TMS 9: 2a-b; TMS 19: 2a; TMS 19: 15a-b; TMS 27: 8b-9a; TMS 31: 19a-b. The writings collected in the *Tŏng munson* are also instructive with regard to Kim Pushik's perception of the Koryŏ ruler as Son of Heaven, entitled to imperial instead of royal prerogatives. Also see Breuker, 'Koryŏ as an independent realm'.

<sup>47</sup> TMS 115: 1a-2b.

<sup>48</sup> Puil's *Congratulatory words in honour of the festival of the Eight Prohibitions* was such a success that Yejong ordered always to use this text and never to change it (which would have constituted a sharp break with tradition that dictated that new texts should be written for each celebration). It was brought to the attention to the Song emperor by a Song musician who had been at the Koryŏ court. The Song emperor summoned Yi Charyang, at that time staying at the Song court as an envoy, who told him of the literary fame of all four Kim brothers. The emperor thought Kim committed *lèse majesté* by referring to Yejong as "the previous emperor", but he was much impressed by the composition itself. See KS 97: 2a-b.

<sup>49</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>50</sup> I have translated 合 here as "to let co-exist" instead of "combine" or "unite", because there is no evidence of Koryŏ literati from this period trying to integrate the different ways of thinking and believing. Besides, if 合 had meant "combine" or "integrate" in this context, it would not have gone against the classics. The idea that Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism are at bottom the same has a long pedigree, going back to the Han. There is on the other hand as far as I know no widely acknowledged scriptural basis for letting the different ways co-exist without some sort or other explanation that their constitutive principles are commensurable or even similar. Hence Kim Puil's remark that "letting the ways co-exist" went against the classics.

<sup>51</sup> TMS 41: 5a-b.



Buddhism and Confucianism together; the Koryŏ ruler was both Buddhist believer and Confucian ruler, both qualifications being independent from each other. The writings of the oldest brother, Kim Pup'il 金富弼, have not been preserved<sup>52</sup>, but those of the youngest brother Kim Pu'i have been recorded in the *Tŏng munson* and have been reviewed earlier in this chapter.<sup>53</sup> Partly on account of their simultaneous careers, Kim Pushik and Kim Pu'i were ideologically and politically very close to each other.

A congratulatory text written in honour of the completion of the wooden framework of the Yŏngyŏng-gung 延慶宮 palace gives a concrete and quite literate clue how the different belief and thought systems in Koryŏ were aggregated in a flexible worldview:

Arangwi 兒郎偉,<sup>54</sup> look east of the crossbeam, the long crossbeam is high and magnificent like a rainbow. Now that the palace of the transcendentals on Mount Penglai 蓬萊山 has opened, the whole world will gladly receive the light of the sun and moon.

Arangwi, look west of the crossbeam, the high cross poles in heaven have caught the end of a cloud. One hundred barbarians wearing the hats and girdles of officials submit to the ruler's sacred virtue, expecting to see the phoenix build a nest in the paulownia tree.

Arangwi, look south of the crossbeam, the atmosphere of the palace is mysterious, glowing with a thousand layers. Written in gold leaf the proper time for the Son of Heaven to sacrifice to Heaven has approached. In response, the *manse* 萬歲 hurrahs from Mount Songshan 嵩山 will be heard three times.

Arangwi, look north of the crossbeam, beautiful energy completely fills the palace of the Supreme Being. In the government hall, our mysterious soldiers are like gods. The northern borders are secure and the dust of worldly affairs has settled.

Arangwi, look above the crossbeam, ten thousand tiles are like the skin of a fish and the gates are high. Who has moved the palace of the Supreme Being to here? Colours green and gold dazzle the eyes.

Arangwi, look beneath the crossbeam, a sacred wind blows at the mandarin duck tiles. Complete peace and prosperity rightly belong to the present.<sup>55</sup>

In this text, the writer alternately makes Daoist (transcendentals on Penglai-shan, the palace of the Supreme Being), Confucian (sacrifice to Heaven of the Son of Heaven), mythical (the *manse* from Song-shan, also used to refer to Songak 松嶽), Buddhist (dust of worldly affairs) and historical references (barbarians in the north, northern borders). The reference to Penglai-shan can also be read as a reference to the Diamond Mountains (Kŭmgang-san 金剛山) on the peninsula, for these were also referred to as Penglai-shan. The text was written with

<sup>52</sup> Except for one text in which Kim Pup'il announced the successful candidates of the state examinations in a rather Buddhist context. See *TMS* 23: 7a-b.

<sup>53</sup> Also see Breuker, 'Koryŏ as an independent realm'.

<sup>54</sup> 'Arangwi' is probably a phonetic rendering of the sound workmen made when they heaved the crossbeams in place. See *TMS* 108: 20b-22a.

<sup>55</sup> *TMS* 108: 23b-25a. There are some more examples in this genre which exhibit the same characteristic aggregation of Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist, mythical and historical allusions. See *TYSC* 19: 1a-2b; *TMS* 108: 25a-26b. The writer of the text quoted above, Im Chongbi (fl. mid twelfth century) has written more texts in which he easily switched from Confucian elements to Daoist and Buddhist ones, as well as putting in many references to the Koryŏ landscape and to the Koryŏ ruler as emperor and Son of Heaven. *TMS* 104: 3b-4a; *TMS* 104: 4b-5a.

some dexterity, because the references to classical Chinese places and concepts could also be read as references to Koryŏ; in particular the northern border and the ruler as Son of Heaven come to mind. A text such as this is important in the sense that it shows how different ways of looking at the world could be, quite literally, be lined up and used to see different things, again quite literally. It should not pass unnoticed that no attempt at a syncretic approach is made in this text.

An even more concrete expression of the same mindset has been preserved in several entries specifying how the Koryŏ ruler battled with insects who were about to completely eat Kaegyŏng's sacred pines. The following passage from the *Koryŏsa*, also quoted in chapter eight, gives a good idea of the various methods a ruler had at his disposal to battle problems:

In the fourth month of 1102 (the seventh year of the reign of Sukchong) insects were eating the pine trees, so Buddhist monks were mobilized to recite the *Flower garland sutra* 華嚴經 for five days to stop this disaster. On the *kyeyu* day in the fifth month the king led some of his ministers in the palace in a celebration of a commemorative ritual for Sangje 上帝 and the Five Emperors 五帝. A prayer of repentance was directed at T'aejo 太祖, the sun and the moon and was only discontinued in the evening of the third night. On the *pyŏngsul* day of the sixth month, the ruler decreed that the ministers of state should perform rituals in honour of the spirits of the great mountains and streams of the east, west, south, north and the middle of the country, divided in three separate places of worship. He furthermore decreed that 2,000 monks should be gathered and split in four groups that would tour the mountains around the capital and in the provinces, while reciting *The heart of the prajna paramita sutra* 般若經 to the insects to rescue them and stop disasters. In the end, 500 soldiers were mobilized to catch the insects on Pine Tree Peak 松岳山.<sup>56</sup>

As discussed in chapter eight, the pine trees on Pine Tree Peak were sacred and symbolized the viability of the Koryŏ dynasty. Faced with such a pressing problem, the ruler was forced to try all means at his disposal. Accordingly, he used Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian state rituals, ancestor worship, on worship of indigenous geographical features and in hopeless cases even shamans.<sup>57</sup> From occurrences such as these, it may be concluded that Koryŏ's pluralist orientation in history, historiography and diplomacy was also present in practical dealings with domestic occurrences and incidents.

The example of Yun Ŏni is of great importance in the study of the intellectual environment of middle Koryŏ. Although Yun had fought on the side of Kim Pushik during the Myoch'ŏng rebellion, he was afterwards consistently associated with the rebels. As the son of Yun Kwan, Ŏni was destined to play an important role in Koryŏ politics, which he did until he retired to become a lay Buddhist hermit. He was versed in astronomy, geography, history, the classics and Buddhist texts.<sup>58</sup> He was appointed in many different bureaucratic functions, but

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<sup>56</sup> *KS* 54: 2a-b

<sup>57</sup> See chapter eight.

<sup>58</sup> In 1123, Yun was sent as a representative of the ruler to a newly built Buddhist temple complex to burn incense (*TMS* 64: 32b). According to the *STYS*, Yun excelled at literary composition, wrote a commentary on the *Book of changes*, loved Buddhism, and retired to live as a Buddhist lay hermit after retirement (*STYS* 11: 25b). The same work

also in functions that were only given to the brightest, as academician, state historian and royal lecturer. He composed a book on political events of the past, another one on astronomy and annotated the *Book of changes* 周易. His fame as a scholar who regularly held the royal lectures was such that he was called ‘Confucius of Korea’ 海東孔子. The interesting thing about Yun Ŏni’s person is that he was caught up in the rapidly polarizing atmosphere of the 1120’s and 1130’s and was banished by Kim Pushik, for allegedly helping Chŏng Chisang 鄭知常 (?-1135), a sympathizer of Myoch’ŏng and himself executed by Kim Pushik.<sup>59</sup> Yun’s career clearly showed how a person who probably prided himself on his diverse interests and achievements, and was on account of this also praised by others, could suddenly end up being ostracized and find his intellectual proclivities more or less proscribed in a political climate that, for some years at least, no longer tolerated radical diversity.<sup>60</sup> Yun had acquired a reputation as an excellent Confucian scholar; his royal lectures were famous (as were his altercation with his adversaries during these lectures).<sup>61</sup> His lectures were apparently impressive, because the ruler bestowed valuable gifts on him on several occasions.<sup>62</sup> He had also written on Confucian scholarship. Nonetheless, he was firmly pushed into the corner of Myoch’ŏng and his Koryŏ-centric ideas, adorned with geomantic and Buddhist lore. Yun was accused saying that:

Ŏni and [Chŏng] Chisang have concluded a pact to die together and they discuss all things, great and small, together. Last year when your majesty made a tour to the Western Capital they submitted a request for the adoption of a reign name and the implementation of an imperial system. They furthermore enticed students of the National Confucian Academy to discuss past events and in general tried to provoke the wrath of the Great Jin 大金. At every opportunity they disposed at will of people outside of their faction and planned treason.<sup>63</sup>

As I have argued elsewhere, the accusations against Yun were not substantial; the things he allegedly proposed had strong historical precedents in Koryŏ and would under normal circumstances not have been enough to send Yun into exile.<sup>64</sup> I will treat this problem in depth in the last chapter; here I merely want to draw attention to the fact that Yun Ŏni was accused of having been in league with Myoch’ŏng (although Yun was present at the siege of

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also states that Yun held a royal lecture on the *Book of changes* in the Kirin pavilion in 1127, the same place where five years earlier Chŏng Chisang had lectured on *Without luxurious ease* (STYS 51: 34b).

<sup>59</sup> After being recalled from his place of exile in 1140, Yun wrote a long expression of gratitude to Injong, in which he defended himself. TMS 35: 21a-26a. Chŏng Chisang was an interesting figure, whose poems were considered to be even more beautiful than the poems of Kim Pushik. At the time of Chŏng’s execution, angry tongues contended that literary jealousy was behind Chŏng’s execution. Chŏng was a native of Sŏgyŏng and a supporter of Myoch’ŏng, but he was also a scholar committed to the revitalization of Koryŏ politics, who had pledged to Injong that “to be steadfast in his loyalty until he would die and his bones be bleached white.” See TMS 34: 19b-20b.

<sup>60</sup> For a historical account of the relationship between Kim Pushik and Yun Ŏni, see Kim Pyŏngin 김병인, “Kim Pushik-kwa Yun Ŏni 金富軾과 尹彦頤,” *Chŏnju sabak* 全南史學 9 (1995): pp. 35-82. This study unfortunately confirms the stereotypical image of Kim Pushik as a reactionary Confucian scholar and that of Yun Ŏni as a nativist independence-minded Buddhist hermit.

<sup>61</sup> TMS 64: 17a-18a.

<sup>62</sup> KMC 56: 89-90.

<sup>63</sup> TMS 35: 21a-26a.

<sup>64</sup> Breuker, ‘Koryŏ as an independent realm’

Sögyöng and had been commended for his courage in the battle against Myoch'öng) and that ever since he has been seen as emblematic of the so-called nativist party.<sup>65</sup> The concept of Koryö nativism is problematic, but it is best understood as a broad complex of beliefs and ideas in which the idea of Koryö takes precedence over any other value. Given the lack of relevant source materials, it is impossible to precisely define nativism, but it seems that the idea that the unconditional privileging of Koryö to anything else was the common element in the thought of the Koryö monks and literati that were associated with Myoch'öng's faction. This kind of nativism contained both metaphysical, political and religious ideas and beliefs, but the idea of exclusive Koryö-centrism was most important.

Ironically, Yun Öni was put in this position by Kim Pushik. Given the fact that Kim Pushik is now known as a conservative Confucian and not as the Buddhist and Koryö-centric diplomat he also was, it is more than an ironic twist of fate that Yun was known as the 'Confucius of Korea', while Kim Pushik was never known as such or as something similar. A short text in the *Pobanjip* offers a clue how to understand Yun's pluralist orientation and his subsequent classification as a nativist:

Mungan-gong Yun Öni 文簡公 尹彥頤 increasingly enjoyed Sön meditation towards the end of his life. He retired from office and lived as a hermit in his Küm-gangjae 金鋼齋 [Diamond Study] in Yöngpyöng County. He called himself *küm-gang kösa* 金鋼居士 [Diamond Lay Hermit]. Each time he visited the town, he rode a yellow ox. Everybody recognized him. [...] His loss was lamented by noble people and by excellent scholars. [...] *Chungsung* 中丞 Yi's 李 pen name was Ch'unggön 忠謦 and he was the only one to criticize him: "Lord Yun was a councillor of state who was well-liked and looked upon. Even when he had retired on the grounds of old age, he still worried about the customs of the country and sharpened his convictions even more to show them to later generations. In doing so, he went against the achievements of the Buddha, against the [Confucian] way and he corrupted the social relations between men. He consequently harmed the teachings of the sages. I am afraid that from this misleading and weird customs will originate."<sup>66</sup>

In fact, Yi had not been the only one to criticize Yun; when Yun was banished, the majority of the court and the bureaucracy were against him, as Yun himself noted.<sup>67</sup> What Yi's evaluation of Yun Öni's convictions shows, is that it was not Yun's diverse interests that worked against him, or his association with Myoch'öng's supporters, but that in his diversity,

<sup>65</sup> Kang Ogyöp, "Koryö Sögyöng-üi p'ungsujirijök koch'al 高麗 西京의 風水地理의 考察," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論總 71 (1996): pp. 69-101; Kang Ogyöp, "Myoch'öng nan-üi yön'gu tonghyang-gwa seroun inshik mosaek 妙清亂의 研究動向과 서로인 認識 摸索," *Paeksan hakpo* 白山學報 49 (1997): pp. 169-208; Kang Ogyöp, "Injong-dae Sögyöng ch'ondoron-üi taedu-wa Sögyöng seryök-üi yökhal 인종대 서경천도론의 대두와 서경세력의 역할," *Sabak yön'gu* 史學研究 55-56 (1998): pp. 109-130; Kang Ogyöp, "Koryö Injong-dae Sögyöngmin-üi hangjaeng-gwa Sögyöng seryog-üi punhwa 高麗 仁宗代 西京民의 抗爭과 西京勢力의 分化," *Sabak yön'gu* 史學研究 58-59 (1999): 571-590; Yi Chöngshin 李貞信, "Myoch'ong-Ui nan-gwa tae-Güm kwan'gye 묘청의 난과 대금 관계," in *Koryöshidae-üi chöngch'i pyöndong-gwa taeye chöngch'aek* 고려시대의 정치변동과 대외정책 (Seoul: Kyöngin munhwasa 景仁文化社, 2003), pp. 37-130; Kang Söngwön 姜聲, "Myoch'öng-üi chae kom'to 妙清의 再檢討 *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 13 (1990): pp. 177-196.

<sup>66</sup> *POHJ* 1: 76.

<sup>67</sup> *TMS* 35: 21a-26a

he apparently transgressed against the principles of both Buddhism and Confucianism. It is no longer possible to find out what exactly this criticism was aimed at; it does not seem to have been Yun's eccentric behaviour as a lay hermit, because the same behaviour was approvingly noted with regard to other people. In this regard, it is worthwhile to note that a description of Kim Pushik would for a large part match with the description of Yun Ŏni, although Kim's influence precluded him from ever being accused of transgressions against the way, Buddhist or Confucian. The precise nature of Yun's transgressions may remain unknown, but he may serve as an excellent example of two important points. The first point is the wide-spread nature of a pluralist worldview among Koryŏ literati; a worldview, moreover, that was independent from political points of view or faction affiliations. Both Yun and Kim shared a pluralist view on the world, but politically they were on opposing sides. The second point is that Yun's example shows that this worldview had limits. It could not be stretched infinitely. It had a certain bandwidth along which it could be adapted, but it could not transcend that bandwidth. Any attempt in doing so, ended in accusations of transgression.

Koryŏ sources point to the fact that despite the flexibility of a pluralist worldview, it also possessed limits.<sup>68</sup> It was one thing to acknowledge fundamental differences in the different approaches to life, as for instance when Ch'oe Hae stated that "the accomplished man (*tarin* 達人) and the superior man (*kunja* 君子) savour their respective ways and enjoy them, which is why they will not get rid of them."<sup>69</sup> It was quite another thing to accept any interpretation whatsoever, as the criticism on Yun Ŏni showed. Yun Ŏni also wrote a commentary on the *Book of changes*, which shows the importance of this book and its explanation of divinatory techniques. Interestingly, precisely these techniques were the object of criticism at several points in Koryŏ history. The rebellion of Myoch'ŏng is perhaps the most illustrative example and I shall deal with this later. But even before Myoch'ŏng, perceived abuses (unauthorized stretching of bandwidth) of the *Book of changes*, divinatory practices and *üm/yang* theories were the butt of criticism:

Yi Chayŏn's 李子淵 brother Yi Chasang 李子祥 was an executive of the Department of Ministries and he had two sons, Ye 預 and O 敖. Both sons became state councillors. His grandchildren all married into the royal family and prospered as the highest nobility, without precedent in past or present. When Ŭi 顛 was newly working at the Censorate, persons who believed in yin/yang theories all advocated their own prophecies as well as theories on strengthening the earth by establishing temples. When the ruler asked him [about this], Ŭi answered: "*Üm/yang* finds its origins in the *Book of changes*, but nowhere is it mentioned that the help of geographical features will extend to later generations. In later generations, impostors have twisted this idea, put it down in words and are

<sup>68</sup> One instance in which both the boundaries and the flexibility of the pluralist worldview came to the fore is when a young scholar was barred from taking the civil examinations because he was the child of a monk. Sukchong intervened, quoting Confucius to argue that even if the rules governing the Confucian state examinations prohibit the young scholar from participating, the purpose of state examinations was to select wise people, not to discard them on account of their fathers. *KS II*: 33a-b 1102

<sup>69</sup> *TMS* 68: 17a-19a. He said this in a piece dedicated to a Confucian scholar who later in life had become a Buddhist monk. In the piece, Ch'oe makes a clear distinction between Confucianism and Buddhism, the last of which he is in fact quite critical about. Despite his reservations about the social abuses extreme veneration of the Buddha brought with it, he could identify with the more modest goals of the scholar who turned monk.

confusing many people with it. Further, these so-called prophecies are completely groundless and there is nothing to be gained from them.” Having answered thus, the ruler thought he was right.<sup>70</sup>

Such criticism, here against the abuses of *ŭm/yang* theories and geomancy, at times was also directed towards Buddhism. Yi Kyubo, for instance, complained about the Confucian cosmological idea of repercussion (*kongmyŏng* 共鳴), the study of which had not been able to do anything about the Mongol invasions: “That the barbarians slobber with greed is worth being warned against/But with what portents does astronomy warn us?/The mind of Heaven is like water and hard to fathom/While the power of the Buddha is steady like a mountain and to be trusted.”<sup>71</sup>

The realization that a worldview has its limits, parameters outside of which it stops functioning, was articulated by appealing to the changing times. Methods that had worked during one period, did not work in a later period.

In general, there is but one way of the ruler (*wangdo* 王道), not two. But the rites of the five emperors and the three kings were not the same. This was caused by the fact that they encountered times that needed to be subdued or were unruly. There is but one vehicle of the Buddha, but the reason that the expedient means of the Deer Park and the Vulture Peak are not similar is that the opportunities the Buddha waited for were [sometimes] small and [sometimes] big. The manners in which the world of human kings and that of the Buddhas appear in our world may be different, but they are nevertheless not far apart if one makes the amalgam of scattered things one’s king and the integration of dispersed things the Buddha. If native traditions that go well with the dharma help the king in ruling, how would this be different from administering effective medication to a sick person and the falling of sweet rain at precisely the right time?<sup>72</sup>

This historical observation may seem obvious enough, but it should be realized that while observations such as these were made, both ways of looking at the world, the ‘older’ one and the ‘newer’ one, simultaneously existed in Koryŏ. The way of the kings, Buddhism, native traditions, Confucianism, geomancy, Daoism: these different roads towards successful dealing with the world were not only historically different methods; they co-existed in the same space and same time. As in China, this realization led some scholars to believe that fundamentally Confucianism and Buddhism were compatible,<sup>73</sup> but in general it was accepted that the

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<sup>70</sup> *POHJ* 1: 64.

<sup>71</sup> *POHJ* 2: 114-115.

<sup>72</sup> *TMS* 68: 7b-12b.

<sup>73</sup> See for example this text (*Sorimsa chungsu sang ki*) 小林寺重修象記 by Im Ch’un 林椿: “The ways of the sages emerge apart from each other in the world and change it for the better. That is why Confucius was active during the late Zhou and propagated his teachings with benevolence and righteousness. The teachings of Yangzi 陽子, Mozi 墨子, the Yellow Emperor and Laozi arose alternately, but these split up in several strands of strange words and bizarre teachings. Their detrimental influence was transmitted to the Qin 秦 and the Han 漢. There is nowhere that it did not reach, reaching the point that it could no longer be tolerated or listened to. Then Buddhism reached China, gently showing people its profound truths, teaching them to act with compassion and guiding all living beings. By doing so, it adapted itself to its times. That is why Liuzi 柳子 considered the teachings of the Buddha not

different belief and thought systems served different, if sometimes overlapping, purposes and were as such necessarily different. The next text, a letter of farewell to a friend (Yi Misu 李眉叟, d.u.) written by Im Ch'un, is an exposition on the ambiguities of the different teachings and their actual social practice:

Long ago our sage appeared towards the end of the declining Zhou dynasty, together with Laozi. The two sages relied on and trusted each other, but later scholars even came as far as the evil of harming one another. And worse, fifteen hundred years after our sage had left [for the other world], Sakyamuni appeared and competed with the teachings of Confucius and Laozi. It was evident that they would collide with each other and not be unified. Sakyamuni made compassion, generosity, extinction and unintentional acts [the basic concepts of] his teaching. Some of these positively correspond to the *Book of changes*, so if they would be truly integrated and united, originally there would be no different truths. Even if our sage would return to life, he would not be rejected. If one would try to save the world from its fighting, stealing and harming of life, only Sakyamuni's teaching can be of help in this. Therefore, even Confucian scholars followed it, enjoying and promoting this teaching. Only Han Tuizhi 韓退之 rejected and contested this vehemently. In general, it is so that scholars who are not like this cannot be saved, because in the end Confucius will disappear [from them], but the followers of Confucius and of Buddha cannot but bring harm to their respective ways. They wear the proper clothes and headgear, avow benevolence and righteousness and say: "We are the disciples of Confucius." But if you watch them carefully, they rely on Confucius' teaching to carry out injustices and have the stupid and uneducated people suffer unbearable acts. This certainly amounts to digging a grave for the *Book of documents* and it also constitutes a grave offence against our sage. Even those who shave their heads and dress in black [monks], who have no wives, nor fathers or sons, are corrupted and debased, idly speak empty words and deceive people. There are many who only benefit themselves. So how are they different from each other? How can a superior man not reject these things; must he then praise and promote them? The reason that I reject Buddha is precisely because of this and also because I revere his teachings. Yi Misu 李眉叟 and myself like each other and he rejoices in the Buddha, as do I. What makes me doubt is the fact that he likes to produce karmic ties and if you look at the followers of the Buddha, they all clasp their hands together and respect and believe this. How can they be persons who really love the Buddha? I have said this, but there has been no change whatsoever. Without good reason they take me to be one who rejects the Buddha, while they themselves do not know how to rejoice in the way, but are debased and worthless. You have left me and went south, but because I attach much importance to your leaving, I could not but appeal to you to change your intentions.<sup>74</sup>

The main thrust of this letter seems to accept the fact that the different belief and thought systems served different, if sometimes overlapping, purposes and possessed as such

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to be different from those of Confucius and why he said that only when the dharma seal of the true vehicle and the Confucian codes are studied side by side, that people will know the paths they must travel. So if one would join and unite them, the two teachings of Confucianism and Buddhism would fundamentally not be different and amount to the same. That is why after the Jin and the Song dynasties, excellent scholars and officials heard of this and enjoyed it." Even this text is ambiguous about the fundamental similarity between Confucianism and Buddhism. *TMS* 65: 3a-5a.

<sup>74</sup> *TMS* 83: 9a-10a

necessarily different ultimate principles, although the writer is not completely sure whether Buddhism and Confucianism cannot be reduced to one another. What is clear, though, is that in social practice, the two teachings serve different purposes and possess different ultimate principles. It is perhaps tempting to read this text as a confirmation of the idea that the different truths are in origin alike and that it is merely their social practices that differ. Both the fact that the respective social practices are so different and the repeated acknowledgement in the text that Confucianism and Buddhism serve different purposes make such an interpretation impossible. An anonymous poem recorded in the *Tong munson* gives a possible interpretation of the ideological justification or perhaps explanation of Koryŏ pluralism. The poem starts off as a rather general description of how the spirits should be appeased so that the people and the country do not suffer. Although not very explicitly articulated, the poem refers to the Confucian idea of cosmological retribution according to which the ruler's possession and exercise of virtue blocks natural catastrophes from happening. Interestingly, the poem acknowledges the general truth of this mechanism, but it does not cast it in the absolute terms in which it is usually described in the Confucian discursive environment. The identity of the spirits or their locality and such is not discussed, but given the general nature of the poem, the spirits mentioned probably refer to the local spirits of mountains and streams as well as to other supernatural beings. The poem exhorts the ruler to rule with propriety (*yii* 義), which will make the spirits rejoice and prevent people from falling ill or becoming spiteful. The mechanism behind this relationship between the ruler and the spirits is explained with a quotation from the *Spring and autumn annals*, which states that "man is the master of spirits".<sup>75</sup> Despite the quite clearly perceived power of the spirits, man influenced the spirits to the extent of being their master. Man, in other words, is the measure of things and it is his behaviour that regulates the world.<sup>76</sup> As such, he had several ways at his disposal to appease the spirits, regulate the world and, in the case of the ruler, rule the realm. Again, it is clear that not everything was permissible. The use of the concept of *yii* (despite the range of meanings this concept has) in this particular poem, the allusions to the Confucian perception of the cosmos and other allusions to classical Confucianism inform the reader that flexibility of interpretation should be located foremost with reference to Confucian thought. Nonetheless, the poem also states that if the spirits are satisfied, "there is no policy or learning that is not appropriate", since "the spirits of heaven and earth will bring harmony to everybody". Man is the measure of all things, but simultaneously bound to some mechanisms that are inescapable. If, however, the workings of these mechanisms are respected, man becomes master of the spirits, and "proper royal rule extends to far and near alike", which will cause the people to "know the proper way". There is in other words a kind of cautious or provisional pluralism noticeable in this poem, a pluralism that is contingent upon human appreciation of certain fundamental concepts. Flexibility and leeway exist, but the bandwidth of possible interpretations is clearly

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<sup>75</sup> TMS 2: 14b-15b. The title of the poem in the *Tong munson* is also taken from the same quotation from the *Spring and autumn annals*.

<sup>76</sup> "Man is the measure of all things – of the things that are, that they are; of the things that are not, that they are not. As each thing seems to me, so it is to me and as each thing seems to you, so it is to you." Protagoras, in Diels, Hermann and Walther Kranz. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Zurich: Weidmann, 1985.



limited.

Other writings by prominent Koryŏ literati explain why this should be so. Kim Pushik explained in his response to the ruler's refusal to accept Kim Pushik's refusal to write the text for a commemorative stele in honour of a high Buddhist monk that the most difficult thing to write was a factual text. It is not the writing itself that is necessarily difficult; it is difficult because facts and words have to correspond so that there will be neither excesses nor deficiencies.<sup>77</sup> The assiduity in making words and facts correspond (despite the fact that there were several ways of doing so) also echoes in a text decrying fashionable literary embellishments at the expense of content:

Even worse, at the Hallim Academy the words used in the texts devoted to the Buddha and the spirits are unnecessarily complex and ever increasing in number. These are not merely unnecessarily complex sentences, but they are also deceiving Buddha and misleading man, by discussing about the Buddha, the spirits and spiritual retribution or the fortunes of the state or barbarian invasions, writing them down and exaggerating about them. This they have made their talent. How can the fact that the compositions of the ancients were necessarily concise, mean that their talents were not sufficient for exaggeration and embellishment? This was because they rejected that which was wrong and meaningless, kept that which was true and tried to express this according to the facts. People who compose texts should keep this in mind.<sup>78</sup>

This text stops short of giving explicit directions how to write a proper text, but it does declare rather clearly what kinds of texts are not proper. It lays bare in no uncertain terms that the bandwidth available to Koryŏ literati was limited, stressing that some things are wrong; it does so while characteristically referring to the Buddha, local spirits, the well-being of the state and the safety of the borders. What is perhaps most conspicuous is that this text is quintessentially a classically Confucian text that refers to the golden age of Sinitic civilization and its achievements. The background, however, is noticeably Buddhist, which reinforces the impression that Koryŏ literati had clear understandings with regard to the different thought and belief systems they were familiar with and could take recourse to, as well as with regard to their limitations, the parameters outside of which these systems did not function. Again, it was realized that the different thought and belief systems had different, if sometimes compatible and similar, purposes and as such different constitutive principles. The emphasis, however, on writing correct texts, on satisfying the spirits correctly, also strongly suggests that these different systems were in contact with each other and shared at least some basic assumptions about how the world worked, even if other basic assumptions were at odds with each other. A concrete example of this is a short text written by Im Ch'un, the conciseness of which earned it its place in the *Tong munsŏn*. In it, Im addresses a person who has encountered many difficulties in finding a position, but whose talents certainly justified employment. The text is replete with references to Laozi and Zhuangzi, Confucian ideals such as the longing for the ruler, the institute of the royal lectures, protection of Buddhism and the protection of the northern

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<sup>77</sup> TMS 30: 12a-b

<sup>78</sup> POHJ 3: 145

frontier.<sup>79</sup> The conclusion that should be drawn from this text is that these elements (and other elements in other texts) constitute part of the “[a]rguments about reality [which] have an existential component: we regard those things as real which play an important role in the kind of life we prefer.”<sup>80</sup> A text such as this one, and many others, was supposed to make the words correspond so that there will be neither excesses nor deficiencies; the ability to be able to write like this, was the yardstick for measuring the gifted scholar and official. Texts such as these reflected Koryŏ’s realities; ontologically (and I do not think that this admittedly ‘heavy’ term is inappropriately used here), a well-written text provided access to the successful description of reality; hence the esteem composers of excellent texts were awarded in Koryŏ. And given the varied nature of the elements incorporated in these texts, the worldviews touched upon, it is legitimate to speak of the existence (in such texts) of several, different realities.

To conclude this discussion of pluralist literati in Koryŏ, it is instructive to look at the life of Yi Chungyak 李仲若 (?-1122), a scholar famous for his literary style. His life as described by Im Ch’un emphasized Yi Chungyak’s pluralist orientation. Before being called to the capital, he lived as a recluse, and “preserved the way, while as an official he practiced it.” His dwelling place was both a “Buddhist temple” and a “Daoist shrine”. He was convinced that he had learned about Buddhism and Daoism in a previous life and read widely in Daoist books, Buddhist texts and Confucian classics. In his search for the way (or ways), he beseeched geomancy master Ŭn Wŏnch’ung 殷元忠<sup>81</sup> and Sŏn master Ikchong 翼宗禪師 to teach him their secrets. Yi Chungyak was also a gifted physician; he was invited to the capital to cure Sukchong and lived in the palace during the reign of Yejong. In 1108, he went to the Song, accompanying an envoy, met Daoist masters *fashi* Huang Dazhong 法師 黃大忠 and Zhou Yuling 周與齡 and obtained mysterious powers, after having learnt the essential mysteries of the way from them. On his return, he established a Daoist temple to perform rituals on behalf of the state; this temple was subsequently known under the name of Pogwŏn-gung 復源宮.<sup>82</sup> His special ties to the landscape, in particular the place where he had built his dwelling as a recluse, were also noted by his contemporaries: “I do not know whether the master waited for this landscape or if the landscape waited for the master.” After Yi’s departure for the capital, however his house fell in disrepair, until it was restored by his son, who also refurbished it with implements to welcome the Buddha. Ŭijong 毅宗 even sent a painting of Kwanŭm 觀音 as a gift. Yi’s life, his literary excellence, his many interests and achievements, and his experiences abroad make him a prime example of Koryŏ’s pluralist literatus; his recognition as such even more so. The description of his life ends with the categorical statement that a person like Yi Chungyak cannot be reduced to somebody who merely practiced *ŭm/yang* techniques and expresses clear dissatisfaction with the fact that, apparently, Yi was claimed as one of their own

<sup>79</sup> TMS 45: 30a-33a

<sup>80</sup> Paul Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance: A tale of abstraction versus the richness of being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 71.

<sup>81</sup> According to the *Koryŏsa*, Ŭn was a famous geomancy master who had submitted a memorial like Kim Wijŏ, an even more famous geomancer from a previous generation, had once submitted. KS 122:1a-3b.

<sup>82</sup> TMS 65: 6a-10a.

by “those adherents of Ŭn Wŏnch’ung”.<sup>83</sup> Now, as mentioned above, Ŭn Wŏnch’ung was mentioned favourably in the text, when he was put on the scene as a senior figure for Yi Chungyak to ask advice from. The dissatisfaction expressed at the end of the text was not dissatisfaction with Ŭn *per se*, but with the attempt by his followers to disclaim Yi Chungyak’s pluralist orientation and substitute with a monist orientation consisting of *ŭm/ŷang* theories. This example shows that pluralism as such was recognized and articulated in Koryŏ.

Another instance shows the advantages of a flexible worldview by demonstrating what happened to someone who was a paragon of inflexibility. Han Yuch’ung 韓惟忠 (?-1146) was a high-ranking official, envoy and eminent Confucian scholar. Han, who was famous for his inflexible practice of Confucianism, was impeached and removed from his office after the siege of Sŏgyŏng, because of his frequent altercations with Kim Pushik.<sup>84</sup> Ironically, it was Han who was impeached on account of his inflexibility, not Kim Pushik. Han paid the price for his ideological inflexibility: despite his immaculate family background and his impressive learning, he was ousted from almost every post he ever had. He was removed from his office as state councillor (*chaesang* 宰相), after he had refused to try to reach a compromise during a meeting with the other *chaesang*.<sup>85</sup> His refusal to compromise his principles was a prominent theme of his stele. Pak Kyŏngsan 朴京山, who wrote the text, ended the account of Han’s life with the following poem: It is magnificent, Lord Han/From the proper way you never deviated/Exhaustive in your loyalty towards your country/You were never bothered by the demands of the times/That the superior man (*kunja* 君子) was right/And the mean persons (*soin* 小人) wrong/Was not recognized by Heaven/O, how sad it is.”<sup>86</sup>

Knowing the demands of the times and deviating from the way was precisely what characterized the majority of early to middle Koryŏ literati. Maintaining rigid principles was not. Deviation, contradiction, and inconsistency, always in conjunction with the demands of the times, characterized the average scholar or official. Naturally, there were persons active who did not conform to this description. One of these persons, Myoch’ŏng, will be the subject of the last chapter. Historiography on the Koryŏ period has often described its policies, beliefs and thoughts in an idiom of contrasts, that is, in a disguised monist terminology that emphasizes their fundamentally contradictory natures.<sup>87</sup> But, as must be concluded from the examples above, it is not possible to dichotomise Koryŏ society and thought to such an extent. Instead of dichotomies between Buddhism and Confucianism or between Confucianism and geomancy, Koryŏ literati have turned out to be pluralist, active in an ideologically huge gray area in which most of their activities took. Despite the tendency in modern historiography to dichotomize Koryŏ’s intellectual and religious environment, it has proved to be impossible to divide Koryŏ literati into mutually exclusive groups. The same argument holds true for Koryŏ diplomacy; Koryŏ’s diplomats and policy makers were neither sinocentric Confucianists, unprincipled and opportunist usurpers of royal prerogatives, nor die-hard nativists.

<sup>83</sup> TMS 65: 9b-10a.

<sup>84</sup> KS 16: 37b-38a; KMC 43: 31-33.

<sup>85</sup> KMC 43: 38-41.

<sup>86</sup> KMC 43: 56-58.

<sup>87</sup> Breuker, “Koryŏ as an independent realm”.

It has become clear that in several respects Koryŏ literati as a rule located the centre of the known world in Koryŏ. Koryŏ was perceived of as an independent realm, whose independence was defended by pragmatic diplomacy, which nonetheless was certainly not divorced from ideological motivations and concerns. The bandwidth that assured Koryŏ literati a host of different opinions and worldviews that were nonetheless historically and ideologically understandable for their contemporaries also ensured that Koryŏ's views on the world could withstand unusual change. Practical experience aided Koryŏ's scholars and officials in determining the country's course. Most if not all of Koryŏ's leading literati had been abroad on diplomatic missions to the Liao, the Song or the Jin, which given the complicated nature of these missions and the sometimes difficult travel conditions lasted from several months to several years. These experiences abroad with foreign cultures enabled these officials to come to share a fundamental sense of Koryŏ-centrism coupled to the ability to realistically assess the international political situation.<sup>88</sup> The universe as constructed by Koryŏ literati thus attached much significance to Koryŏ's place in it and the place of Koryŏ's ruler in the universal scheme; their peculiar view on the world enabled them to execute realistic policies, while the fact that the Koryŏ ruler was considered as the ontological equal of other rulers meant that these policies need not be divorced from ideological concerns.

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<sup>88</sup> A study by Edward Shultz brings out this aspect of Koryŏ's diplomatic relations well. See Edward J. Shultz. "Koryŏ's envoys to China: Early 12<sup>th</sup> century." *Han-kuo hsueh-pao* 7 (1988): pp. 247-266.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### THE ORIGINS OF KORYŎ PLURALISM

A pluralist conception of the world was essential to Koryŏ during the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and a large part of the thirteenth century. We have seen that this conception of the world was expressed historically; Koryŏ's historical descent was both in fact and in narrative plural. A unified narrative of descent did not exist. Koryŏ's pluralist self-perception had its counterpart in the way it perceived the international world; its fundamental outlook on foreign relations was also pluralist. The roles of the ruler betray the same ideological orientation, as do Koryŏ's most conspicuous embodiment of pluralist ideology, its literati.

In this chapter, I shall attempt to provide a more general and abstract background of Koryŏ pluralism. I shall also attempt to provide some possible historical reasons for the development of Koryŏ pluralism. Koryŏ pluralism can partly be traced back to a universal presence of pluralist elements and partly to the specific and contingent historical circumstances on the Korean peninsula. Here, it is important to bear in mind what kind of pluralist outlook on the world is found in Koryŏ. Far from a stable, clearly defined gathering of different elements, Koryŏ's *Weltanschauung* was characterized by a constant interaction of ideology, history and politics, creating an unstable and ever-changing blend of ways to look at the world and to deal with it. In certain situations, such as when dealing with the northern dynasties, this mixture proved to be a miracle cure of sorts; in other instances, such as when Koryŏ had to deal with the rebellion of Myoch'ŏng or the Mongol invasions, it turned out to be somewhat of a foul concoction. Overall, however, the ability to switch between different perspectives without eradicating the pasts of Koryŏ was a clear advantage, which provided flexibility and (almost) always different possible paths to travel and courses of action to take.

#### AN EVER-PRESENT PHENOMENON

Pluralism is, to a certain extent, always present in human societies and on a personal level in man's mind. In any society, "different universes of discourse meet, acknowledge each other and enjoy an oblique relationship which neither requires nor forecasts their being assimilated to one another."<sup>1</sup> This does not mean that such mechanisms are articulated. In most societies, they are probably not articulated at all or only to a small extent. In any given community, several kinds of logic and different ways of viewing and understanding the world

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Oakeshott, "The voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind," in *Rationalism and politics*. (London: Methuen, 1962; reprint Liberty Fund expanded edition, 1991), pp. 476-490.

coexist and are necessarily in constant conflict with one another.<sup>2</sup> Conflict, in various intensities, is a necessary state of affairs: the presence of each system precludes the establishment of a complete system of identifications based on either one of them.<sup>3</sup> These various logics collide, but co-exist and are not reduced to or dissolved in one another.<sup>4</sup> Such incommensurability, which in concrete instances is expressed in the pursuit of mutually exclusive ultimate goals, does not in general produce unliveable societies. On the contrary, the tension generated between the different systems of thought, each with different strong points and advantages as well as disadvantages, can create a spectrum of possibilities and potentialities. Michael Oakeshott has described how such a polyphony of different voices, ideas and logics works, how incommensurable ideas influence one another, how they function and how potentiality turns into actuality and vice versa:

[...F]acts appear only to be resolved once more into the possibilities from which they were made. 'Certainties' are shown to be combustible, not by being brought into contact with other 'certainties' or with doubt, but by being kindled by the presence of ideas of another order, approximations are revealed between notions normally remote from one another.<sup>5</sup>

It is through the close encounter of incommensurabilities that on the one hand certainties are collapsed, but on the other hand new possibilities arise. Koryō identity as a whole consisted of this polyphony of different, incommensurable voices, ever-changing and flexible, but within certain parameters. The situation sketched by Oakeshott is what Chantal Mouffe has called a 'precarious in-between', which 'emphasizes not only unrealized possibilities, but also the radical impossibility of final completion.'<sup>6</sup> Given the impossibility of final completion, an ever-changing space in which different logics and ideas are articulated is inevitable. Different ideas collide and interact and "[t]his articulation must be constantly re-created and renegotiated: there is no point of equilibrium where final harmony could be attained."<sup>7</sup> The 'certainties' of Oakeshott that are "kindled by the presence of ideas of another order" are constantly being renegotiated, which is in essence identical to the way the boundary mechanism of Barth functions.

The universal presence of pluralism may be attributed to individual differences, as Michael Oakeshott does:

Nor may all its [moral association's] various calls be equally responded to; each man

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah Berlin, "The sense of reality," in *The sense of reality: Studies in ideas and their history* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997), edited by Henry Hardy, pp. 1-39; Isaiah Berlin, "Historical inevitability," in *The proper study of mankind: An anthology of essays* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997), edited by Henry Hardy and Roger Hauscheer, pp. 91-118.

<sup>3</sup> Chantal Mouffe, "For a politics of nomadic identity," in *Travelers' tales. Narratives of home and displacement* (London: Routledge, 1993), edited by George Robertson et al., pp. 105-113, esp. p. 111

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah Berlin, "The sense of reality", pp. 1-39.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Oakeshott, "The voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind", p. 489.

<sup>6</sup> Chantal Mouffe, "For a politics of nomadic identity", p. 112. Mouffe discusses democracy and its inner workings in this essay, but the mechanisms she describes are universal.

<sup>7</sup> Chantal Mouffe, "For a politics of nomadic identity", p. 112.

hears and understands the promptings of some allegiances more clearly than others. As the ancient Greek well knew, to honour Artemis might entail the neglect of Aphrodite.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps pluralism goes even deeper and perhaps must its origins be sought on an ontological level, as both William James and Paul Feyerabend argue:

Conjunctions, prepositions, and adverbs play indeed the vital part in all philosophies; and in contemporary idealism the words 'as' and 'quâ' bear the burden of reconciling metaphysical unity with phenomenal diversity. Quâ absolute the world is one and perfect, quâ relative it is many and faulty, yet it is identically the self-same world—instead of talking of it as many facts, we call it one fact in many aspects.<sup>9</sup>

The discrepancy between the experience of fragmented realities of daily life and the absolute unity of the principles said to underlie reality (“‘wholes’ are not realities there, parts only are realities”<sup>10</sup>) have also been noticed by Paul Feyerabend.<sup>11</sup> Different logics articulate their ultimate goals, defend their fundamental values, and strive for their final realization, while compromising with competing ideologies along the way. Each speaks in its own peculiar idiom, emphasizing its claims to ultimate truths, and staking out claims to social, economic and political influence. The articulation in divergent idioms of incommensurable ideas (embodied in discussions, actions, decisions and even in men) is an on-going process; it is of the utmost importance here to realize that any approach between divergent voices was likely to be followed by a distancing; every schism followed by unity and vice versa. There is no common point of origin, or a common destination, merely a common presence in the present.

An attempt to suspend such a chaotic and conflict-ridden situation, to solve all contradictions and collisions is “therefore to be seen as an ‘impossible good’ [...], as something that exists only as long as it cannot be perfectly achieved.”<sup>12</sup> Human history has

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<sup>8</sup> Michael Oakeshott, *On human conduct* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 66. Oakeshott continued in the same essay as follows: “That there should be many such [moral] languages in the world, some perhaps with familial likenesses in terms of which there may be profitable exchange of expressions, is intrinsic to their character. This plurality cannot be resolved by being understood as so many contingent and regrettable divergences from a fancied perfect and universal language of moral intercourse (a law of God, a utilitarian ‘critical’ morality, or a so-called ‘rational morality’). But it is hardly surprising that such a resolution should have been attempted: human beings are apt to be disconcerted unless they feel themselves to be upheld by something more substantial than the emanations of their own contingent imaginations. This unresolved plurality teases the monistic yearnings of the muddled theorist, it vexes a moralist with ecumenical leanings, and it may disconcert an unfortunate who, having ‘lost’ his morality (as others have been known to ‘lose’ their faith), must set about constructing one for himself and is looking for uncontaminated ‘rational’ principles out of which to make it.” (pp. 80-81) Isaiah Berlin’s elaboration of value pluralism is very close to Oakeshott in this respect. Isaiah Berlin, “The sense of reality”, pp. 1-39; Isaiah Berlin, “Historical inevitability”, pp. 91-118.

<sup>9</sup> William James, *A pluralistic universe, The Hibbert Lectures at Manchester College on the present situation in philosophy* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), p. 47.

<sup>10</sup> James, *A pluralistic universe*, p. 194.

<sup>11</sup> Feyerabend, *The conquest of abundance*, introduction.

<sup>12</sup> Chantal Mouffe, “For a politics of nomadic identity”, p. 112. For a similar argument, see Berlin, “The sense of reality”, pp. 1-39.

amply shown that such attempts are rife and persistently made and that the explicit articulation of the existence of pluralism as a universal phenomenon was but seldom made.<sup>13</sup>

### KORYŌ PLURALISM

Early to middle Koryŏ's ideological landscape was no exception with regard to the existence of pluralism, but as I have pointed out in the introduction, it is not so much the existence of pluralism in Koryŏ that is of interest, but rather its intensity and pervasiveness, combined with the realization that reality was not a unified whole, but a aggregate of partial realities. In Koryŏ, the acknowledgment that reality was fragmented and contradictory was made and was accordingly codified in its laws and histories. The ideological landscape of the period from the late tenth to the late twelfth century may best be described as constantly changing and always on the road towards a better situation, without ever arriving there. Perhaps the most important aspect of early to middle Koryŏ is the fact that it never reached a stable equilibrium. Conflicts were in most cases not definitively solved; in the few instances where this did happen, the price paid was severe social upheaval, such as when Myoch'ŏng's revolt was suppressed in an orgy of bloodshed.

Koryŏ's ideologies moved along the bandwidth limited by the parameters of Koryŏ identity, or, to put it in Barth's terminology, the boundaries that guarded communal identity. In concreto, this was the space in which different narratives of historical descent competed for primacy; in which different systems of thought clashed with, influenced or avoided one another; in which maternal and paternal lines of descent were alternately emphasized or ignored, depending on respective advantageousness; in which northern Manchurian and southern Sinitic elements were simultaneously adopted and adapted

In Koryŏ, several kinds of logic, different systems of thought and of perceiving the world, were in constant conflict with one another. The logic of the state presumed the ultimate nature of the interest of the state, while Buddhist thought and practice was founded on the twin pillars of the ultimate transitoriness and emptiness of all phenomena and the possibility of salvation for sentient beings. The Confucian logic of the primacy of social order and the possibility of a meaningful life through adherence to social ethics aimed at yet another kind of final realization of ultimate goals. Indigenous systems of belief had their own kind of logic, although their position as more or less marginalized forms of belief and thought precluded their goals from becoming ultimate goals. Instead, indigenous belief systems survived by allying themselves to the dominant Koryŏ ideologies. An exception must be made for geomancy, the art of reading the landscape. Although in itself a mishmash of various elements, the art of reading the Koryŏ landscape was closely associated with the fate and destiny of the state and the people and as such possessed an ultimate logic that was neither completely statist, nor completely popular, or completely mystical. These different kinds of logic, which in

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<sup>13</sup> Berlin, "The sense of reality", pp. 1-39.



themselves also knew often understated but endless variations, came in conflict with each other, because the presence of each system made impossible the establishment of a complete system of identifications based on either one of them.<sup>14</sup> These various logics were consequently not reduced to or dissolved into one another, but co-existed. All major ideologies in Koryŏ subscribed to the view, *mutatis mutandis*, that daily reality hid its underlying principles from view. Pluralism in Koryŏ was not located (or articulated) on this level; it was located in the boundary mechanism's bandwidth and in the spectrum of alternatives available to Koryŏ's literati, where ideologies that in their own estimation possessed unique access to the true principles of life, cosmos and reality, were in constant contact with each other, exercising influence but not assimilating, denying but not excluding.

It has become clear in previous chapters that the differences between different ways of looking at the world in Koryŏ (be they political, ideological, religious, diplomatic) were considered to be fundamental and unbridgeable, except for practical and temporary purposes. In practice, this meant that coexistence, both on a social and an individual level, was unavoidable. Each of these outlooks possessed some notion of "the perfect realization of an ideal existing in a harmony". Significantly, however, for most periods and among most people, such a notion does not seem to have been operational. To phrase it differently, "the perfect realization of an ideal existing in a harmony" was pursued on the level of a particular ideology, but not as a socially desirable goal. Instead of the pursuit of a unified and harmonious whole, the other and its otherness were considered irreducible.

## A HISTORICAL EXAMPLE

Pluralism was not unique to Koryŏ, although its extent and codified status were. Koryŏ literati were also not the first ones to experience the impossibility of some choices or the fundamental incommensurability of different worldviews, thought systems and values. Literati in Koryŏ were conversant with such examples which influenced their own actions. A particularly poignant example, and one I would like to discuss in more detail here, of the ultimately insolvable nature of such dilemmas is that of Wŏn'gwang 圓光 (traditional dates 542-640), a Shilla Buddhist monk who devised the famous five commandments for laymen (*sesok o'gye* 世俗五戒). The Shilla dynasty (57 B.C.E.-668; as a unified state on the peninsula 668-935) became a thoroughly Buddhist dynasty after its acceptance of Buddhism in the sixth century. The Buddhism under which banner Shilla had united the peninsula had been internalized and had become a symbol of the ruler and the royal family, who were considered incarnations of Sakyamuni and his family. The adaptation of Buddhism to the distinct environment of Shilla has been studied elaborately elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> Here I would like to focus on a

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<sup>14</sup> Chantal Mouffe, "For a politics of nomadic identity," in *Travelers' tales. Narratives of home and displacement* (London: Routledge, 1993), edited by George Robertson et al., pp. 105-113, p. 111

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of Buddhism's role in the unification of the Korean peninsula under Shilla, see Pankaj N. Mohan, "The Buddhist transformation of Silla kingship: Buddha as a king and king as a Buddha," in *Transactions of the Korea*

particularly important point during the integration of Buddhism into the Shilla state which has been interpreted in many ways. In 613, Wŏn'gwang made his famous five commandments for laymen. Responding to a request by the young *hwarang* 花郎 warriors Kwisan 貴山 (?-602) and Ch'uhang 蕭項 (?-602) to furnish a “maxim which will serve to instruct us for the rest of our lives”, Wŏn'gwang gave them his five commandments for laymen. By the early seventh century, the elite of Shilla and certainly its *hwarang* warriors had become thoroughly and passionately Buddhist.<sup>16</sup> The *hwarang* were devout followers of the Buddha of the future, Maitreya; some *hwarang* were even seen as Maitreya incarnations.<sup>17</sup> Wŏn'gwang gave them the following commandments: “Now, there are five commandments for laymen: serve your sovereign with loyalty 事君以忠; attend your parents with filial piety 事親以孝; treat your friends with sincerity 交友以信; do not retreat from battle 臨戰無退; be discriminating about the taking of life 殺生有擇.”<sup>18</sup> Many studies have been devoted to get to the bottom of the curious nature of these five instructions, focusing on the ideological provenance of each of the five and trying to integrate them, one way or the other.<sup>19</sup> This has been difficult, as can readily be surmised, when an eminent Buddhist monk counsels young warriors to kill with distinction, but kill nonetheless. Wŏn'gwang justified this by telling the two youths, “There are ten commandments in the bodhisattva ordination. But since you are subjects and sons, I fear you

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*Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 70 (1995): pp. 15-35; Mohan, “Shamanic Buddhism in early Shilla,” in *Perspectives on Korea* (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1998), edited by Lee Sang-oak and Duk-soo Park, pp. 333-352.

<sup>16</sup> For a comprehensive study of the *hwarang*, see the essays in *Hwarang munhwa-ü shin yŏn'gu* 花郎문화의 신연구 (Seoul: Mundoksa 문덕사, 1996), edited by Hŏ Hŭngshik.

<sup>17</sup> Mohan, Pankaj N., “Maitreya cult in early Shilla: Focusing on hwarang in Maitreya-dynasty,” *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 14 (2001): pp. 149-174.

<sup>18</sup> Both the *Samguk sagi*, the *Samguk yusa* and the *Haedong kosŭng chŏn* list the five commandments. I borrowed the translation of the version in the *Haedong kosŭng chŏn* (HKC 1B: 1020c-1021b) from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 82.

<sup>19</sup> Yi Chonghak 李鍾學, “Wŏn'gwang pŏpsa-wa sesok ogye-e taehan shin koch'al 圓光法師과 世俗五戒에 대한 新考察,” *Shilla munhwa* 신라문화 7 (1990): pp. 145-168 (nativist approach); Kim Chonggap 金正坤, “Hwarang-do-wa sesok ogye 花郎道와 世俗五戒,” *Chŏngshin munhwa yŏn'gu* 정신문화연구 13.1 (1990): pp. 37-54 (also nativist approach); Shin Hyŏnsuk 申賢淑, “Chŏngt'ogyo-wa Wŏn'gwang sesok ogye-ü koch'al 淨土教와 圓光世俗五戒의 考察,” *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 61.62 (1988): pp. 49-66 (Buddhist approach); Yi Kwanhyŏng 李寬炯, “T'ongil Shilla-ü hwarang-do-e nat'an an ch'eyuk sasang koch'al 統一新羅의 花郎道에 나타난 體育思想 考察,” *Sŏul kyodae nonmunjip* 서울교대논문집 21 (1988): pp. 111-137 (integrative approach to Buddhist, Daoist and Confucian elements); An Kyehyŏn 安啓賢, “Shillain-ü sesok ogye-wa kukkagwan: Shilla munhwa-ü tŭ'kch'ing ihae-rŭl wihan sŏsŏl 新羅人の 世俗五戒와 國家觀-新羅文化의 特徵 理解를 위한 序說,” in *Han'guk sasang 3* 韓國思想 (Seoul: Han'guk sasang p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe 韓國思想編輯委員會, 1960), pp. 81-97 (Buddhist approach); Kim Unhak 金雲學, “Hwarang-do-wa pulgyo sasang 花郎道와 佛教思想,” in *Tongguk sasang* 동국사상 7 (1974): pp. 7-20 (Buddhist approach); Chŏng Pyŏngjo 鄭柄朝, “Wŏn'gwang-ü posalgye sasang 圓光의 菩薩戒思想,” in *Han'guk kodaemunhwa-wa injŏp munhwa-üi kwan'gye* 韓國古代文化와 隣接文化와의 關係-報告論叢 (Sŏngnam: Han'guk chŏngshin munhwa yŏn'guwŏn 韓國정신문화연구원, 1981), edited by Han'guk chŏngshin munhwa yŏn'guwŏn, pp. 81-115 (Shilla adaptation of Buddhist thought); Pak Sŏnmi 朴美先, “Shilla Wŏn'gwang pŏpsa-ü Yŏraejang sasang-gwa kyohwa hwaltong 新羅 圓光法師의 如來藏思想과 教化活動,” *Han'guk sasangsabak* 韓國思想史學 11 (1998): pp. 19-54 (Buddhist approach); Kim Sujo 金戊祚, “Wŏn'gwang-ü 'salsaenyut'aek' 圓光의 「殺生有擇」,” *Kwangyŏngsŏng taebak nonmunjip* 觀慶星大學校論文集 12.3 (1991): pp. 7-39; Hŏ Hŭngshik 許興植, “Koryŏ-shidae hwarang-ü pyŏnhyŏng-gwa sahoejŏk kinŭng 高麗時代 花郎의 變형과 사회적 기능 高麗時代 花郎의 變형과 사회적 기능,” in *Hwarang munhwa-ü shin yŏn'gu* 花郎문화의 신연구 (Seoul: Han'guk hyang'osa yŏn'gu chŏn'guk hyŏpŭihoe 韓國향토사연구 전국협의회, 1996), edited by Hŏ Hŭngshik, pp. 621-632.

cannot practice all of them.”<sup>20</sup> This, of course, showed some excellent sense of the daily reality of Shilla, but still sits strange coming from the mouth of the most revered Buddhist monk of his day.<sup>21</sup>

Previous research has studied the five commandments for laymen from all possible angles. Authoritative studies have alternately characterized them as Buddhist, Confucian, nativist, a mix of Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist elements or as an expression of ancient indigenous beliefs that only superficially resembled these ideologies.<sup>22</sup> One aspect, however, that has not been sufficiently appreciated is the fact that both Wŏn'gwang's Buddhist beliefs as practiced by himself and the statist five commandments belong to the category of ultimate values.<sup>23</sup> Both constitute self-contained value systems that in principle need no other values to complement them. It is sufficiently well known that the value system of a monk possessed an ultimate nature, which was not compatible with society at large.<sup>24</sup> The life of Wŏn'gwang, for instance, or the martyrdom of Ich'adon 異次頓 (506-527) showed that Buddhist faith was not secondary to anything; it came first, even at the expense of one's own life.<sup>25</sup> And in a way, this view of Buddhism seems to have been sanctioned by the king; or at least made the most of. Chinp'yŏng-wang 眞平王 received the bodhisattva precepts from Wŏn'gwang, which meant

<sup>20</sup> HKC 1B: 1020c-1021b. Translation borrowed from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 82.

<sup>21</sup> An alternative way of explaining this from a Buddhist point of view may point out the existence of the concept of *upaya* or expedience in Buddhism which allows contradictions, such as mentioned above, in order to achieve more important goals. The existence and frequent use of such a concept in Buddhism can be taken as an indication of the presence of pluralist elements in Buddhism. I shall not pursue this line of questioning here (which is a legitimate line of inquiry), but focus on the particular tension that existed between Buddhism and the state in seventh-century Shilla. For an exploration of the concept of *upaya* in Mahayana Buddhism, see Daigan Matsunaga and Alice Matsunaga, “The concept of Upaya in Mahayana Buddhist philosophy,” in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 1.1 (1974): pp. 51-72.

<sup>22</sup> See the studies mentioned before. Also see Shin Chongwŏn 辛種遠, “Pulgyo 佛教,” in *Han'guksa*, volume eight, pp. 49-90; Shin Chongwŏn, “Wŏn'gwang-gwa Chinhŭng-wang-dae-ŭi chŏnch'al pŏphoe 圓光斗眞平王代의 占察法會,” in *Shilla ch'ogi pulgyosa yŏn'gu* 新羅初期佛教史研究 (Seoul: Minjoksa 民族史, 1992); Yi Kibaek 李基白, “Wŏn'gwang-gwa kŭ-ŭi sasang 圓光과 그의 사상,” reprint in Yi Kibaek, *Shilla sasangsa yŏn'gu* 新羅思想史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1965); Ch'oe Yŏnshik 崔鉛植, “Wŏn'gwang-ŭi saengae-wa sasang 圓光生涯와 思想,” *T'aedong kojŏn yŏn'gu* 泰東古典研究 12 (1995): pp. 3-37. These studies emphasize Wŏn'gwang's thought as state-protection Buddhism (*hoguk pulgyo* 護國佛教). According to Fukushi Jinin 福士慈稔, Wŏn'gwang's thought is better understood as a Shilla adaptation of an amalgam of Buddhist, Confucian and other elements. See Fukushi Jinin, “Enkō no seizoku no gokei to karō shūdan nit suite 圓光の世俗の五戒と花郎集團について,” in *Chinsan Han Kidu paksu hwagap kinyŏm Han'guk chonggyo sasang-ŭi chejomyŏng* 進山한기두박사기념 한국종교사상의 재조명 (Iri: Wŏn'gwang taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1993); Fukushi Jinin, “Shiragi Enkō hōshi denkō 新羅圓光法師傳考,” in *Ra, Tō bukkyo* 羅唐佛教 (Tokyo: Daikan dentō bukkyo kenkyūin, 1993). Despite the differences between these positions, they converge in their respective attempts to arrive at an interpretation that will smooth away the contradictions reluctantly admitted to exist between Wŏn'gwang's Buddhism and Shilla society.

<sup>23</sup> I use statism here according to its definition in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, as “subservience to political expediency in religious matters”.

<sup>24</sup> This was a problem that surfaced on and again in all Buddhist societies; the fact that a monk should in theory cut all ties with his family and with society in general created a fundamental tension with society's demands on its members (which included monks). This tension still exists between modern societies and their institutes of monastic cultivation.

<sup>25</sup> Ich'adon was a young noble who sacrificed his life in order for Buddhism to be accepted as Shilla's state religion. He allowed himself to be beheaded on account of his Buddhist faith. When his head was chopped off, a miracle happened; a milky fountain sprang forth from his neck. Convinced by the power of Buddhism, it was subsequently adopted by its erstwhile enemies.

that he accepted Wŏn'gwang as his teacher and, formally at least, as his superior in religious matters.<sup>26</sup> An ardent belief in Buddhism and its ultimate truth did however not take away the more pressing concerns of daily life. In 608 the king requested something that caused Wŏn'gwang ethical anguish:

The king was worried about the frequent invasions of Koguryŏ and he asked Wŏn'gwang to write a letter of request to the Sui. Wŏn'gwang said: "Saving one's life by killing another is not the behaviour of monks. However, since I live in the territory of Your Majesty, drink your water and eat your vegetables, how could I possibly not comply with your order?"<sup>27</sup>

Like many monks before him and after him, Wŏn'gwang had at bottom to choose between two different, mutually exclusive value systems; between his Buddhist faith and between the requirements of the state. This difficult dilemma was not solved by Wŏn'gwang's choice to honour the request of his sovereign; he only temporarily dealt with it. It resurfaced in the five commandments for laymen. Wŏn'gwang made these five instructions, despite the fact that commandments for Buddhist laymen were well established and known in Shilla at this time. It is accordingly difficult to regard Wŏn'gwang's five commandments as Buddhist. They should rather be seen in the context of the choice between Buddha and state. Despite the popular argument that Shilla's Buddhism served the state, nothing less and nothing more, this view is oversimplified.<sup>28</sup> In the end, Buddhism and the state had different goals and possessed different value systems. The dilemma caused by the differing value systems that belonged to Buddhism and the state was real and is not explained away by appealing to the state-protectionist functions of Shilla Buddhism or by the inconstant attitudes towards this dilemma by contemporary figures. If Wŏn'gwang as the paragon of statist Buddhism in Shilla experienced anguish over this dilemma, the same is plausible of other Buddhist monks. The Buddhist faith demanded from its followers adherence to eventually ultimate values. But the five commandments for laymen were equally ultimate. The sacrifices on the battlefield of Kwisan and Ch'uhang who "adhered to [the five commandments] without ever breaking them" showed their ultimate nature. Accepted as "maxim[s] which will serve to instruct [them] for the rest of [their] lives", they overrode any possible objections or competing values. This is what the five commandments explicitly state and which is borne out by the actions of the *hwarang* who accepted the implications. The inclusion of the fifth commandment was a direct instance of what Feyerabend described as real: those things which play and important

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<sup>26</sup> This is also apparent from the fact that the king presented Wŏn'gwang with robes and food he was supposed to have prepared himself at this occasion. Shin Chongwŏn, "Wŏn'gwang-gwa Chinhŭng-wang-dae-ŭi chŏnch'al pŏphoe," p. 158.

<sup>27</sup> *SGSG* 4: 56.

<sup>28</sup> For a criticism of this view, see Robert E. Buswell Buswell, Jr., "Imagining 'Korean Buddhism': The invention of a national religious tradition," in *Nationalism and the Construction of Korean Identity* (Berkeley: Center for Korean Studies, Institute of East Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1998), edited by Hyung Il Pai and Timothy R. Tangherlini; Kim Jong Myung (Kim Chongmyŏng), "Chajang (fl. 636-650) and 'Buddhism as national protector' in Korea: A reconsideration," in *Religions in traditional Korea* (Copenhagen: Seminar for Buddhist Studies, 1995), edited by Henrik H. Sorensen.

role in the kind of life people prefer.<sup>29</sup> Shin Hyönsuk has convincingly argued that the five commandments can be both interpreted as Buddhist and Confucian, because the values they represent are prominently present in both ideologies.<sup>30</sup> It is necessary, though, to go one step further than Shin and bring the fact into focus that the five commandments are in a sense literally Machiavellian.<sup>31</sup> They contain the ethos of the warrior who fights for this state: loyalty, obedience, trustworthiness, courage and well-dosed blood-thirst.<sup>32</sup> Their contents are universally valid for communities, which is precisely what made these commandments ultimate. The needs of the state are cast in absolute terms, which is neither exclusively or particularly Buddhist, nor Confucian or nativist.

Far from resolving the conflict between state and faith, as the scholarly *communis opinio* has it, Wön'gwang made this conflict explicit in giving his maxims to the *hwarang* youths. He had chosen another path himself, that of his faith, but acknowledged the existence of the clashing values embraced by Kwisan and Ch'uhang. The Buddhism of Kwisan and Ch'uhang was in the end not compatible with a monk's Buddhism, since "saving one's life by killing another is not the behaviour of monks", however discriminatingly the killing is executed. Acknowledging this and the political reality of Shilla in which most men were "subjects and sons" and *hwarang* like Kwisan and Ch'uhang died on the battlefield, Wön'gwang's counsels, then, seem to have aimed not so much at the propagation of Buddhism or the harnessing of Buddhism for the sake of the state, but rather at imparting sensible advice. Not everybody had the means or disposition to opt out as Wön'gwang had done (although not always successfully). He realized this, because the gist of the five commandments for laymen sets them apart from Buddhist monks; the five commandments represent a different reality. Buddhist monks were not expected to adhere to them; they had their own vows. Nor were they widely applied to the people; commandments for laymen had also been available for a long time and continued to be so. But for young *hwarang* warriors these commandments formed effective instructions as to what were their goals and how to realize them. They are fundamentally alien to Buddhism. They merely borrowed available language and concepts to express the age-old and universal idea that the community took precedence over any other potentially competitive value. This does not mean that the commandments were merely using Buddhist and Confucian ethics to cloak their real goals. They borrowed the available language (which is inevitable) to express a different set of values that centred on the state, instead of on compassion, enlightenment, benevolent government and so forth. The language did not conceal a lack of values, then, but introduced five commandments in a way that was known and understood by those for whom they were meant.

Wön'gwang did not divorce the political realm from the ethical/religious realm. Far

<sup>29</sup> Feyerabend, *The conquest of abundance*, p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Shin Hyönsuk, "Chöngt'ogyo-wa Wön'gwang sesok ogye-üi koch'al", pp. 50-56.

<sup>31</sup> According to Isaiah Berlin, Machiavelli had also realized the existence of fundamentally opposed value systems. I use the adjective 'Machiavellian' here in this sense, not as a synonym for 'unscrupulous'. See Isaiah Berlin, "The originality of Machiavelli," in *Against the current: Essays in the history of ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), edited by Henry Hardy, pp. 25-79.

<sup>32</sup> Shin Hyönsuk, "Chöngt'ogyo-wa Wön'gwang sesok ogye-üi koch'al", pp. 49-66; Shin Chongwön, "Pulgyo", pp. 49-90.

from that, he seems to have realized that both the state and his faith possessed its own kind of ethics and that these were not compatible. 'Subjects and sons' do not become bodhisattvas. Their respective realities overlap, but are nonetheless fundamentally different. Hence the need for differing values: the need for different values for different people in different situations was explicitly recognized. The dilemma between subjects and sons on the one side and bodhisattva's on the other side is universal. One only has to think of the debates on royal and papal authority in medieval Western Europe or of the Japanese discussions about the precedence of filial piety or obedience to the state to see the prevalence of this particular clash of values.<sup>33</sup> It was certainly not solved on the Korean peninsula in the seventh century, but it was encountered and made explicit, which give this example its value. It continued to exercise its influence on later rulers. Wŏn'gwang was revered as one of the most eminent monks coming from the Korean peninsula. He was eulogized in the *Samguk sagi*, the *Haedong kosŭng chŏn* 海東高僧傳 and the *Samguk yusa* and his reputation extended to China, where he was extensively quoted and revered.<sup>34</sup>

Wŏn'gwang's realization of the existence of fundamentally incommensurable values or ways of looking at the world served as an example during later periods. At the same time, its importance should not be overestimated in the sense that Wŏn'gwang's example was not the only one of its kind.

### KORYŎ PLURALISM'S HISTORICAL ORIGINS

The origins of Koryŏ pluralism must partly be located in a universal phenomenon, the presence of pluralism to some extent both in society and in man's mind. The example of Wŏn'gwang's five lay commandments alerts us to this fact, while simultaneously suggesting that it is not only an example of the ubiquity of pluralism, but also a historical example that exercised influence upon later generations. Other, contingent, factors that made Koryŏ's acceptance and maintenance of a pluralist view of the world unusual in its degree were firstly its codified narratives of historical descent; secondly, its equally codified personal descent along several possible ways; and the presence of two immensely influential and powerful civilizations as its neighbours.

Let us first look at the implications of Koryŏ's plural historical descent. As demonstrated in chapter one, Koryŏ's narratives of descent were plural. In a tantalizing manner, these narratives of descent both correspond to and differ from what Susan Reynolds has noted about European medieval myths of origin: "their concern with collectivities which generally corresponded to political units of the time when the stories gained currency but

<sup>33</sup> I. J. McMullen, "Rulers or fathers? A casuistical problem in early modern Japanese thought," *Past and Present* 116 (1987): pp. 56-97.

<sup>34</sup> Ch'oe Yŏnshik, "Wŏn'gwang -ŭi saengae-wa sasang"; Fukushi Jinin, "Shiragi Enkō hōshi denkō"; Pak Kwangyŏn 박광연, "圓光의 占察法會 시행과 그 의미 Wŏn'gwang -ŭi chŏmch'al pŏphoe-ŭi shihaeng-gwa kŭ ŭimi," in *Yŏksa-wa hyŏnshil* 43 (2002): pp. III-140.

which were extremely unlikely to have had a single common descent.”<sup>35</sup> Reynolds’ argument that myths of origin or narratives of descent fulfil an integrative role in the construction of communities roughly within political borders holds true for the case of Koryŏ and probably for any other case; her emphasis on a presumed “single common descent”, wholly understandable in the European medieval context, does not. Lacking a credible myth of origin, Koryŏ stressed the importance of its different narratives of descent. It remains to be seen whether the strongly historicized nature of these narratives holds special significance, because an emphatically historicized way of approaching the past seems to have been dominant in early to middle Koryŏ, but here it is first and foremost of importance to appreciate the influence of plural historical descent had upon Koryŏ’s self-perception. As discussed in chapter one, narratives of descent address the communal need for a more or less coherent story of origin in which present situations are explicitly linked to past situations that on account of their distance in the past or their perceived ideal nature were considered to possess authority and provide legitimacy. Another equally important purpose lies in the legitimation of rulers and social structures. It has been established before that the historical heritage that had already come into being before the establishment of the state of Koryŏ was of sufficient weight to instil a sense of descent into Koryŏ’s inhabitants that did not altogether converge with Koryŏ (which was why the narrative of origin of the Wang lineage did not become a national narrative of descent). An important characteristic of origin-stories in general is that they correspond to the notions and values of the people they were intended for. In order for a narrative of descent to be efficacious, such a narrative must make the intended consumer of the story recognize and feel empathy with elements contained in the story. An origin-story has to appeal to commonly shared worldviews as well as to common sense. The presence of plural narratives of descent in Koryŏ meant that on the one hand these accepted stories of origin habituated its consumers to the idea of plurality, even when it involved certain contradictions. On the other hand, the narratives themselves are products of an environment which at the very least was conducive to the emergence of pluralist perceptions of the past. Determining which was first seems impossible and would also be off the mark; Koryŏ pluralism slowly emerged in a dynamic process in which both the plural narratives and the environment mutually and continuously influenced one another. It appears that the codification of the plural pasts of Koryŏ by the state on different levels (in rituals, place names, names of palaces, book titles, on coins, in noble titles) may have been the decisive factor in preserving the influence of this historical heritage upon the self-perception of Koryŏ people.

A similar argument can be made with regard to the personal descent of the Koryŏ ruling class (and perhaps extended to the ruled class as well). The Koryŏ family system was heavily influenced by its Chinese counterpart, especially with regard to nomenclature, but it differed from the Chinese system on several crucial points. The most obvious and most important point of difference was the acknowledgement in Koryŏ of the importance of the matrilineal line of descent. This acknowledgement was not merely ideological. As has been

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<sup>35</sup> Susan Reynolds, “Medieval *origines gentium* and the community of the realm,” *History* 68 (1983): pp. 375-390, esp. p. 378.

pointed out in previous research, uxori-local residence for males was common; sons-in-law could enjoy the privileges (such as the all-important protected appointment privilege) of their in-laws; sons-in-law at times fulfilled ritual duties in honour of their in-law family; daughters inherited from their parents; daughters were in a position to preside over ancestral worship rituals.<sup>36</sup> Such familiar facts of Koryŏ life, both in practice and in the realm of ideology, meant that from a very early age on, people were used to the idea that the Chinese ideal of strict patrilineal descent, as prescribed by the classics that were read and memorized, was not quite suitable for Koryŏ, where such a system would deny some of the Koryŏ system's most salient features. It was a fact both known and experienced, then, that Koryŏ reality not only diverged from the ideals of Sinitic civilization, but also that this implied that descent and ancestry were more complicated and less unambiguous than in China. For males, their role as a son-in-law was not necessarily less important than their role as a son; this depended for a large part on the respective social and economic circumstances of his family and his in-laws. This again meant that descent could not be taken at face value, but had to be, to a certain extent at least, constructed out of the available options. And if the need to do so arose, to be reconstructed.

The mechanism involved is similar to the one described in chapter one, when the plurality of Koryŏ pasts served its diplomats well by allowing them room to manoeuvre and giving them flexibility, without cutting the ties to Koryŏ's past. To a more limited extent internationally but certainly more important on a personal level, the existence of dual descent in Koryŏ society made descent and related affairs such as inheritance potentially more difficult and intricate. It also virtually guaranteed a flexible approach to descent and instilled in its members from an early age on the appreciation of contradiction and plurality, as well as an eye for the associated advantages.

Perhaps the most important factor in the emergence and consolidation of a pluralist worldview in Koryŏ was its size and location in between Manchuria and the Chinese mainland. From an early date on, the different states on the peninsula maintained close relations with the states on the Chinese mainland and in Manchuria and had always been confronted with the different cultural achievements of civilizations in both regions. In chapter nine I have discussed the importance of the northern court in identity-formational processes in Koryŏ. The Liao functioned both as an example to be emulated and as the archetypical barbarian Other to be kept at a distance. This ambiguity is in itself a fundamental feature of identity formation. In a coincidental but nonetheless revealing reference to the perceived affinity of beasts and strangers (a notion explicitly articulated in Koryŏ where the Khitan were described as possessing "human faces and animal hearts"), Michel de Montaigne put it as follows: "[I]f our faces were not alike we could not tell man from beast: if they were not unlike we could not tell man from man."<sup>37</sup> The inherent ambiguity in the Koryŏ-Liao relationship was exacerbated by the equally ambiguous relationship between Koryŏ and the various mainland Chinese dynasties. Although Koryŏ did not consider the Chinese mainland dynasties, most notably the

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<sup>36</sup> Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A study of society and ideology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies, 1995), pp. 29-87.

<sup>37</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *The essays of Michel de Montaigne* (London etc., 1991), trans. and ed. M. A. Screech, book 3, essay 13, 'On experience', p. 1213.



Song, barbarian, it did not unreservedly admire Sinitic achievements either. Admiration, a sense of Koryŏ achievements and contempt for overly refined elegance lapsing into decadence were the main ingredients of the mixture that determined the Koryŏ view of mainland China.

To have two impressive, powerful and yet also clearly imperfect and fallible realms of imposing size and resources at one's borders (both continental and maritime) cannot but leave traces in how one views the world. Acting as the main factor in the establishment of the Koryŏ Weltanschauung that perceived and utilized the contradictions in the world around it, the presence of two civilizations that each propagated different civilizational values and principles (despite the considerable overlap and mutual influence) was the most important dynamic in Koryŏ's ever-changing view of the world. Within Koryŏ, many debates were conducted over whether or not to allow the continuing influx of Manchurian ideas and artefacts. Similar debates were held with regard to the at times overwhelming presence of Sinitic cultural achievements. Internationally, Koryŏ's policy veered between the two powers, ever vigil not to start avoidable wars and ever ready to pronounce its own active participation in North-East Asia and to preserve its freedom of action. As a result, Koryŏ was confronted on ideological, political, economic and social levels with two qualitatively different traditions. From before the establishment of the dynasty until after its demise in the fourteenth century, the presence of these two different great traditions was a given in the world Koryŏ inhabited. It learned how to deal with this situation by incorporating the existence of difference and contradiction into its perception of the world, by making ambiguity and diversity the organizing principles of its actions.

The emergence of a pluralist view of the world in Koryŏ was fragmented and non-linear: it was not shared by everyone, actively opposed by some, and stronger in some periods than in others. The period before Hyŏnjong, roughly most of the tenth century, seems to have been the period in which the foundations of a pluralist worldview were laid. The upsurge of Buddhism (especially in its economic aspects) under Kwangjong, the crucial innovations during the reign of Sŏngjong, mainly of Confucian orientation, the resistance against the abolishment of the P'algwanhoe and Yŏndŭnghoe and the encroachment of the Liao, both in military and economic terms, created an environment in which Confucian scholars and nativist officials went head to head. While the ruler chose to limit the expenditure on Buddhist festivals and increase the allotment of Confucian ceremonies (and the sacred buildings associated with these ceremonies), Koryŏ's self-reliant foreign policies ceased to be effective in the face of unrelenting Liao pressure.

It probably took the occurrence of a traumatic incident to cement a pluralist view on the world into place. The Liao invasions of the early eleventh century, following on the murder of Mokchong, the enthronement of the young monk Hyŏnjong, the virtually unopposed rule of Hyŏnjong's most intimate advisors, a short-lived military coup and subsequent rule, the near-collapse of the Wang lineage, an increasingly malfunctioning government apparatus and the continued pressure from the Liao (and the Song as well) created a period of sustained trauma. To this should be added that its history, its family system and its international position made wide-spread acceptance of pluralism a viable option. As a result, unpredictably and contingently, a consensus emerged that the accommodation of contradictions and

inconsistencies might be a viable way to deal with the many challenges Koryŏ faced domestically and internationally. A document surfaced that reflected the problems of this period and offered very loose and broadly interpretable solutions: the *Ten injunctions*, traditionally ascribed to T'aejo Wang Kŏn. This document was the first codification of a pluralist worldview in Koryŏ.<sup>38</sup>

The origins of Koryŏ pluralism, then, must be located in the factors described above. It is of the utmost importance to realize that although pluralism per se may be labelled an ideology, it was distinguished in Koryŏ by its strong historical orientation. The most fascinating aspect of Koryŏ pluralism, which also constitutes the reason it is so very hard to pin down, is its substitution of historical precedent for ideological principle. If the governing notion behind the establishment of the Chosŏn dynasty may be given the, admittedly rough and generalizing, label of ideology (the idea that ideas or principles should rule practical reality), the guiding principle of Koryŏ was history or, to put it more precisely, particularized instances of historical consciousness. History as opposed to ideology as the “ultimate referee” implies a preference or proclivity for abundance, contradiction and inconsistency.<sup>39</sup> The *Ten injunctions* were nothing if not a historical accounting for Koryŏ's present. The injunctions tried to present possible solutions to problems based on historical precedent. The period in which Hyŏnjong came to the throne was decisive for Koryŏ's history as well as its historiography; the Liao invasions destroyed much of the historical records and the efforts to rescue as much of Koryŏ's history as possible continued until the end of Hyŏnjong's reign.

A particularly enlightening illustration of the importance of history as a guiding principle in early to middle Koryŏ is the way travel was conceptualized.<sup>40</sup> Comparing examples from early to middle Koryŏ with examples from the late Koryŏ period (the period of Mongol intervention and beyond), an interesting contrast emerges. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, travel was conceptualized in a manner that can best be described as historical. An example is furnished by a text of Ch'oe Ch'ung 崔冲 (984-1068), who composed a brief travelogue dealing with the establishment of a Buddhist monastery complex to be used by travellers, the nature of travel and its relationship to the state.<sup>41</sup> Ch'oe concluded that the opening up of inhospitable (or because of robbers dangerous) terrain by making travel possible was an important duty of the ruler. It was a civilizing action that emphasized the importance of the landscape and the need of the state to incorporate it into the state structure by building on it.<sup>42</sup> What is interesting about accounts that documented these actions is that they were invariably written in conjunction with contemporary history. The bond between

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<sup>38</sup> See chapter thirteen.

<sup>39</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, *The landscape of history: How historians map the past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); William James, *A pluralistic universe*; Paul Feyerabend, *The conquest of abundance*. I do not intend to deny the ideological components of historiography in Koryŏ, but merely to establish the hierarchy between ideological elements and historical elements.

<sup>40</sup> The following paragraphs are a condensed version of a chapter in a forthcoming volume on travel in Korea: “Within or without? Ambiguity of borders and Koryŏ Koreans' travels during the Liao, Song, Jin and Yuan”. Chapter in the conference volume *Imagining Korea, Imagining the World* [working title], edited by Marion Eggert, JaHyun Kim Haboush and Boudewijn Walraven.

<sup>41</sup> *TMS* 64: 18a-20b.

<sup>42</sup> See for example *TMS* 64: 20b- 23b; *TMS* 65: 21b-23a.

landscapes, the buildings people built upon it and the influence these exercised upon the fate of the country was made explicit. History, the particular history of a particular piece of land, a mountain, a village, a river, was mobilized to explain the importance of the object of discussion. Certain landscapes were essential for the well-being of both man and state, mainly on account of their particular history and much less on account of their inherent qualities. These qualities were only brought out in conjunction with the histories associated with the landscapes.<sup>43</sup>

The idea that there existed a spiritual bond between man and landscape was well-attested throughout the entire Koryŏ period. According to Im Ch'un 林椿 (1147-1197), "as for fostering an energy conducive to composing literature, one who does not travel to visit famous mountains and great streams and who does not search for intriguing tales and spectacular scenery, will likewise not be able to broaden the intentions in his breast."<sup>44</sup> The duty of the literatus with regard to the recording of the landscape in texts was of essential importance because only the well-educated scholar was able to remember, confirm or at times forge the history of a particular locale. The historicizing of the landscape was the concrete and down-to-earth counterpart of the geomancer's analyses of the same physical places. If anything, travelogues of early to middle Koryŏ period literati are distinguished by the at times rather extreme attention given a particular locale's historical background. And in the context of Koryŏ's plurality of pasts (it had after all succeeded to Kaya, Paekche, Shilla and Koguryŏ and kept these – at times conflicting – heritages alive), the references were to different pasts, recalling a variety of historical events and figures from various periods and provenances.<sup>45</sup>

If we now compare this to the conception of travel in late Koryŏ, an interesting contrast emerges. The text quoted below is representative of late Koryŏ in this respect:

All things under heaven endowed with form possess an underlying principle. There is nothing that is not like this. Regarding large things, there are mountains and streams. Regarding small things, there are stones the size of a fist and plants of only one inch high. People who travel and see these things are stimulated on account of these and accordingly take pleasure in viewing them. This is why pavilions and outdoor structures are built. The strangeness of their forms is located [at the level of] their accessibility and can be appreciated with the eyes, but the mystery of their underlying principle is located at the level of meticulous perception and must be got at with the mind.<sup>46</sup>

The contrast between this text and Ch'oe Ch'ung's idea of travel is quite striking. Such an understanding of the nature of travel was quite common in the late Koryŏ period, when in accounts such as these the landscape is thoroughly dehistoricized and personalized, while examples from the early and middle Koryŏ periods describe the landscape in strongly historical terms, situating it in the context of the state.<sup>47</sup> How did the change come about

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<sup>43</sup> Travelogues from this period unambiguously emphasize this point. In such works, the history of the locales visited is recorded in scrupulous detail. See for example *TMS* 66: 6b-7a; *TMS* 65: 10a-12b; *TMS* 65: 12b-15b.

<sup>44</sup> *TMS* 59: 3b-4b.

<sup>45</sup> For concrete examples, see Breuker, "Within or without?"

<sup>46</sup> *TMS* 68: 26b-28a. The text quoted above is part of a travelogue written by An Ch'uk.

<sup>47</sup> Again, for more examples of both kinds of texts, see Breuker, "Within or without?"

which made late Koryŏ travelogues describe the landscape as notably dehistoricized spaces? This intriguing contrast with early to middle Koryŏ can perhaps be explained by the changed notions of Koryŏ as a historical territory and the position of Koryŏ over the *longue durée*. Whereas Koryŏ's boundaries had not significantly changed over time, Koryŏ's position in the world had. Before the Yuan domination of the fourteenth century, Koryŏ looked at the world through a prism that understood the world through the existence of a southern court, a northern court and different groups of barbarians. From the late thirteenth century onwards, the Yuan came to first conquer and then represent both the southern and the northern courts. Under indirect Yuan control, confronted with the universal civilization the Yuan pronounced to possess and without an independent court in the north to balance the situation, Koryŏ literati came to accept Yuan civilization as normative and universal. Consequently, texts were produced in Koryŏ in which the Yuan were described as a sacred empire spreading its civilization throughout the world. This new role of the Yuan in the context of the absorption of Koryŏ into the Yuan empire is of extreme significance, because it directly influenced Koryŏ's self-perception through the perception of its landscape (and through the perception of travel). Whereas before, the Koryŏ landscape was larded with historical references, now the Koryŏ landscape had lost nothing of its beauty, but much of its historicity. Travelogues and other texts from this period point at the Koryŏ landscape now being embedded in the Yuan empire.<sup>48</sup> Koryŏ's sceneries had become spaces embedded into the Yuan empire; travels within Koryŏ had become travels within the Yuan empire.

Freeing Koryŏ from its history, which by the fourteenth century had in the eyes of quite many Koryŏ literati become a burden, the personalization and dehistoricization of the travel experience carried significance beyond the act of travelling itself. Scholars and literati of late Koryŏ had distanced themselves from the many historical relationships that had shaped their predecessors' perception of the Koryŏ landscape in order to take part in the new civilization the Yuan offered Koryŏ and reap the rewards of a chance at a new society.

With regard to pluralism, this shift was of immediate relevance. Without the plural histories of Koryŏ acknowledged and recorded by Koryŏ literati who travelled to Koryŏ's famous locales and without the presence of a strong southern court and an equally strong northern court, Koryŏ's *Weltanschauung* was bound to change. While Koryŏ's self-perception underwent radical changes<sup>49</sup>, its focus on the viability of an outlook on the world that sustained contradiction and inconsistency blurred. Inclusion in the new intellectual world made possible by the Yuan empire came at the price of Koryŏ's historical experiences and memories, leading to a radically different way of perceiving the world as well as Koryŏ itself. Despite the apparent contradiction involved, this radical shift away from a pluralist *Weltanschauung* and its subsequent absence is perhaps the best indication of what Koryŏ's ideological world looked like before this happened. The stark contrast between the pre-Yuan period and the Yuan period is indicative of the changes in *Weltanschauung* that occurred

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<sup>48</sup> See for example *TMS* 71: 13b-22a; *KJJ* 2: 4b-12b.

<sup>49</sup> Although not, as the majority opinion in academia holds, by changing into some sort of proto-nationalist consciousness. On the contrary, instead of giving rise to a Koryŏ nation, emerging under Yuan pressure, a new self-perception that placed Koryŏ within the Yuan empire gained much strength. See Breuker, "Within or without?".

during and after the Mongol invasions of Koryŏ. The ambiguity of mental borders, which had been the hallmark of Koryŏ's *Weltanschauung*, sharply decreased, while the ambiguity of the physical borders of the peninsula, largely absent until the Mongol invasions, increased under Koryŏ's incorporation in the Yuan empire. In the end, this meant that Koryŏ came to be positioned within the empire, with unrestricted access to its cultural resources, but to a large extent also outside of its own historical experiences. Given the strong association of those historical memories with pre-Yuan Koryŏ's ideological world, it was perhaps inevitable that the social, political, economic and ideological transformations under Mongol tutelage, together with the earnest desire of Koryŏ literati for ideological and social change, would involve the distancing of a significant part of Koryŏ's particularistic historical memories.

## CONCLUSION

The prominent presence of a pluralist *Weltanschauung* in early to middle Koryŏ is both an explanans and an explanandum of this period's history. The dynamics involved in the creation of Koryŏ's unique view of the world preclude an easy answer to the question of the origins of Koryŏ pluralism. I have attempted to sketch a more general and abstract background of Koryŏ pluralism, in conjunction with the specific, contingent historical circumstances that gave rise to it and stimulated its emergence and maintenance. Lastly, I hope I have suggested why and when the predominantly pluralist outlook on the world in Koryŏ gradually started to disappear, ultimately to make way for a completely different view on the world that started developing in the early Chosŏn dynasty.<sup>50</sup>

If we leave alone the human penchant for allowing contradiction and inconsistency to exist, Koryŏ was exceptional in the intensity and omnipresence of its pluralist ideology, due to the specific circumstances on the peninsula. Koryŏ's plural historical descent and its codification, the presence of several, fundamentally different thought and belief systems, the family system and the presence of the southern and northern court at its borders were conducive to a strengthening and even a codification of a pluralist way of looking at the world. In the next three chapters, I shall demonstrate the concrete workings of such a worldview by analyzing concrete examples: the introduction of Song Confucian ritual music in the early twelfth century, the uses and abuses of the *Ten injunctions*, and finally the revolt of Myoch'ŏng and the consequences the revolt, which came perilously close to a full-blown civil-war, had for Koryŏ society and its self-perception.

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<sup>50</sup>This is not to say that pluralism did not exist in Chosŏn, but that its existence was not recognized nor acknowledged.

**PART FOUR**

**KORYŌ'S PRACTICAL REALITIES OF ENGAGEMENT**

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### IDEOLOGY IN A PLURALIST PERSPECTIVE: RITUAL MUSIC IN KORYŎ

Ritual music played an important role in the Koryŏ dynasty. The administrative apparatus of Koryŏ was largely Confucian by orientation and as such, music was considered to be of paramount importance in the proper performance of rituals and the maintenance of the proper cosmological order. The introduction to the monograph on music of the *Koryŏsa* puts it as follows: “Now music establishes the proper socialization [of men] and symbolizes merit and virtue.”<sup>1</sup> As such, music was performed at all state, court and provincial rituals. Regrettably, no scores for Koryŏ’s ritual music have survived directly, although the *Koryŏsa* contains detailed instructions at what moment during which ritual what piece of music should be performed.<sup>2</sup> Music, then, constituted an indispensable underpinning of Koryŏ’s ritual order. Since the importance of ritual music was an essential characteristic of Sinitic culture, it can easily be imagined that ritual music was important in more senses than its basic function. Ritual music was not only considered to be indispensable in the performance of ritual, at times it also played an important role in the diplomacy between states due to its high status.<sup>3</sup> The introduction of the new Song ritual music in Koryŏ between 1114 and 1116 has been well documented and researched, but mainly from a standpoint of diplomatic history. The introduction of this new ritual music offers an excellent avenue for the exploration of the topics that have been looked at in the previous chapters, most notably Koryŏ’s ideas regarding its place in the world order, the status of the Koryŏ ruler and its position vis-à-vis China and Sinitic culture.

A fact that is often overlooked when discussing the introduction of Song ritual music in Koryŏ is that the music played in some of Koryŏ’s most essential Confucian rituals was not entirely imported from the Song or Tang dynasties or adapted on the basis of imported Chinese music. The *Koryŏsa* mentions that originally Chinese ritual music was performed together with indigenous Koryŏ music at the ancestral shrines (*chongmyo* 宗廟) of the Koryŏ rulers. An entry from 1114 describes how Yejong (l.: 1079-1122; r. 1105-1122) ordered that the newly imported Song ritual music (*taesŏngak* 大晟樂) should be performed at the ancestral shrines together with Koryŏ’s indigenous *hyangak* 鄉樂 music.<sup>4</sup> Concurrently, the ideological background against which the introduction took place has consistently been neglected in favour of an analysis of the international relations of Koryŏ in the early twelfth century. An examination of the introduction of the Song music and its joint performance with indigenous

<sup>1</sup> *KS* 70: 1a.

<sup>2</sup> The monograph on rituals of the *Koryŏsa* gives detailed descriptions of Koryŏ’s state rituals and specifies both the sequence and the kind of music (often the name of the piece as well) to be performed at each particular moment.

<sup>3</sup> Keith L. Pratt, “Music as factor in Sung-Koryo diplomatic relations, 1069-1126,” *T’oung Pao* 62.4-5 (1976): pp. 199-218; Pratt, “Sung Hui Tsung’s musical diplomacy and the Korean response,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 44.3 (1981): pp. 509-521.

<sup>4</sup> *KS* 13: 35a.

Koryŏ ritual music will highlight Koryŏ's ideological background in relation to its foreign relations and its self-perception.

The significance of the simultaneous performance of Song ritual music and Koryŏ's indigenous ritual music at the same sacred location lies in its implicit challenge to the abundance of one-dimensional characterizations of Koryŏ society. It not only reveals the existence of heterogeneous elements within a tradition that is often portrayed as homogeneous, but also offers an avenue for further exploration into the composition of Koryŏ ideology. This example of the mixed performance of ritual music alerts us to the common practice of deviation from the established norms. The study of ideology is crucial to the understanding of any given society or group, but in the case of Koryŏ it has special significance in the sense that Koryŏ ideology has usually been described in monist, mutually exclusive terms, while Koryŏ was in fact characterized by the existence of a pluralist ideology, or perhaps by the simultaneous existence of different ideological thought and belief systems, often in the same space and held by the same person. The previous chapters have borne out that Koryŏ's ideological landscape is not easily characterized as either Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist or nativist. This chapter will explore the different ideological elements of Koryŏ by means of focusing on the introduction of the Song ritual music and Koryŏ's indigenous ritual music.

## RITUAL MUSIC IN KORYŎ

The chapters in the *Koryŏsa* that deal with rituals and ritual music, give detailed instructions regarding the nature, format and sequence of the music that was played during state and court rituals. Predictably, perhaps, the neo-Confucian approach to the compilation of Koryŏ's history into the *Koryŏsa* exercised a decisive influence upon the arrangement and classification of the rituals. Instead of recording these in a format that was representative of their Koryŏ period significance, the compilers chose to rearrange and reclassify the Koryŏ state rituals according to the demands of neo-Confucian doctrine. As a result, the great Confucian state rituals gained in prominence and were classified as 'great rituals' (*taesa* 大祀), while essential Daoist court rituals were demoted to the 'miscellaneous rituals' (*chapsa* 雜祀). Recent research has convincingly shown that Daoist rituals in particular suffered from the neo-Confucian principles applied by the compilers of the *Koryŏsa*.<sup>5</sup> These editorial practices also extended to the lyrics of indigenous Koryŏ songs. The introduction to the music section reads that in Koryŏ "Chinese music (*tangak* 唐樂), music from the Three Kingdoms and contemporary indigenous music (*sogak* 俗樂) were performed arbitrarily", and it continued to say that "the lyrics of the indigenous music are often vulgar and of the most vulgar ones only the title and general purport have been recorded. These [three kinds of music] have been divided in Confucian ritual music (*a'ak* 雅樂), Chinese music (*tangak*) and indigenous music

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<sup>5</sup> Kim Ch'orong 金澈雄, "Koryŏ kukka chesa-ŭi ch'eje-wa kŭ t'ŭkch'ing 고려 國家祭祀의 體制와 그 특징," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 韓國史研究 118 (2002): pp. 135-160, esp. pp. 147-150.



and incorporated into the music section.”<sup>6</sup> The compilers of the *Koryŏsa* heavily emphasized Confucian *taesŏngak* and omitted Koryŏ’s indigenous *sogak* from the proper development of music in Koryŏ.<sup>7</sup> Ritual music was not taken lightly, nor demoted to the status of Koryŏ’s improper and vulgar indigenous music, made for purposes of entertainment only.<sup>8</sup> This predisposition towards Song dynasty Chinese ritual music has structured the *Koryŏsa*’s chapters dealing with music to a large extent, although Koryŏ’s blasphemous music and its place in the important state rituals has been recorded in the ritual manuals. The *Koryŏsa* remains silent, though, on ritual music before the introduction of *taesŏngak*.

Contrary to what might be expected, the ritual instructions for the heaven-worshipping ritual of the Round Altar (*hwan’gu/wŏn’gu* 圜丘/圓丘), the rituals at the state altar in honour of the land and grain gods (*sajik*), the ritual at the royal ancestral shrines (*t’aemyo* 太廟), the rituals at the temple of agriculture (*chŏkjon* 籍田) and at the temple of Confucius (*Munsŏmwang myo* 文宣王廟) all featured performances of indigenous music:

The procedure for performing indigenous music [is as follows]: at the second and third ceremonial raising of the sacrificial cup and at the departure of the spirits *hyangak* is performed during the ceremonies at the Round Altar and at the state altar in honour of the land and grain gods, and when performing ceremonies at the royal ancestral shrines, the temple of agriculture and the temple of Confucius.<sup>9</sup>

The only notable exception on this list of most important Confucian state rituals is the ritual that worships the earth (*pangt’aek* 方澤), which is probably due to the extreme brevity of the entry on this ritual.<sup>10</sup> Presumably, all detailed information pertaining to the *pangt’aek* ritual has been lost. Koryŏ’s indigenous music may have been “vulgar”, but it nonetheless played an important role in the celebration of the state’s most important rituals.<sup>11</sup>

The *Koryŏsa* classified Koryŏ music into the categories of *a’ak* or *taesŏngak*, *tangak* and *hyangak* or *sogak*. The music section of the *Koryŏsa* further shows that *hyangak* or *sogak* was subdivided into *Koryŏ sogak* and *Samguk sogak*: “In Koryŏ, the music from Shilla, Paekche and

<sup>6</sup> KS 70: 1a-b. No Myŏngho has discovered an excellent example of the re-editing of Koryŏ lyrics. The lyrics of the original Koryŏ song *P’ungipsong* 風入松 (“The wind in the pine trees”) celebrate the Eastern Emperor, that is to say, the ruler of Koryŏ. In its early Chosŏn version it has become a song celebrating the Ming Emperor. See No Myŏngho, “Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch’ŏnha’gwan-gwa haedong ch’ŏnja 高麗時代의 多元의 天下觀과 海東天子,” *Han’guksa yŏngu* 105 (1999): pp. 3-40.

<sup>7</sup> KS 70: 1a-b.

<sup>8</sup> This attitude is related to efforts by King Sejong to restore Confucian ritual music as it had been when it was introduced into Koryŏ in 1114-1116. See Robert Provine, “Sejong and the preservation of Chinese ritual melodies,” *Korea Journal* 14.2 (1974): pp. 34-39.

<sup>9</sup> KS 71:47a-48b. This information is confirmed in the entries pertaining to each ritual in the monograph on rituals. KS 59: 13b-14b; KS 59: 34a-37b; KS 60: 18b-19b; KS 61: 1a-4b; KS 62: 11a; KS 62: 26b-27a; KS 62:41a-b.

<sup>10</sup> KS 59: 27b: 28a.

<sup>11</sup> Later commentators would not only condemn Koryŏ’s indigenous music, but also the *taesŏngak* of the Song. Yi Ik (1682-1763) vehemently criticised it on the grounds that it was vulgar and not suited to the high standards of the Chosŏn dynasty. It was well known, according to Yi, that Koryŏ had been in the dark about the true principles that lay at the bottom of reality and that was incomprehensible that their music would have been used for such a long time. If the Song emperor had given this music to Koryŏ, it could not have been very valuable to begin with. He ends his tirade by recommending that it be only used in the schools for *kisaeng* 妓生. See *On taesŏngak* in *SHSS* 13: 4a-5b.

Koguryō was all performed and music albums were edited.”<sup>12</sup> *Hyangak*, or Koryō’s indigenous music, was not only used for ritual purposes.<sup>13</sup> On the contrary, it seems that the most popular music during banquets, poetry contests and other social gatherings was *hyangak*. The often-found prohibitions on its performance during times of disaster or ritual cleansing refer to this use of *hyangak*.<sup>14</sup>

*Tangak* was, as the name suggests, the music derived from Tang Chinese examples. Although originally only used for entertainment, one of its main uses was ritual and formal.<sup>15</sup> Until the introduction of the Song ritual music during the early twelfth century, *tangak* and *hyangak* found themselves at more or less opposed ends of the musical scale. Chinese envoy Xu Hsing 徐兢 wrote in his account of his visit to Koryō the following:

Now the music is divided into two categories: the left is called *tangak* and consists of Chinese music; the right is called *hyangak* and consists of indigenous music. For the Chinese music, the instruments follow the Chinese system. But for *hyangak* [...] the construction [of the instruments] is different.<sup>16</sup>

Previous research has already suggested that the distinctions between *hyangak* and *tangak*, especially when used for entertainment, gradually disappeared.<sup>17</sup> By the middle of the Chosŏn dynasty, Confucian ritual music (*a’ak*) had become diametrically opposed to a mixture of Chinese (*tangak*) and Korean music (*hyangak*), both of which were used for entertainment purposes.<sup>18</sup> The origins of this development are visible in the *Koryōsa*, where the compilers’ annoyance with the seemingly arbitrary way in which Koryō’s ritual music was performed resounds in many passages.<sup>19</sup> The repeated remarks that music in Koryō was not performed in a ‘pure manner’ suggest that the strictness of the performance of ritual music in neo-Confucian ritual cannot be transposed to Koryō ritual without some serious reservations.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>12</sup> KS 71: 43b. The *Koryōsa* notes that the lyrics (which unfortunately have not been recorded) had regrettably all been written in vulgar language. This criticism is reminiscent of the criticism uttered by Kwŏn Kūn 權近 with regard to Kim Pushik’s 金富軾 decision to record the vulgar languages of the Three Kingdoms in his *Historical chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*. See chapter two for a more detailed treatment of this issue.

<sup>13</sup> The *Koryōsa* does not specify whether the indigenous music that was performed was originally from Koryō or from one of the Three Kingdoms. It stands to reason, given the abovementioned entry in the monograph on music of the *Koryōsa* that they were performed alternately.

<sup>14</sup> In times of drought or national calamities, the food of the court was simplified, consumption of alcohol was prohibited and the slaughter of animals was outlawed. At such times, the playing of music was also banned. See for instance the fourth month of 1025, the eighth month of 1043, the ninth month of 1055 or the eighth month of 1056 in the *sega* of the *Koryōsa*.

<sup>15</sup> Pratt, “Music as factor in Sung-Koryo diplomatic relations”, pp. 199-218; Pratt, “Sung Hui Tsung’s musical diplomacy”, pp. 509-521.

<sup>16</sup> *GT*, chapter 40.

<sup>17</sup> Chang Sahun 장사훈, “Koryō shidae-ūi umak 高麗時代の音樂,” reprinted in *Koryō T’aemyo ūirye yŏn’gu nonjip* 高麗太廟儀禮研究論集, (Seoul: Kyōngin munhwasa 경인문화사, 2002), pp. 121-161. The original article dates from 1972. Also see Song 宋芳松, “Koryō Tae-aksō-wa Kwanhyōnbang 高麗大樂署와 管絃坊,” reprinted in *Koryō T’aemyo ūirye yŏn’gu nonjip*, pp. 167-207. The original article dates from 1974.

<sup>18</sup> *SJS* 65:8b; *CMP* 105:13a-b.

<sup>19</sup> See for example *KS* 71:1a; *KS* 70:1a-b.

<sup>20</sup> Although Confucian ritual music continued to be distinct from both *tangak* and *hyangak*, it must be noted that this distinction was lost on Chinese ears. Among other things due to a different instrumentation and different

It also suggests that ritual music in Koryŏ perhaps had a different significance and was less fundamentally distinct from music used for entertainment than in later periods.

Confucian ritual music (*a'ak*) was introduced in Koryŏ during the reign of Yejong, for which he would be praised by later generations. In the eulogy for Yejong, the customary list of his achievements begins like this:

His literary skills stood out among a hundred rulers and he established ritual music on a par with China.<sup>21</sup>

Only then are listed his other and certainly not negligible achievements: the radical reforms of the educational system, his worship of classical texts and learning and the revision of the state examinations. Proper ritual music was considered to be of such importance that its establishment ranked as the crowning achievement of a ruler who had accomplished much.

In 1114, Koryŏ envoy An Chiksong 安稷崇 (1066-1135) introduced 167 new Chinese musical instruments, music and instructions, all gifts of the Chinese emperor, into Koryŏ.<sup>22</sup> The imperial gifts came with an imperial edict, explaining the importance of ritual music with regard to the maintenance of a prosperous and peaceful cosmological order.<sup>23</sup> The *Koryŏsa* records that the new music was first performed in the tenth month of 1114 at the royal shrines:

On the *chŏngmyŏ* day, the king performed the three-yearly great ancestor worship ritual (*byŏp* 輿). The new music from the Song was jointly performed [with indigenous music] and [convicted criminals] were granted amnesty.<sup>24</sup>

In the sixth month of 1116 (the eleventh year of Yejong's reign) envoys Wang Chaji 王字之 (1066-1122) and Mun Kongmi 文公美 (fl. late eleventh/early twelfth century) returned from the court of the Song emperor with splendid gifts, consisting of 428 musical instruments, music, ritual paraphernalia and Koryŏ musicians that had been trained in the new Song ritual music.<sup>25</sup> The next mention of the performance of *taesŏngak* is from 1116, again during the

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preferences with regard to the relative importance of some instruments, Confucian ritual music in Koryŏ had changed to such an extent at the end of the Koryŏ dynasty that it became necessary to go look for its original form. See Pratt, "Music as factor in Sung-Koryo diplomatic relations", pp. 199-218; Pratt, "Sung Hui Tsung's musical diplomacy", pp. 509-521.

<sup>21</sup> *Yewang shich'aek mun* 睿王諡冊文 in *TMS* 28: 18a-19a.

<sup>22</sup> *KS* 70: 28a-b; *KS* 13: 33b. An Chiksong's epitaph also mentions An's role in the introduction of the new music: "He passed the civil examinations in 1104. He became an executive assistant of a local official in Yangon 良醞. In 1108, when Yejong had been on the throne for four years, he was selected to become a recorder. Through various offices he attained high rank. On royal command he went to the Song as an envoy in 1113 and returned with the great and shining new music (*taesŏng shinak* 大晟新樂) that the Song emperor had bestowed on Yejong. This is the music that is played nowadays during the ancestral worship ceremonies in the royal ancestral shrines." See *An Chiksong myojimyŏng* 安稷崇墓誌銘 in *KMC* 27: 1-32.

<sup>23</sup> *KS* 70: 28a-b.

<sup>24</sup> *KS* 13: 35a

<sup>25</sup> *KS* 70: 5b-9a. The training the Koryŏ musicians received is not mentioned in the *Koryŏsa*. It is mentioned, however, in a letter of gratitude composed by Im Chon (fl. early twelfth century). In it he describes how grateful Koryŏ is for the gift bestowed upon it by the Song emperor. He also makes it clear that the initiative came from the side of Koryŏ. See *TMS* 35: 19b-21a. Im Chon, *Sa bŏsŏp taesŏngak p'yo* 謝許習大盛樂表. These gifts to the Koryŏ court were

ancestor worship ceremonies at the royal ancestral shrines in the tenth month.<sup>26</sup> Yejong was apparently much impressed with the new music, for he decreed it also to be played during the morning reveille of the court officials.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, the first ceremonial performance of the Song ritual music was combined with the first performance of a new Koryŏ composition for performance at *chongmyo*, ostensibly in order to maintain the cultural balance.<sup>28</sup> In the twelfth year of the reign of Yejong's son Injong 仁宗 (l. 1109-1146; r. 1122-1146) *taesŏngak* was for the first time used during the ceremony that marked the beginning of the agricultural year, the *chŏkjön* ritual.<sup>29</sup> *Taesŏngak* went through several changes during the reign of Ŭijong 毅宗 (l.: 1127-1173; r. 1146-1170), but these need not concern us here.<sup>30</sup> The introduction of Song ritual music did not go entirely unchallenged, however. As may be surmised, the music that was performed during state ceremonies before the Song emperor's musical gift did not disappear just like that. A memorial from Cho Chun (趙浚, 1346-1405) alerts us to what kind of music was performed before the introduction of *taesŏngak* in 1116 and what may have happened to it. In this memorial, that deals with ritual matters and their practical implications, Cho condemns the decadence that was now associated with court music and the ever widening gap with proper ritual music:

It used to be so that with regard to the music at our court, guests were invariably entertained with a banquet and *tangak*, which was then followed by *hyangak*. But these days the dance of the *kisaeng* and the melody of the music do not harmonize any longer. [The music] is in particular losing its origins in ritual music. According to the *Court Ritual Prescriptions* [Chojŏng ūiju 朝廷儀注] music during the morning reveille and at banquets must be performed by able and wise men and *kisaeng* must not be allowed to join. It is my sincere hope that in the future *tangak* will be performed during banquets and *kisaeng* will be prohibited from participating.<sup>31</sup>

Cho Chun, known for his radical neo-Confucian ideology and harsh criticism of late Koryŏ's corrupt court, informs us that firstly, the *tangak* and *hyangak* of late Koryŏ had become music solely for entertainment purposes.<sup>32</sup> Secondly, he explains that the origins of Koryŏ's indigenous music were ritual. Cho's memorial contrasts sharply with a comment in the music section in the eighteenth year of Myŏngjong's 明宗 reign (r. 1170-1197; l. 1131-1202). This anonymous comment, probably written by Kwŏn Kyŏngjung (權慶中, fl. early thirteenth

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unsurpassed in sheer magnitude and have remained so. No Chinese emperor was ever again quite so generous. Koryŏ was keenly aware of this: "Your generous gifts exceed all precedents" and "If one would look for a precedent, one could search the ancient past when our country was established and yet never hear of another glorious day that we came to enjoy such gifts." writes Kim Puil 金富侁. See TMS 34: 18a-19b.

<sup>26</sup> KS 70: 14a; KS 70: 16a-20b.

<sup>27</sup> KS 70: 14a.

<sup>28</sup> KS 14: 17b. The composition performed was the *Kushil tungga* 九室登歌.

<sup>29</sup> KS 16: 28a; KS 70: 14a.

<sup>30</sup> Yi Hyegu 이혜구, "Koryŏ taesŏngag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn 高麗大盛樂의 變遷," in *Han'guk um'ak sŏsŏl* 韓國音樂序說 (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1965), pp. 143-145; Song Hyejin, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi a'ag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn-gwa chisok 高麗時代の 雅樂의 變遷과 持續," in *Koryŏ T'aemyŏ ūiryŏ jŏn'gu nonjip*, pp. 276-285. The original article is from 2000.

<sup>31</sup> KS 118: 15a-b.

<sup>32</sup> This partly explains how *tangak* and *hyangak* came to be one category of music during the Chosŏn.

century) who was one of the compilers of the no longer extant *Myǝngjong sbillok* 明宗實錄<sup>33</sup>, is an indictment against the disappearance of Koryŏ's indigenous music:

The comment of the historian is as follows: "The shortcomings and confusion in the music are terrible. The Office of Sacrificial Ceremonies (*T'aesang* 太常) recently requested to follow the institutions as they had been under former kings, but the supervising bureau is delaying this and it has not been implemented, which is deplored by those persons who are knowledgeable. [They think that] the music that was bestowed by the Song on Yejong was newly created Song music and not music made by [Song] emperor Taizu. Not long after this music was established [as the official state music], the Song court was thrown into disorder. Even worse, in 1161 Confucian officials and foolish musicians from our own court changed it to their own liking, reversing the order and confusing above and under. [The number of] instruments such as the *kan* 干, *ch'ŏk* 戚, *yak* and *chŏk* 翟 has changed, causing great discrepancies. According to the *Regulations for sacrificial ceremonies* (*T'aesang p'yŏnje* 太常編制), the Song court only sent us clothes, headgear and instruments, but we did not know how to use them. Transmitter Sŏ On 徐溫 went to the Song and learned about dance and ritual privately and taught them (to us). But since there is no evidence for the procedures of moving forwards and backwards in the dances, it seems it is not to be trusted. And the musicians wanted to follow how it was done when it was first introduced, but until now it has not been executed that way. Even if the chief examiner would do something about it, the old records cannot be changed and if it was performed, it would just be as before. From among the eight instruments, the *sa* 絲 and the *t'o* 土 are missing. The singers merely memorize the high and low tones from the scores and have no idea whatsoever what the lyrics are about. This is deceiving both god and man. Furthermore, *hyangak* is our indigenous custom and should be performed at all rituals from beginning to end. Presently, it is only performed at the second and third time the sacrificial cup is raised. [In this manner] the error of performing [the ritual] biased cannot be avoided. [...]"<sup>34</sup>

Although this comment aims at a very different goal than Cho Chun's memorial, they both point to the originally ritual nature of Koryŏ's indigenous music and to it being gradually replaced by the Song ritual music. At the same time, it is clear that the Confucian ritual music from the Song is not performed in a 'correct' manner. The complaints in the comment should probably be taken with a grain of salt, but nonetheless ring true.<sup>35</sup> It has been argued that the claims of the anonymous author cannot have been true, because an extant letter by Im Chon 林存 thanks the Song emperor for having allowed Koryŏ musicians to be trained in *taesŏngak* in China.<sup>36</sup> The Koryŏ musicians knew how to play *taesŏngak*, because they had been instructed in Song China. But this argument misses the point the author of the commentary is trying to make. His complaint is less about the way *taesŏngak* is performed than it is about the nature of *taesŏngak*. Admittedly, the argument of the anonymous writer of the comment partly consists of an exaggerated representation of the state of affairs. On the other hand, his argument revolves

<sup>33</sup> Song Hyejin, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi a'ag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn-gwa chisok", p. 288.

<sup>34</sup> *KS* 70: 14a-15a.

<sup>35</sup> Song Hyejin argues that the complaints in this comment are commonplace. The lyrics, for example, would have been in classical Chinese and thus mostly incomprehensible to most musicians. See Song Hyejin, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi a'ag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn-gwa chisok", pp. 280-90.

<sup>36</sup> Song Hyejin, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi a'ag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn-gwa chisok", pp. 280-90.

around the contention that even though Koryŏ musicians had been instructed in the proper usage of music and dance, this could not be trusted since it relied on nothing substantial. This is the essential part of the criticism. Rather than a denunciation of Koryŏ musicians' command of Song music and dance, then, the comment seems to aim primarily at *taesŏngak* itself. This was after all not the ritual music associated with Song emperor Taizu 太祖, founder of the dynasty, as the commentary explicitly points out. Worse, it was connected to the desperate state of affairs at the Song court and had been created by an emperor who would let himself be captured by the Jin 金 dynasty. The comment also reveals the great importance that was attached to the proper performance of ritual music, be it Song or Koryŏ music, with regard to the conditions in the country. The implied causal relationship between the proclamation of the new Song music and the capture of the two Song emperors by the Jin is more than a rhetorical sleight of hand.<sup>37</sup> Music was an essential part of proper ritual and proper ritual was essential to the well-being of ruler, country and people.<sup>38</sup>

This commentary, then, draws attention to the difficulties that accompanied the introduction and the acceptance of Song ritual music. Fifty years after its introduction, there was still dissatisfaction with the nature of *taesŏngak*. The way this dissatisfaction was voiced is of interest. It voiced the idea that Koryŏ had its own ritual music that was neglected in favour of the Song emperor's new music, but at the same time concedes that had it been created by the founder of the Song dynasty, the ritual music would have been much more effectual. The writer's aversion is not necessarily aimed at Sinitic cultural achievements, but at the introduction of Sinitic cultural accomplishments that have no merit. Especially so, when Koryŏ possessed viable alternatives itself. It may not have been the majority opinion, but it is hard to imagine that it was a marginalized opinion. It would not have been included in the veritable records as a historian's commentary in that case; these commentaries carried too much significance not to be representative. The nuanced commentary with regard to the provenance, nature and suitability of *taesŏngak* is all the more interesting since a Confucian scholar wrote it. It shows how these literati dealt with these complicated issues which were inextricably tied up with their identity as Koryŏ scholars. The commentary clearly reflects the prestige that was inherent to Sinitic cultural achievements, but also indicates that the principles behind those achievements had been digested by Koryŏ literati and were consequently applied by them to, for instance, Song ritual music. If the object which these principles were applied to fell short, the fact that they came from the Song or any other high-status dynasty was considered less important than their defective nature. The commentary also manifests the faith in Koryŏ's own achievements, in this case Koryŏ's indigenous ritual music.

It is highly probable that by the time the above commentary was written – the end of the twelfth century – the codification of Koryŏ's rituals by means of the compilation of the

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<sup>37</sup> The author seems to refer to the catastrophic capture of two Song emperors by the Jurchen Jin in 1126. When Song envoys visited Koryŏ in 1128, they requested the officials in charge of the ritual protocol not to perform music out of piety with the two captured Song emperors. *KS* 15: 29a-b.

<sup>38</sup> Especially in Koryŏ, where the ruler had 'usurped' some of the ritual privileges of the Son of Heaven, the proper performance of rituals was considered to be exceedingly important and of immediate relevance to daily life. See chapter five for an examination of the status of the ruler in Koryŏ.

Confucian *Kogŭm sangjŏng ye* 古今詳定禮 (*Detailed rituals from past and present*) had given *taesŏngak* a more prominent position in Koryŏ's ritual world, by providing it with recorded ideological underpinnings.<sup>39</sup> For "those persons who were knowledgeable", having a contender for Koryŏ's indigenous ritual music was one thing; having that contender on the official record as the proper ritual music was quite another and would have been apt to stir up resistance. After all, this music was performed at each and every essential state and court ritual and as such needed to be beyond reproach.

### THE IDEOLOGY BEHIND THE MUSIC

One way to look at ritual music is to see it as an expression of the shared beliefs and intentions of a community with regard to those things that matter to it and that are considered to be in need of special protection. Ritual music expresses the ideals cherished most by a community and actively helps in promoting and realizing them: whether by magical means or by appealing to the better instincts of man through musical persuasion. The relative dearth of historical records in Koryŏ makes it a rather ungrateful task to try and gauge the ideological intentions behind Koryŏ's music. No treatises about the nature and function of ritual music have been transmitted, nor are there any works extant that have ritual music as their subject. It is possible, however, to infer some important points from indirect source materials, which is what I will try to do in this chapter.

Contrary to Koryŏ's indigenous music, the case for Confucian ritual music is well documented, especially in the case of the Song ritual music. Ritual music was supposed to "bring the minds of the people into harmony and transform the world".<sup>40</sup> The enormous importance attached to ritual music can be inferred from the fact that during the Northern Song more books on music theory were written than ever before.<sup>41</sup> While particular interpretations of what ritual music ought to be like were severely and bitterly contested, the efficacy of proper ritual music per se was not doubted. As is also clear from the edict the Song emperor sent to Koryŏ in 1114, creating the proper music was expected to last long and cost much effort: "Music moves with the Heaven and the Earth. It rises only one hundred years after meritorious deeds have been performed."<sup>42</sup> This was no mere figure of speech, because by the time the new ritual music from the Song was introduced in Koryŏ, four to five generations of musicians and scholars had been working on it. Koryŏ scholars were aware of the painstaking endeavours that had been undertaken in Song China. A letter of gratitude for the Song emperor's gift by Kim Puil (1071-1132) clearly states this:

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<sup>39</sup> Song Hyejin, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi a'ag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn-gwa chisok", p. 284.

<sup>40</sup> Pratt, "Sung Hui Tsung's musical diplomacy", p. 509. This citation is from the monograph on music in the *Songshi* 宋史.

<sup>41</sup> Pratt, "Sung Hui Tsung's musical diplomacy", p. 510.

<sup>42</sup> *KS* 70: 28a-b.

In my humble opinion, the virtue of the Five Emperors and Three Kings grew ever more distant and the sources for rituals and music became lost. [Later generations] have made do with very poor [versions of it] and have not been able to resurrect all [of the achievements] of the ancients. Generations after generations have only transmitted the poorest of traditions. When your dynasty was founded, emperor Taizu endeavoured to realize good government and establish great things. He ordered chancellor Xie Chongyi 葉崇義 to revise the three classics of ritual. Chongyi 崇義 fathomed the old theories of all philosophers, attached his own interpretation to them and made these into a ritual diagram. But there have been corrupted Confucian scholars whose vulgar learning has not been able to discover the true meaning of the author. The right time had to be awaited for this to happen.<sup>43</sup>

The right time finally had come, but it had taken some hundred years. On the other hand, Kim Puil, although courteously exaggerating his praises, was also well aware of the consequences of the performance of proper ritual music:

Thus, if you sacrifice at the Round Altar, the heavenly gods all descend towards you and if you sacrifice at the Square Altar all earth gods come out to watch you. The rain falls timely and the stars appear at the right moment. Every year the harvests are abundant, auspicious clouds appear, and sweet dew comes down. Auspicious fungi are magnificent and sweet springs erupt. Since all these [symbols of] blessings and signs of universal peace appear, so how could this not be a bright response from Heaven? The four seasons are responding properly to one man's felicitousness.<sup>44</sup>

Another feature of Song Confucian ritual music was, predictably perhaps, its effectiveness in singing the praises of the Song dynasty and its emperors. Im Chon has Yejong

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<sup>43</sup> TMS 34: 18a: 19b. Kim Pu'il, *Sa ha yegi chebok ch'ŏnhyang kokpo yegi kwanji tŭng p'yo* 謝賜禮器祭服薦享曲譜禮器欸等表. Im Chon writes something very similar: "I respectfully think that in the olden times when the way was established, music alone was made the fundament of government. Bells, drums, reeds and flutes were used for instruments; joy and love were used as emotions. Through [music], the spirits were communicated with. Through [music] customs were transferred. The three sovereigns transmitted this to the two emperors. The two emperors transmitted it to the three kings. The writings of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius still preserved this law, but after the Jin and the Han, everything that had been transmitted became lost and simultaneously illicit sounds arose. It is a long time since proper music and the songs that sing the praises of the ancestors have disappeared and the restoration of the ritual codes was only awaiting the intent of the ruler". See TMS 35: 19b-21a. Another letter of gratitude to the Song emperor was composed by Pak Kyŏngjak 朴景緯 (1055-1121; he was later known as Pak Kyŏngin 朴景仁). Again, the message is similar: "[...] An Chiksung returned with a missive from Your Majesty. He handed over to us an imperial edict and ten volumes of separate writings. With this Your Imperial Majesty bestowed upon your servants the gift of new music, together with musical scores and illustrated manuals. Your intention to spread the music that you created in mysterious ways widely among the people, made you send envoys to our vassal country and it is with deep emotion and amazement that we have received your edict. Your servant has heard that when the Yellow Emperor created the music of *hamjak* and when King U created the music of *taebaak*, they took their own body as the measurement and listened to the sounds of bronze cauldrons. Until the Zhou dynasty, this method was always used, but its tradition was broken and the method lost after the Han dynasty. When Zheng Wei 鄭衛 prospered, the tradition of ritual music had been discontinued for a long time, so the Confucian scholars did not recognize his music. Generation after generation were not capable of showing their skills in it. Would this not have been because the proper way is not exercised at just any time, but awaits the coming of a sage? I respectfully think that Your Imperial Majesty has become a sage on account of your resourcefulness. [...] The heart is moved in the same manner when listening to the new music or to the music of old." See *Sa sa shinak p'yo* 謝賜新樂表 TMS 34: 14a-15a.

<sup>44</sup> TMS 34: 18a: 19b.



eloquently describe this aspect in his letter of gratitude to the Song emperor, signifying that the Koryŏ court was very much aware of the implicit propaganda value of ritual music:

The beautiful creation that is *taesŏngak* embellishes the meritorious achievements of the fiery Song. Its contents begin with the founding ancestor and the flow of [Song history] is identical to [that of] Heaven. Heaven overspreads all without partiality. Earth accepts all without partiality.<sup>45</sup> How then could our faraway country not be made to listen to the melodies of this ritually proper music?<sup>46</sup>

Ritual music from the Song, then, was both ideologically and politically legitimating and it was accepted as such by Koryŏ. In the process of being adapted to Koryŏ Song ritual music preserved the cosmological implications which went well with the ideological background of the rituals that celebrated Koryŏ and its ruler. Rituals such as the *wŏn'gu* and the *pangt'aek* rituals were performed in Koryŏ by the Koryŏ ruler as a Son of Heaven, ontologically equal to the Chinese (or Liao or Jin) Son of Heaven.<sup>47</sup> As has been discussed in chapters three and five, the majority of contemporary Koryŏ designations for ruler and country were left out of the *Koryŏsa* in the same manner and for the same reasons that the 'blasphemous' lyrics of Koryŏ's indigenous music had not been recorded.<sup>48</sup> Fortunately, other sources less susceptible to editorial intervention such as literary collections and inscriptions carved in stone still preserve terms such as 'Son of Heaven' and other terms of comparable ontological weight.<sup>49</sup> Performing Song Confucian ritual music, then, seems to have had the same function as the performance of originally Chinese Confucian state rituals had. In the Koryŏ context, these performances had gotten to be centred on Koryŏ and the Koryŏ ruler; the initial Chinese orientation was first subverted and then mobilized to serve the Koryŏ state. At the same time, the prestige and authority associated with these Sinitic cultural achievements was usurped. It should also be remembered that this was not merely a game of borrowing and recycling those continental accomplishments that shone most brightly and conveyed the highest kind of authority. To a certain extent, this was obviously true, but the principles behind them were deemed to be valid by the Koryŏ literati. Such expressions are often found and only a reductionist approach that categorically supposes all utterings of Koryŏ literati to this extent to be untrue can suggest otherwise.

Koryŏ's indigenous *hyangak*, on the other hand, did not share the cosmological

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<sup>45</sup> This is a slightly adapted quote from a passage in the *Book of rites*, when Confucius lectures on the importance of proper ritual and proper music and the role of the ruler. Aided by proper music, the sage ruler impartially protects and supports everything under heaven.

<sup>46</sup> *TMS* 35: 19b: 21a. Keith Pratt has argued that the main reason for the Song to bestow its ritual music on the Koryŏ court was political. It hoped to win over Yejong to unite against the Jin. Yejong accepted the bribe, but it was unsuccessful. Pratt seems to have been unaware, however, of the letter of gratitude by Im Chon in the *Tongmun sŏn* that explicitly states that Koryŏ asked for this music. See Pratt, "Music as factor in Sung-Koryo diplomatic relations," pp. 199-218; Pratt, "Sung Hui Tsung's musical diplomacy," pp. 509-521; Song Hyejin, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi a'ag-ŭi pyŏnch'ŏn-gwa chisok", pp. 267-285.

<sup>47</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>48</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>49</sup> No Myŏnggho, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha'gwan-gwa haedong ch'ŏnja", pp. 3-40; Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm".

preoccupations of the Song ritual music. The absence of the cosmological aspect does not mean that this music did not contain explicit references to and strong associations with what Koryŏ was thought to be. Although ritual in origin, *Koryŏ sogak* and *Samguk sogak* were as much about Koryŏ and the Koryŏ ruler (or about their historical antecedents) as *taesŏngak* was about the Song. A song like *P'ungpison* 風入松 directly celebrated the Koryŏ ruler as Son of Heaven; he was perhaps not the only one, but he was nonetheless a Son of Heaven.<sup>50</sup> Most lyrics have not survived due to the censorial activities of the compilers of the *Koryŏsa*, but what can be gathered from the short descriptions of contents in the *Koryŏsa* is that more than half of the recorded songs describe celebrations of Koryŏ or famous landmarks within or precisely at the borders.<sup>51</sup> Almost all songs are laudatory songs that sing the praises of ruler and country, often by focusing on one particular aspect or place.<sup>52</sup> The continuation of the music of the Three Kingdoms is also of great importance in this respect. The dominant historical perception in Koryŏ traced back Koryŏ's ancestry through the Three Kingdoms to the Three Han, rather than to any one of these. As has been shown in chapters three and four, a strong sense of succession and continuity is apparent from Koryŏ historical works. Against the background of the idea that Koryŏ was an embodiment of the Three Han, the continuing importance of music from Shilla, Koguryŏ and Paekche is understandable. The performance of *Samguk sogak*, then, confirmed Koryŏ's past, both on a macro-level for the state, which had succeeded to all three kingdoms, and on a micro-level for those people who identified with one kingdom in particular.<sup>53</sup> The lyrics of the surviving songs clearly reflect this.<sup>54</sup> In doing so, they reveal the ideological component of Koryŏ's indigenous music, which was, quite naturally perhaps, intended to celebrate Koryŏ, its ruler, its history and its people. Introducing the prestigious Song ritual music in this environment evidently harnessed Song music for this purpose, instead of the other way round. It may be argued that Koryŏ's attempt at legitimation by seeking recognition from the Chinese Son of Heaven, while at the same constructing a (conceivably even more important) domestic counterpart and relying on indigenous (or indigenized) concepts and beliefs, is mirrored in the way it tried to use *taesŏngak*, *hyangak* and *tangak* in

<sup>50</sup> No Myŏngho, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi tawŏnjŏk ch'ŏnha'gwan-gwa haedong ch'ŏnja", pp. 3-40.

<sup>51</sup> A composition such as *Sŏgyŏng* 西京 (The Western Capital) not only firmly situated Kija's 箕子 (and Tongmyŏng's 東明) old capital within Koryŏ territory, but also sang about the love of the people for the ruler. *Taedong-gang* 大洞江 (Taedong River) recalls Kija's achievements, compares P'yŏngyang 平壤 landmarks to famous places in China and praises the ruler of Koryŏ. *Yangju* 楊州 is a song about present-day Seoul, praising its wide fields and bustling markets. *Kŭmgang-sŏng* 金剛城 (Diamant Fortress) praises the strength of the capital Kaesŏng 開城 and the resilience of the Koryŏ court in the face of Khitan (or perhaps Mongol) invasions; the association with the Kŭmgang Mountains seems unavoidable. See *KS* 71: 33a; *KS* 71: 33a-b; *KS* 71:35a.

<sup>52</sup> A good example is the song *Chaba-dong* 紫霞洞 (Chaha Neighbourhood). Its contents deal with a very localized topic. The author of the lyrics used to spend his days drinking and talking with old men in his private guest hall. At the same time, the descriptions of the old men as "old men of the Three Han" and the fact that the locale is situated on Pine Mountain (Song-san 松山), the most sacred mountain of Koryŏ near Kaesŏng, introduce a more general dimension of belonging to Koryŏ—which in the song is promptly put into perspective by saying that "our lives in this age of peace (*t'aep'yŏng* 太平, one of the characteristics of saintly rule) are but inebriated scenes.". See *KS* 71: 42b-43b.

<sup>53</sup> See chapter one.

<sup>54</sup> The songs sing about the most famous places in the Three Kingdoms: Kyŏngju 慶州, Naju 羅州, Kwangju 廣州, Chiri-san 知異山, Naewŏl-sŏng, Myŏngju 冥州. See *KS* 71:43b-47b.

important rituals. The fact that the introduction of *taesŏngak* had taken place at the behest of Koryŏ's ruler Yejong is significant. It shows that rather than an exclusively diplomatic means, the introduction of the Song ritual music must also be seen against the background of Koryŏ's domestic circumstances and ideological conditions.

### KORYŎ'S ANCESTRAL SHRINES

Koryŏ's ancestral shrines occupied a central place in its ritual world. As discussed before, Koryŏ's ritual world was complicated, diverse and not hierarchically arranged, but instead consisted of constantly interacting and changing performances and interpretations of rituals.<sup>55</sup> Some of the most important rituals were performed at the royal ancestral shrines. When the new ritual music from the Song had arrived, its first official performance took place at the royal ancestral shrines.<sup>56</sup> The royal ancestral shrines were a unique sacred space in the sense that they constituted the focal point of both the state and the royal family. The former rulers were enshrined there and Koryŏ's most famous officials were also commemorated on the same premises, symbolizing the indissoluble bond between ruler and vassal, between the royal family and the state.<sup>57</sup> The importance of the royal ancestral shrines can also be read from the fact that all important state and court rituals were followed by a closing ceremony at *t'aemyo*. As mentioned before in chapter three, the shrines figured in the daily lives of the living, because the ancestral spirits, or at least their tablets, were told of all important things happening in Koryŏ: they were kept abreast of marriages, deaths, wars, and so forth. Separate shrines for Koryŏ's deceased rulers had existed from the beginning of the dynasty, but the establishment of Koryŏ ancestral shrines according to Chinese model only took place during the reign of Sŏngjong 成宗 (l. 960-997; r. 982-997) in 992:

On the *kyŏngsŏn* day, the king promulgated the following edict: 'As for the basis of the country, the royal ancestral shrine comes first. For that reason, there has never been an emperor that has not added to the halls, built palaces for the tablets, arranged the tablets with the fathers on the right and the sons on the left and held three-yearly and five-yearly memorial services. It has been several generations since our dynasty responded to its destiny and was founded, but there have not yet been memorial services in the royal ancestral shrines. [...]'<sup>58</sup>

Few other locations were considered as sacred as *chongmyo*. The royal ancestral shrines

<sup>55</sup> Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm".

<sup>56</sup> *KS* 70:5b-9a; *KS* 70: 28a-b; *KS* 13: 33b.

<sup>57</sup> Due to Koryŏ's complicated indigenous kinship system, many and frequent problems arose in the arrangement of the ancestral tablets. Chinese ritual regulations stipulated that the fathers should be put on the one side and their sons on the other side, and so on. In Koryŏ, where succession to the throne by a brother was quite common for a long period, this system could not be adapted as it was. For an excellent description and analysis of this issue and the debates it gave rise to, see Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A Study of society and ideology* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1992).

<sup>58</sup> *KS* 3:24b-25a.

housed the tablets of former Koryŏ rulers, the physical representations of their spirits, which gave it its sacred character. Politically, *chongmyo* cemented the status of the royal family with regard to its position in the state of Koryŏ. The ancestral worship of the Wang lineage was transformed into an essential state affair with the establishment of the royal ancestral shrines. Personal worship of deceased rulers shifted towards the Buddhist temples where their images had been enshrined.<sup>59</sup> When during the late 11<sup>th</sup> century succession of the throne from father to son became the rule, the importance of the royal ancestral shrines increased, a trend that was actively promoted by the rulers.<sup>60</sup> More than before, the royal ancestral shrines came to the political forefront, when the continuous power struggle between the royal house and its supporters in the bureaucracy, among whom was Kim Pushik, and the powerful great lineages (*kwŏnbŏl* or *munbŏl*) as exemplified by the Kyŏngwŏn Yi 慶源李 lineage of Yi Chagyŏm 李資謙 heated up. The ancestral shrines occupied the central position in the ritual structure and were a source of both legitimation and political power. It was the place where rituals and prayers were performed and as such it represented Koryŏ's past through the enshrined rulers and their ministers and its present through the protection it was thought to confer on the state. *Chongmyo* even furnished the locale for a representation of Koryŏ's future: prophesying rituals concerning the future of the Koryŏ state were also performed at the ancestral shrines. The visual and physical way in which *chongmyo* furnished these representations (the spirit tablets of the deceased were enshrined there, after all) enhanced its ritual and political importance.

It has already been mentioned in chapter four, but the connection between the royal house and the ancestral shrines extended to ritual music. When a villainous courtier requested that ritual music should be played at the tomb of the grandfather of Yi Chagyŏm during a posthumous investment ceremony, Kim Pushik reacted with indignation that ritual music was reserved for the royal ancestral shrines.<sup>61</sup> It was not to be played at the tombs of others, no matter how powerful their lineage was. The Kyŏngwŏn Yi lineage, of whom Yi Chagyŏm was a leading member, was traditionally one of the great and powerful aristocratic lineages and at the time of this incident, Yi Chagyŏm himself was the de facto ruler of Koryŏ. Despite all this, Kim Pushik felt that he could stand up to Yi by appealing to the intrinsic sanctity of ritual music –although the fact that Kim himself belonged to an old and powerful lineage obviously facilitated his decision.<sup>62</sup> Ritual music, then, was not something to be lightly regarded, especially not in connection with the royal ancestral shrines which symbolized royal power. This was acknowledged by both advocate and adversary of royal power. Due to its ritual importance, the performance of ritual music could become a formidable political weapon.

Ritual music served the state, but it also served the royal house. In a letter of gratitude to the Song emperor, Kim Puil, Kim Pushik's elder brother, recognized this and knew that his

<sup>59</sup> Sem Vermeersch, *The power of the Buddha: The ideological and institutional role of Buddhism in the Koryŏ dynasty* (Ph. D. diss., SOAS, 2001).

<sup>60</sup> Ch'oe Sun'gwŏn 최순권, "Koryŏ chŏn'gi o'myoje-ŭi yŏn'gu 高麗前期 五廟制의 研究," reprinted in *Koryŏ T'aemyŏ ŭiryŏ yŏn'gu nonjip* 高麗 太廟 儀禮 研究 論集 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa 경인문화사, 2002), pp. 79-111, esp. pp. 80-85. See *KS* 67: 35a-b; *KS* 68: 22a-23b.

<sup>61</sup> *KS* 98: 3a.

<sup>62</sup> Pratt, "Sung Hui Tsung's musical diplomacy", pp. 509-518.

counterpart also recognized it:

Through the mysterious words of the music, you have illuminated the melodies of the sacrificial ceremony. Through the illustrations on the book covers, you have taught us how to play. Embarrassed by these extraordinary gifts, I know the difficulty of responding appropriately. How could [this music] only be used to comfort [the spirits of] our ancestors? It will influence later generations and extend to our grandchildren.<sup>63</sup>

Agreeing with the opinion the Song emperor had expressed in his edicts accompanying his unprecedented gifts of music, musical instruments and music scores, Kim Puil wrote that the gift of the emperor, his new Confucian ritual music, should first and foremost be performed at the royal ancestral shrines. Performance of ritual music at *chongmyo* was not an exclusive affair: *taesöngak* was performed during all state rituals. Nonetheless, its most important stage was *chongmyo*.

The music that had until then been played at the royal ancestral shrines had sung the praises of Koryö and its rulers. The introduction of the new music with lyrics that were completely in Chinese meant that Koryö ritual music became more complicated and diverse. *Tangak* had by this time become thoroughly Koryönized; the introduction of *taesöngak* added a new and contrastive category of music to the ritual repertoire. Royal power received prestigious support by accepting this imperial gift. The performances at the royal ancestral shrines were intended to further strengthen the royal house as the focal point of the Koryö state; *taesöngak* was certainly not intended for use at the tombs of the powerful families – such as the Kyöngwön Yi lineage to which Yi Chagyöm belonged.

#### LISTENING TO DIFFERENT BEATS

At first sight, it would seem that *taesöngak* was introduced in Koryö to strengthen royal power and perhaps also to stimulate the dissemination of Song Confucianism. The reign of Yejong was after all characterized for an important part by the efforts from scholars and officials alike to assimilate the new Confucianism that had been gaining popularity in the Song.<sup>64</sup> Yejong himself was renowned for his hunger for learning, culture and knowledge. It was under his reign that such famous institutes of learning as Pomun'gak pavilion 寶文閣 and Ch'öngyön'gak 淸燕閣 were established.<sup>65</sup> It makes sense, then, that the initiative to introduce *taesöngak* in Koryö came from him.<sup>66</sup> Yejong's ambitions were, however, not limited to

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<sup>63</sup> TMS 34: 19a-b.

<sup>64</sup> Ch'ae Ungsök 蔡雄錫, "12 segich'o Koryö-üi kaehyök ch'ujin-gwa chöngch'ijök kaltüng 12세기초 고려의 개혁 추진과 정치적 갈등," *Han'guksa yön'gu* 韓國史研究 112 (2001): pp. 33-62.

<sup>65</sup> KS 96: 9b.

<sup>66</sup> This is not only apparent from Im Chon's memorial. The *Songsbi* also confirms this. *Songsbi* 82: 19b. Also see Song Hyejin, "Koryö shidae-üi a'ag-üi pyönc'h'on-gwa chisok", p. 266.

Confucian culture. Buddhist ceremonies were very frequently held on the palace grounds.<sup>67</sup> Daoism experienced an unprecedented boom; Daoist rituals at the court were perhaps the most important rituals during Yejong's reign.<sup>68</sup> The royal lectures (*kyōngyōn* 經延) were also established when Yejong ruled Koryō. Though Confucian in origin, the subjects treated were diverse and heterodox.<sup>69</sup> Yejong also had historical works compiled, as well as an anthology of geomantic secrets.<sup>70</sup> There was ample reason, then, for cultural pride. In a text on the Ch'ōngyōn'gak composed by Kim Yōn 金緣, Yejong says that “now that the warfare and fighting at the three borders has ceased [Koryō] has achieved a unified culture that is equal to that of China”.<sup>71</sup> This manner is exactly the manner in which both the introduction of *taesōngak* and the establishment of the pavilions of learning functioned. On the one hand, they served as important emblems of Sinitic culture and of Koryō's cultural achievements based upon Sinitic culture. On the other hand, they signalled Koryō's cultural maturity vis-à-vis China.

The flourishing of diverse and often divergent cultural strands during Yejong's reign had its counterpart in the contemporary political situation. Domestically, a struggle was raging between the great lineages, supporters of royal power and officials from the country without the backing of the powerful aristocracy. Internationally, the Khitan, with whom Koryō had enjoyed a long and stormy but also advantageous relationship, were losing the fight with the Jin. The Song dynasty was bending under the continuing onslaught of the Jin, which had come after protracted wars with the Liao 遼. Koryō, in the meantime, tried to profit as best as it could from the constantly changing international situation. The long relationship with the Liao had been most profitable for Koryō – especially with regard to Buddhist knowledge and books – and there was understandable aversion to recognize the suzerainty of the Jin, Koryō's erstwhile vassals.<sup>72</sup> A plea in 1110 by yet another sibling of Kim Pushik, Kim Pu'ui 金富儀 (1079-1136) to recognize the Jin Son of Heaven, initially fell on deaf ears.<sup>73</sup> Yejong, however, was to be the last king invested by the Liao emperor; his son Injong would receive his investment from the Jin emperor.<sup>74</sup> Koryō's relations with the Song meanwhile were intense, but not officially ratified and would stay so until the demise of the Song.

Koryō's attitude is perhaps best exemplified by the proclamation which was issued by Yejong in the eighth month of 1116, just after envoys Wang Chaji and Mun Kongmi had returned with *taesōngak* and slightly before its first ceremonial performance in *chongmyō*:

<sup>67</sup> See for example *KS* 12:23a. Also see chapter five.

<sup>68</sup> Kim Ch'ōrung, “Koryō kukka chesa-ūi ch'eje-wa kŭ t'ŭkch'ing”, pp. 135-160.

<sup>69</sup> Subjects treated included orthodox Confucian topics, numerology and astrology and Daoist texts. See for instance *KS* 96:9b; *Yun Ōni myojimyōng* in *KMC* 115: 89, 97, 100. For a discussion of the royal lecture and its lecturers, see chapter two.

<sup>70</sup> *KS* 121: 9b; *KS* 12:23a.

<sup>71</sup> *KS* 96: 9b. Yejong liked this text so much that he ordered it to be carved in stone, which was a rare honour.

<sup>72</sup> An Pyōngu 안병우, “Koryō-wa Song-ūi sangho insik-kwa kyosōp: 11segi huban-12segi chōnban 고려와 송의 상호 인식과 교섭: 11세기 후반-12세기 전반,” in *Yōksa-wa hyōnsil* 역사와 현실 43 (2002): pp. 78-110; Kim Yōngmi 김영미, “11segi huban-12segi ch'o Koryō-Yo oegyo kwangye-wa pulgyōng kyoryu 11세기 후반-12세기 초 고려·요 외교관계와 불경교류,” in *Yōksa-wa hyōnsil* 43 (2002): pp. 47-77.

<sup>73</sup> *KS* 97:3a-b; *KSC* 8:20a-b. According to Kim Pu'ui, Koryō would stand nothing to lose and much to gain. Moreover, even Chinese dynasties had recognized barbarian ones when that was thought expedient.

<sup>74</sup> *KS* 17:7a-b.

[Proper administration] should not do away with or incline too much to either one side of diplomacy or warfare. Lately, however, the brigands of our vassal territories are becoming increasingly restless. I deem it to be [an] urgent [task] for our civil and military officials to mend their suits of armour and drill their troops. I remember with longing how emperor Shun used to propagate civilized virtue and have both the dances of the military and of the civilians danced at both of these two branches. He thus appeased the Yumo barbarians in no more than seventy days. Now that the Song emperor has specially bestowed the gift of *taesöngak* upon us, the dances of the civilian and military branches should first be performed at our ancestral shrines and then also at banquets and during memorial services.<sup>75</sup>

The entry concludes with mentioning that Yejong inspected a performance of *taesöngak* two months later. Some days later he performed in person the memorial services at the ancestral shrines at which time *taesöngak* was jointly performed with *hyangak*. Yejong's proclamation displays some peculiarities of Koryö's *Weltanschauung*. Format, references and even the stated purpose of the text obey Confucian guidelines, but a closer and contextual reading reveals more. The proclamation first of all uncovers the fact that the role of ritual and of ritual music was "real", that is to say, it was thought to exercise influence upon the lives of men. Ideology is often underestimated or explained away as a mere cloak for the real facts of history, but this is certainly not appropriate. Beliefs, such as the belief in the efficacy of music, make differences, as they demonstrably did in Koryö. Secondly, Yejong's decree intimates the flexibility in Koryö's politics and administration, which did "not do away with or incline too much to either one side of diplomacy or warfare". This crucial flexibility is well attested to in Koryö's diplomatic history and is mirrored in its ideological flexibility.<sup>76</sup> The embrace of *taesöngak* at first sight seems to be sinocentric and Confucian, but, as explained above, it must be seen against the background of strengthening royal power and protecting Koryö's international interests. The reigns of Yejong and Injong were extremely dynamic, both politically and ideologically and both abroad and domestically. The example of *taesöngak* reveals how deceptive it can be to try and 'freeze' this dynamic, changing and still remarkably stable situation (or situations) at one moment and take that moment to be representative for the period as a whole. *Taesöngak* is Confucian ritual music; there can be little debate about that. The way it was used in Koryö, however, had less to do with this characteristic than with the ways it could profitably be used by Yejong, who had requested the introduction of this new music. The introduction of *taesöngak* meant that from that period on Koryö's official music consisted of three different genres: *hyangak*, *tangak* and *taesöng a'ak*. If it is realized that all three genres first and foremost catered to the royal family, the significance of the introduction of *taesöngak* becomes clearer.

Unlike the Chosön period, in Koryö, the distinction between *hyangak* and *tangak* and later *taesöngak* was always made; in other words, it was very well known what was indigenous

<sup>75</sup> KS 70: 13b-14a.

<sup>76</sup> No Myönggho, "Koryö shidae-üi tawönjök ch'önha'gwan-gwa haedong ch'önja", pp. 3-40; Breuker, "Koryö as an independent realm".

and what was not. Nonetheless, when rituals were performed, these distinctions, which could add up to becoming contradictions, were often tolerated: essential Confucian rituals were accompanied by indigenous music, while rituals that were thought to be of immediate state importance were accompanied by foreign ritual music. Often, both kinds of music were performed at the same ritual. This is not to say that there was no opposition from within Koryŏ society to this phenomenon. There certainly was, but this goes to show that ritual or ritual music was as much a site of contention as politics was, because ritual, or the ideas it expressed, was thought to matter. The introduction of *taesŏngak* goes far beyond being a mere means of political expediency – or of musical love.

The mixed performance of ritual music at the Koryŏ ancestral shrines, a sacred space rivalled by few other locations, reveals the flexibility of Confucian and non-Confucian ritual and, more importantly, shows the co-existence of different ideological elements in the same space. The different beats or the divergent rhythms of Chinese and Koryŏ ritual music did not prohibit their virtually simultaneous performance in the same sacred space, despite occasional clashes. Boundaries between different ideological elements are not always as clearly delineated as in music and even in the case of *byangak* and *tangak* they tended to blur. Ideology functions in a dynamical discourse where boundaries overlap, intersect and are never absolute.

Ideologies function as the means by which man meets his world. Neutral in origin, the world is digested, as it were, through ideology that makes it comprehensible and manageable. Every ideology obviously has its parameters outside of which it ceases to function and comes in need to be replaced, but human creativity and ingenuity have always guaranteed that ideology is stretched to the limit when circumstances demand it. The uses of *taesŏngak*, *byangak* and *tangak* nicely illustrate this. All three kinds of music had different histories, different ideas and different ways of performing. By putting them in the same environment, they influenced each other; remember for instance Cho Chun's comments or the attempts at rediscovering the original *taesŏngak* during Sejong's reign. But at the same time they stayed different, contrastive and occasionally hostile to each other. The unity that was formed at simultaneous performances was temporary and subject to change at every moment. The example of ritual music is merely one in a virtually inexhaustible list of similar instances in which the fundamental pluralist Koryŏ approach to the world is found. Simultaneously, it also shows how Koryŏ introduced and adapted Sinitic cultural achievements and how these functioned within a Koryŏ context. Koryŏ's pluralist approach to the world cannot be seen as separate from its attitude towards the Song (and for that matter the Liao and Jin).



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE *TEN INJUNCTIONS*

The *Ten injunctions* (*bunyo shipcho* 訓要十條) left by T'aejo are considered his political and administrative will. According to the *Koryŏsa*, T'aejo, sensing his death was imminent, summoned his trusted comrade-in-arms Pak Surhŭi 朴述熙/希 (?-945) and gave him ten instructions for his successors. They came to play an important role as a kind of ideological constitution all through the Koryŏ dynasty; it outlined different approaches to problems and issues Koryŏ was habitually confronted with. I have shown elsewhere that the injunctions are a forgery of a later period.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, I shall limit the discussion of the injunctions to the conclusions which may be drawn from the injunctions' peculiar composition, provenance and contents as well as from the way later generations referred back to the injunctions.

Instead of T'aejo's instructions to his successors, the injunctions are Hyŏnjong's 顯宗 vision for the future of the Koryŏ dynasty. The imprint of the eleventh century is left clearly in each and every one of the injunctions. Despite the admirable skills of the forgers in forging a document that had to pass muster as T'aejo's last instructions and succeeded in doing so for close to a thousand years, the pattern and texture of the eleventh century are clearly visible. The retrojection of eleventh century worries, hopes, fears and preoccupations on the distant past is revealing about many aspects of Koryŏ ideology. As such, the *Ten injunctions* as a forgery are historically speaking perhaps even more important than they would have been had they been authentic.

The injunctions were written during the reign of Hyŏnjong and subsequently rediscovered among the estate of Ch'oe Hang 崔沆 (?-1026). Hyŏnjong's most trusted, loyal and powerful ministers were involved in the forgery of T'aejo's political will and, in all probability, Hyŏnjong knew about and perhaps even instigated the forgeries. The covert

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed account of how the question of Hyŏnjong's legitimacy is connected to the forging of the *Ten injunctions*, see Breuker, *Forging the truth: Creative deception and national identity in medieval Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Centre for Korean Studies Monograph Series, forthcoming). Hyŏnjong's predecessor was Mokchong, a weak ruler who was too young and inexperienced to free himself from his mother, queen-dowager Hŏnae posthumously known as queen Ch'ŏnch'u 千秋太后 and her more or less secret lover Kim Ch'iyang 金致陽 (?-1009). While Kim Ch'iyang estranged the mainstream Buddhist community by his behaviour in general and by sponsoring the establishment of temples with strong Daoist leanings, the heir to childless Mokchong, Wang Sun, prince of Taeryang-wŏn palace 大良院君 (the later King Hyŏnjong), was banished to a Buddhist monastery. The illicit liaison between queen Hŏnae and Kim Ch'iyang had produced a son who was intended to take the place of Wang Sun. Several attempts at his life were made by assassins sent by this aunt, queen Hŏnae, but these all failed due to the protection the young prince received at the monasteries he resided in. In 1009 Kang Cho 康兆 revolted, advanced on the capital, killed Kim Ch'iyang and banished queen Hŏnae. He then deposed Mokchong and put Hyŏnjong on the throne. The standard study for Kim Ch'iyang's aborted rebellion is still Kim Tangt'aek 金唐澤, "Koryŏ Mokchong 12nyŏn-ŭi chŏngbyŏn-e taehan il koch'al 高麗穆宗 12年の政變에 대한 一考察," in *Han'guk hakpo* 韓國學報 18 (1980): pp. 82-97.

cooperation of these ministers, among whom Ch'oe Chean 崔齊顏 (?-1046) and Hwang Churyang 黃周亮 (d.u., fl. eleventh century) were the principal forgers and Kim Shimŏn 金審言 (?-1018) and Ch'oe Hang remained in the background, alerts us to the exceptional nature of this particular forgery. The injunctions were not forged to change the perception of Koryŏ history, although they did, and they were also not forged to support spurious ownership claims to for instance land or territory. They were forged to invest Hyŏnjong's ideas with the authority of T'aejo.

The *Ten injunctions* were meant as a practical guide for governing Koryŏ over a longer period of time. Different from the normal royal last will in which urgent matters such as place and method of burial and the choice of the successor were laid down, the *Ten injunctions* articulate a vision concerning Koryŏ's future. This vision was shaped by Hyŏnjong's experiences as Koryŏ's eighth ruler; a ruler who had witnessed the murder of his predecessor, a traumatic flight south during the destructive Liao invasions that reduced Kaegyŏng to ashes, a military coup d'état, the resounding victory on the Liao in 1018, and who ruled Koryŏ for twenty-two years, during which time the country recovered from the wars with the Liao and internal unrest until it was a stable and prosperous state when he died in 1031.

There were several reasons why it was impossible for Hyŏnjong to present this generation-transcending vision using his own authority as ruler of Koryŏ and grandson of T'aejo. Hyŏnjong had been put on the throne by a military coup d'état in which the previous ruler Mokchong 穆宗 and his queen had been killed; he was the child of an illegitimate liaison between Wang Uk 王郁, one of T'aejo's sons, and queen-dowager Hon'ae 獻哀, widow of Koryŏ's fifth ruler Kyŏngjong 景宗; Hyŏnjong's problematic legitimacy also influenced his relations with the Liao, inviting a destructive invasion in 1010. Despite the fact that Hyŏnjong had developed into a very capable monarch, who was furthermore assisted by a formidable group of gifted ministers, his authority was not sufficient to command obedience from the grave. T'aejo's authority had proven to be sufficient for this task. The founder of the dynasty was customarily invoked when his successors issued important edicts and following Ch'oe Sŭngno's 崔承老 appraisal T'aejo was portrayed as the ideal ruler.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the ancestor worship cult around his person was an important part of Koryŏ life; T'aejo was both worshipped as the founder of the dynasty, as a close approximation of a Confucian sage-ruler and as a deified Koryŏ ruler.<sup>3</sup> T'aejo's authority was the highest authority a Koryŏ ruler could appeal to.

What, then, was the message that Hyŏnjong wanted the *Ten injunctions* to convey to later generations? In order to ascertain this, a closer look at the contents of the injunctions is needed. I shall not lay the injunctions along a truth-falsehood axis and consider the minutiae of each injunction which tell of its eleventh-century instead of tenth-century provenance. The injunctions as a whole are a forgery. This does, however, in no way detract from their value as a historical document. It is rather the opposite, since the injunctions' composition during the reign of Hyŏnjong reveals much about eleventh-century Koryŏ ideology and identity. The

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<sup>2</sup> See chapter six.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter eight.

pattern and texture of Hyönjong's reign have been imprinted on the injunctions, making them an extension and exaggeration of expressions that were deeply cherished and held to be genuine. I shall argue that the injunctions must be understood precisely as the ideological mishmash that they are. That is to say, the injunctions are a prime example of Koryŏ's pluralist Weltanschauung. Far from being either Buddhist, Confucian, geomantic or an example of Realpolitik, the injunctions codified a way of looking at the world that was on the one hand characteristically 'Koryŏan' and that on the other hand allowed contradiction and inconsistency to co-exist.

## NUMBER ONE

A consideration of the contents of each injunction, its do's and don'ts and its ideological and historical background, is in order. The first injunction reads as follows:

First injunction: The great enterprise of our state inevitably depends on the protective power of the Buddhas. I have therefore built temples and monasteries for both the Meditational and Doctrinal Schools, despatched abbots to the temples of both Schools to burn incense and practice the way, and made each manage their respective estates properly. If, in the future, villainous courtiers attain power and get swayed by the entreaties of monks, the temples of the various schools will fight among themselves in order to seize one another. This must be prevented at all costs.<sup>4</sup>

The first injunction clearly states the role of Buddhism in Koryŏ: it is crucial to the existence of the dynasty. Buddhism had been Koryŏ's ideological mainstay since its establishment. T'aejo had built temples and monasteries for the meditation and doctrinal schools, establishing close ties with the leading monks of his days.<sup>5</sup> The power of the Buddhas the first injunction refers to had multiple meanings according to one recent analysis. On the one hand it referred to the king "as a monarch in the Chinese tradition who uses Buddhism as an instrument to pacify his realm." On the other hand, "the king also relied on more explicit Buddhist symbols to consolidate and legitimise his power", targeting a much larger segment of

<sup>4</sup> KS 2: 15a. This is the original text: 其一曰, 我國家大業, 必資諸佛護衛之力, 故創禪教寺院, 差遣住持焚修, 使各治其業, 後世, 茲臣執政, 徇僧請謁, 各業寺社, 爭相換奪, 切宜禁之. In making the above translation, I have gratefully relied on the translation in Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, pp. 263-264 as a touchstone. The same is true for the translations of the other nine injunctions.

<sup>5</sup> Sem Vermeersch, "Representation of the ruler in Buddhist inscriptions of early Koryŏ," in *Korean Studies* 26: 2 (2002): pp. 216-250; Han Kimun 韓基汶, "Koryŏ T'aejo-üi pulgyo chŏngch'aek: ch'anggŏn sawŏn-ül chungshim-üro 高麗太祖의 佛教政策; 創建寺院을 중심으로," in *Taegu sabak* 22 (1983): pp. 37-80; Sŏ Chingyo 徐珍教, "Koryŏ T'aejo-üi Sönsüng p'osöp-kwa chuji p'agyŏn 高麗太祖의 禪僧包攝과 主持派遣," in *Koryŏ T'aejo-üi kukka unyŏng* 高麗太祖의 國家經營 (Seoul: Söuldae ch'ulp'anbu 서울대출판부, 1996), edited by Hong Sünggi 洪承基, pp. 365-392. One study of the injunctions presents an extremely reductionist view by claiming that the injunctions were completely Confucian, which flies in the face of the many sources that testify to T'aejo's deep commitment to Buddhism: see Hŏ Chunggwŏn 許重權, "Koryŏ ch'ogi yugyojök chŏngch'i sasang-üi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng-e kwanhan il koch'al 高麗初期 儒教의 政治의 形成過程에 관한 一考察," in *Sabakchi* 사학지 26 (1993): pp. 127-165.

the population.<sup>6</sup> His successors had followed him in this respect. Even during the reign of Sōngjong, who privately was a Buddhist but whose policies did not reflect this, Buddhism continued to function as an important legitimating force and as Koryō's main religion. Ideologically, religiously and practically, then, the first injunction established the primacy of Buddhism in Koryō. The development of Buddhism in Koryō supports the first injunction: until the end of the dynasty, Buddhism was undoubtedly Koryō's most important religion, practiced by both ruler and ruled and accompanied by the unavoidable schisms and internal division major religions have to deal with and against which the second part of the injunction warned.

With reference to Hyōnjong's reign, the first injunction speaks of his favoured treatment of Buddhism and especially that of the Consciousness-only school.<sup>7</sup> During his reign, the two festivals of P'algwan and Yōndŭng were revived, he had the first Koryō Tripitaka carved and established the Hyōnhwa-sa temple 玄化寺. Hyōnjong was also well aware of the dangers that lurked in the favourable treatment he afforded Buddhism: consequently, he took care to counter excesses by prohibiting the arbitrary construction of temples and the transformation of private dwellings into Buddhist temples. The first injunction is a realistic appraisal of the role of Buddhism in Koryō; it was of vital importance to the ruler, the state and the lay believers, but as such susceptible to abuse and foul play.

Interestingly, this injunction has also been interpreted as being essentially Confucian. This particular interpretation disregards the first part of the injunctions and focuses exclusively on the second part, construing it as a warning against the dangers of Buddhism.<sup>8</sup> Apart from the wealth of evidence that connects T'aejo to the Buddhist community of his days, the view is representative of a widely held conviction in historiography on Koryō, that in order to make sense the injunctions must have one common ideological denominator. In the example cited, this common denominator is thought to be Confucianism, but analyses which proclaim the injunctions to be essentially Buddhist or nativist have also been made. I shall return to this point later.

## NUMBER TWO

The second injunction also deals with Buddhism. It reads as follows:

Second injunction: As for the temples and monasteries, Tosōn 道誥 established them all according to his divination of the mountains and rivers. Tosōn said: 'If temples and monasteries are arbitrarily built outside of the sites I have divined and fixed, this will damage

<sup>6</sup> Sem Vermeersch, *The power of the Buddha: The ideological and institutional role of Buddhism in the Koryō dynasty* (Ph. D. diss., SOAS, 2001), p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> Ch'oe Pyōnghōn 崔柄憲, "Koryō chunggi Hyōnhwa-sa-ŭi ch'anggōn-gwa Pōpsangjong-ŭi yungsōng 高麗中期 玄化寺의 創建과 法相宗의 隆盛", in *Sabak non'chong: Han Ugŭn paksu chōngnyōn kibyōm*, 1981, pp. 239-260.

<sup>8</sup> Hō Chunggwōn, "Koryō ch'ogi yugyojōk chōngch'i sasang-ŭi hyōngsōng kwajōng-e kwanhan il koch'al", pp. 127-165.

and dilute the terrestrial force and the mandated enterprise will not last long.' I fear that future kings, princes, members of the aristocracy, queens and princesses and courtiers may call [existing temples] their private temples or build new temples and monasteries. If this happens, it is a matter of great concern. In the last days of Shilla, people competed to build Buddhist pagodas, which weakened and damaged the terrestrial force and caused its demise. Is this not a sure warning?<sup>9</sup>

The injunction consists of two parts; the first part explicitly confirms the special relationship between Tosŏn's geomancy and Koryŏ, while the second part warns against the dangers of arbitrary temple construction. The Koryŏ dynasty's relationship with Tosŏn dates from the reign of Hyŏnjong.<sup>10</sup> During the reign of Injong, Tosŏn was posthumously awarded an appointment as national preceptor.<sup>11</sup> The concerned edict also mentioned that "Hyŏnjong revered Tosŏn and Sukchong 肅宗 elevated him to the precious status of royal preceptor."<sup>12</sup> An accompanying bureaucratic letter of appointment recorded the invented story of Tosŏn's prophecy with regard to the birth of Wang Kŏn.<sup>13</sup> As he emerges from this inscription Tosŏn is a figure of enormous importance for Koryŏ from the reign of Hyŏnjong on. Other sources confirm the stature of Tosŏn in early to middle Koryŏ: a stele inscription of Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng 崔惟清 (1094-1173) on the occasion of the posthumous bestowal of the title of national preceptor Sŏn'gak 先覺 to Tosŏn from 1150 is the first more or less reliable source on Tosŏn's life.<sup>14</sup> Tosŏn's biography is further elaborated upon in Kim Kwanŭi's *Koryŏ segye* 高麗世系, a genealogy of the Wang lineage included in the *Koryŏsa*. Kim Kwanŭi's genealogy is utterly unreliable as a historical source for the early Koryŏ period, but it is of great significance as a source for twelfth-century Koryŏ.<sup>15</sup> The account in the *Koryŏ segye* of Tosŏn's well-known visit to Kaesŏng and the prophecy he made while being there about Wang Kŏn's birth and his eventual unification of the Three Han was written at a much later date than the late ninth century in which Tosŏn was active. Tosŏn's gradual transformation from a historical person into a figure of myth was reinforced by this account; later sources on Tosŏn are historically speaking completely unreliable, but nonetheless added much to the Tosŏn lore.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>9</sup> KS 2: 15a-b. The original text reads as follows: 其二曰, 諸寺院, 皆道說, 推占山水順逆而開創, 道說云, 吾所占定外, 妄加創造, 則損薄地德, 祚業不永, 朕念後世國王公候后妃朝臣, 各稱願堂, 或增創造, 則大可憂也, 新羅之末, 競造浮屠, 衰損地德, 以底於亡, 可不戒哉.

<sup>10</sup> *Sŏn'gak kuksa Tosŏn-ŭi sbing yŏn'gu* 先覺國師道說의 新研究, ed. Yŏngsam-gun 靈岩郡 편 (Yŏngam: Yŏngam-gun, 1988). Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn, "Tosŏn-ŭi saengae-wa Namal Yŏch'o-ŭi p'ungsu chirisŏl: Sŏnjong-gwa p'ungsu chirisŏr-ŭi kwan'gye-rŭl chungshim-ŭro hayŏ 道說의 生涯와 羅末麗初의 風水地理說-禪宗과 風水地理說의 關係를 중심으로 하여," *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 11 (1975): 101-146; Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn, "Koryŏ kŏn'guk-gwa p'ungsu chirisŏl 高麗建國과 風水地理說," *Han'guksaron* 韓國史論 18 (Kwach'ŏn: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 1988), ed. Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, pp. 227-239; Choi Byŏng-hŏn (Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn), "Tosŏn's geomantic theories and the foundation of the Koryŏ dynasty," *Seoul journal of Korean studies* 2 (1989): pp. 65-92.

<sup>11</sup> *Onngnyong-sa wangsa Tosŏn kabong Sŏn'gak kuksa kyoso* 玉龍寺王師道說加封先覺國師教書 in *Tong munson* 東文選 [hereafter TMS] 27: 9a-9b.

<sup>12</sup> *Onngnyong-sa wangsa Tosŏn kabong Sŏn'gak kuksa kwango* 玉龍寺王師道說加封先覺國師官告 in TMS 27: 9b-10b.

<sup>13</sup> *Onngnyong-sa wangsa Tosŏn kabong Sŏn'gak kuksa kwango* 玉龍寺王師道說加封先覺國師官告 in TMS 27: 9b-10b.

<sup>14</sup> *Paekkyesan Onngnyong-sa chŭngshibi Sŏn'gak kuksa pimyŏng* 白鷄山玉龍寺贈諡先覺國師碑銘 in TMS 117: 16b-22b.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Rogers, "P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok: The foundation legend of the Koryŏ state," *Journal of Korean studies* 4 (1982-1983): pp. 3-72; Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 71.

<sup>16</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 70-71.

Tosön's relationship with the Koryŏ dynasty dates from the eleventh century at the earliest, but the relationship between the local terrain and Buddhist temples goes back to the Shilla period.<sup>17</sup> The prohibition of arbitrary construction of temples dates from the same period.<sup>18</sup> Temples were exempt from paying taxes and large temple complexes often steered courses independent from the capital; the construction of a temple was invariably accompanied by expenses, an increased burdening of the local population and missed revenue due to tax exemptions. It was in the best interests of the state, then, to control and if necessary to curb the construction of temples and monasteries. Warnings against and prohibitions of arbitrary temple construction or the transformation of private dwellings into Buddhist temples can be found all through the Koryŏ period.<sup>19</sup>

During T'aejo's reign there seems to have been little need for such a prohibition, but arbitrary temple construction posed a problem for most of his successors.<sup>20</sup> Kwangjong, for instance, squandered the state's resources on the construction of temples in an attempt to rid himself of the bad karma accumulated during his horrendous purges of the aristocracy.<sup>21</sup> In 1002 Mokchong issued an edict in which the ruler took the responsibility for having wasted the resources of the people to construct temples, monasteries and pavilions.<sup>22</sup> The dangers of building too many temples and other edifices also warned against in *On current affairs* by Ch'oe Sŭngno, who lamented the disastrous effects temple construction had on the people.<sup>23</sup>

References to the second injunction mainly took the form of protests lodged against the construction of temples and monasteries: the arguments put forward to stop or limit temple construction were of a twofold nature. The first argument relied on Tosön's warning that rampant temple building might damage the earth; the second argument cited the cost of the people's energy and time construction work entailed. During the reign of Munjong, Ch'oe Yusŏn 崔惟善 objected to the proposed building of the Hŭngwang-sa temple 興王寺 referring to the second injunction in this manner:

<sup>17</sup> When Shilla King Wŏnsŏng 元聖王 died in 798, his burial spot at the Sungbok-sa temple 崇福寺 Temple was chosen with much care. The stele inscription for this temple by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn explicitly links the presence of a Buddhist temple at the proper site with the longevity of the dynasty. Another stele by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn confirms the relationship between the presence of Buddhist artefacts and the protection of the territory. See Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 74. The original stele text can be found in Yi Chigwan, *YKP* 1: 233.

<sup>18</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 75. A Chosŏn scholar interpreted the second injunction as a license to build temples, because it did not explicitly forbid it, but merely restricted temple-building. See Ch'oe Pu 崔溥, *Tongguk t'onggamnon Yŏjo bun'yo* 東國通鑑論 麗祖訓要 in *Kŭnmam sŏnsaengjip* 錦南先生集 16: 396a.

<sup>19</sup> Sŏngjong also proscribed private residence from being turned into temples. Hyŏnjong had to reissue the same prohibition, presumably because Sŏngjong's edict had often been transgressed. Even a senior statesman and scholar such as Ch'oe Hang had violated Sŏngjong's prohibition by turning his private residence into a Buddhist temple. See *KS* 3: 10a.

<sup>20</sup> Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

<sup>21</sup> For a summary of Kwangjong's temple building, see Kamata Shigeo, "Buddhism during Koryŏ," in *Buddhism in Koryŏ: A royal religion*, eds. Lewis R. Lancaster, Kikun Suh, and Chai-shin Yu (Berkeley: Center for Korean Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1996), pp. 40-41. Again, Hŏ Chunggwŏn presents a reductionist view of the second injunction: according to him, it was merely meant to warn against the dangers of the veneration of the Buddha. See Hŏ Chunggwŏn, "Koryŏ ch'ogi yugyojŏk chŏngch'i sasang-ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng", pp. 137-138.

<sup>22</sup> *KS* 3: 33a-34b.

<sup>23</sup> *KS* 93: 15b-19b. A translation can be found in Peter Lee, *Sources*, pp. 289-292.

Our T'aejo the Divine and Sacred King said in his injunctions: "After examining the streams and mountains of our country according to their advantageousness or disadvantageousness, national preceptor Tosŏn concluded that every site suitable for being built upon had already been built upon and that future rulers, vassals, nobles, queens and ministers should not be allowed to compete without gain for the establishment of private temples, because this would sap and damage the energy of the earth. Now that Your Majesty has inherited the accumulated achievements of your forebears, you should make the tranquillity of the country last by earnestly controlling spending, by loving people, protecting our prosperity and handing it down to your successors. How then can you exhaust the possessions of the people, squander their energy, spend funds on something that is not urgent, and endanger the basis of the country?"<sup>24</sup>

Munjong was apparently pleased with the honest comments of his minister, but he decided nonetheless to ignore them and continue the construction of the Hŭngwang-sa.

The second injunction emphasized the special relationship the Koryŏ state, the ruling family and the land were thought to have. It also connected the geomantic ideas of Tosŏn with Buddhism and the daily reality of practical engagement: building temples at inauspicious sites harmed the country both geomantically and economically, as did a Buddhist community that was not controlled to some degree by the state. This injunction is particularly valuable with regard to the view it offers of Koryŏ ideology and Koryŏ reality; it was referred to in order to settle practical matters, but within a distinct ideological framework that combined geomantic concepts with Buddhism.

### NUMBER THREE

The third injunction deals with the essential issue of succession to the throne.

Third injunction: Handing over the state to the eldest son is called correct ritual practice, yet when emperor Yao 堯 let Shun 舜 succeed him, because [his own son] Dan Zhu 丹朱 was not worthy to succeed his father, this truly was public-spirited. Therefore, if the eldest son is not worthy to succeed his father, let the second eldest succeed to the throne. If the second eldest, too, is unworthy of the throne, let the brother who has the most officials supporting him succeed to the royal lineage.<sup>25</sup>

This injunction is a rationalization of patrilineal succession. Direct patrilineal succession pre-empted succession struggles and, as an added bonus, was in agreement with

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<sup>24</sup> *KS* 95: 6b-7a.

<sup>25</sup> *KS* 2: 15b. This is the original injunction: 其三曰，傳國以嫡，雖曰常禮，然丹朱不肖，堯禪於舜，實爲公心，若元子不肖，與其次子，又不肖，與其兄弟之衆，所推戴者，俾承大統。The *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* 高麗史節要 has a slightly different second part of this injunction. The last three lines are as follows: 與其兄弟之中，群下推戴者，俾承大統。Whereas the meaning of the second part of the *KS* version is open to several interpretations, the second part of the *KSC* version is not. Here, I have chosen to translate the second part of the *KSC* version, since this interpretation is also permissible in the *KS* version.

Chinese models. Instead of violent struggles between brothers who had become rivals, a phenomenon that also plagued the neighbouring Liao court, this way of establishing the ruler's successor was clear and, on paper at least, unambiguous. As such, patrilineal succession by the eldest son was the ideal throughout much of the Koryŏ dynasty.<sup>26</sup> From a ritual perspective too, patrilineal descent was to be preferred: it would end the arduous debates about the proper arrangement of the ancestral tablets in the royal ancestral shrines or *chongmyo* 宗廟.<sup>27</sup> The succession of the ruler during the first century of the Koryŏ dynasty did not follow the instructions laid down in the third injunction. T'aejo was succeeded by his son Hyejong 惠宗, but Hyejong was succeeded by his brother Chŏngjong 定宗, who was succeeded by his brother Kwangjong 光宗. Kwangjong was succeeded by his son Kyŏngjong 景宗; Kyŏngjong by his brother Sŏngjong 成宗; Sŏngjong by his nephew and Kyŏngjong's son Mokchong 穆宗. Mokchong, finally, was succeeded by his cousin twice removed Hyŏnjong, who was a grandson of T'aejo, although his father had never been king. Mokchong was a great-grandson of T'aejo, but by way of two other kings, his grandfather Kwangjong and his father Kyŏngjong). Hyŏnjong was succeeded by his eldest son Tŏkchong; Tŏkchong by his brother Chŏngjong and Chŏngjong by his brother Munjong. Direct patrilineal succession did not become the norm in Koryŏ until Sukchong ascended the throne in 1095. Sukchong was succeeded by his son Yejong; Yejong by his son Injong and Injong by his son Ŭijong.

The third injunction was directly inspired by Hyŏnjong's succession to the throne. In stressing the importance of patrilineal succession (Hyŏnjong was the grandson of T'aejo, his son's son) and the necessity of enthroning someone with the proper qualifications, the third injunction effectively defended Hyŏnjong's legitimacy vis-à-vis the claim that he came to occupy the throne through a coup, his illegitimate birth and the fact that the Liao did not recognize him. Despite the very particular historical origin of the third injunction, its contents were cast in more universal terms: the third injunction was certainly understood to be of universal value to Hyŏnjong's successors, which is confirmed by what is known of successions to the throne in Koryŏ.

Succession to the throne is an important event in dynasties and any disruptions of an orderly and legitimate succession may have calamitous results. Extant royal wills clearly confirm this: Munjong expressed his concerns about the succession on his deathbed by saying that "even for one day, the imperial throne must not be unoccupied".<sup>28</sup> Kangjong worried that "the heavenly throne must not be left unoccupied for even one moment", a comment echoed by Kjong, warning that "the throne cannot be empty for long".<sup>29</sup> Consequently, the first thing royal wills in Koryŏ arranged for was the naming of the successor.<sup>30</sup> Speedy succession to the throne, often on the same day, served the same purpose of keeping political unrest and

<sup>26</sup> The succession by the eldest son of successively Sukchong, Yejong 睿宗 and Injong went relatively smoothly. Only in the case of Injong's succession by Ŭijong 毅宗 was there debate about his suitability to rule.

<sup>27</sup> Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian transformation of Korea: A study of society and ideology* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1992).

<sup>28</sup> *KS* 9: 36b.

<sup>29</sup> *KS* 21: 31a; *KS* 24: 44b.

<sup>30</sup> Hong Kip'yo 홍기표, "Koryŏ shidae 'yujo' punsŏk 高麗時代 '遺詔' 分析," in *Sarim* 史林 17 (2002): pp. 3-51, esp. p. 22.



instability at bay.<sup>31</sup>

The selection of the heir apparent was in large part determined by the prospect's descent, but the influence of his personal qualities was not negligible. The third injunction clearly makes the proviso that the person "the people consider the best qualified for the throne" should occupy that throne. This aspect of the third injunction is reflected in extant royal wills; and given the prominent introduction of the theme in the third injunction by the reference to emperor Yao, it is perhaps more important than is often surmised. Qualifications mattered for a future ruler, the most important of which was the possession of "virtue" in the Confucian sense of the concept.<sup>32</sup>

Summarizing, the third injunction provided a rationalization of Koryŏ succession to the throne. It was aimed at a peaceful and undisputed transfer of power. As such, it shares many resemblances to the testaments of Koryŏ rulers which also specified how the transfer of power should be effected and who was to be the next ruler of the country. The emphasis in the injunction is on Confucian statecraft; the reference to the mythical emperor Yao suggests as much, as do the contents of the injunction, preferring the "eldest legitimate royal issue" to succeed to the throne instead of a younger brother of the ruler. The reference to Yao also makes explicit the meritocratic stipulation that the person "best qualified for the throne" should become ruler. This again corresponds to actual practice in Koryŏ, which demanded that the heir apparent possess "virtue", the most desirable quality in a ruler.

#### NUMBER FOUR

The fourth injunction tries to position Koryŏ vis-à-vis its neighbours, by distinguishing Koryŏ from China and from the Khitan Liao.

Fourth injunction: Although our eastern country has long cherished the Tang traditions and followed all of its institutions with regard to writing, material culture, music and ritual, where geographical location is different and the soil also differs, the character of the people does as well. There is no reason to strain ourselves unreasonably to be the same. The Khitan are a state of birds and wild animals. Their customs are not like ours, their language is also different. We should take great care not to model our dress and ceremonies on theirs.<sup>33</sup>

This injunction is often associated with the notorious incident of the camels. When a Khitan mission came to seek Koryŏ's submission in 942, T'aejo banished the thirty envoys to an island and tied the fifty camels they had brought as a gift under the Manbu Bridge 萬夫橋,

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<sup>31</sup> Hong Kip'yo has calculated that for the whole of the Koryŏ dynasty, succession on the same day by the designated heir apparent occurred twenty-three times. Only four times, the succession ceremony was postponed until the following day.

<sup>32</sup> Hong Kip'yo, "Koryŏ shidae 'yujo' punsŏk", p. 24.

<sup>33</sup> *KS* 2: 15b. This is the original text: 其四曰，惟我東方，舊慕唐風，文物禮樂，悉遵其制，殊方異土，人性各異，不必苟同，契丹，是禽獸之國，風俗不同，言語亦異，衣冠制度，慎勿效焉。

where they starved to death.<sup>34</sup> As I have shown elsewhere, this injunction was not written by T'aejo, but by his grandson Hyōnjong.<sup>35</sup> The circumstances that gave rise to the composition of this injunction are worth looking into, because they provide valuable insight into the way Koryō dealt with its neighbours. This injunction was written in response to the Khitan invasions, the continuous Liao pressure before and after the invasions, Hyōnjong's problematic legitimacy vis-à-vis the Liao and the realization that Song China was no reliable ally.<sup>36</sup> As a result, the fourth injunction shows the formation of a distinct sense of being 'Koryōan', different from both Liao and Song and Han Chinese. The same sense of a distinct Koryō identity can be detected in the biographies of military commanders who distinguished themselves in the wars with the Liao. It is to these commanders and to the wars with the Liao on which attention must now be focused.

From the beginning of the dynasty, relations between Koryō and the Liao proved somewhat troublesome. Nonetheless, the virulent anti-Khitanism that is often ascribed to T'aejo rests on flimsy evidence at best.<sup>37</sup> It should not be forgotten that Koryō and Liao only

<sup>34</sup> *KS*: 2: 14a-b. For a discussion of the different reasons ascribed to this action by T'aejo, see Breuker, *Forging the truth*. According to No Myōngho 盧明鎬, T'aejo wanted to demonstrate to Parhae refugees and Jurchen within Koryō's borders that he would not be bullied by the Liao and that they would be safe. This interpretation seems to be correct. See No Myōngho, "Koryō chibaech'ūng-ūi Parhae yumin-e taehan inshik-kwa chōngch'aek 高麗 支配層의 渤海遺民에 대한 認識과 政策," in *Sanun sabak* 汕耘史學 8 (1998): pp. 147-187.

<sup>35</sup> Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

<sup>36</sup> Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>37</sup> The ascription of hate for the Khitan to T'aejo is usually the stepping stone for arguments that stress the antagonistic relationship between Koryō and its northern neighbours. For a discussion of the different arguments associated with this idea, see Breuker, *Forging the truth*. Also see chapter nine. The following studies are representative of this view, with differing degrees of sophistication: Kim Sanggi, "Tan'gu-gwa-ūi hangjaeng 단구과의 항쟁," in *Kuksasang-ūi chemunje* 국사상의 제문제 (Seoul: Kuksa p'yōnch'an wiwōnhoe, 1959), vol. 2, pp. 1-175; Michael C. Rogers, "National consciousness in medieval Korea: The impact of Liao and Chin on Koryō," in *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its neighbors, 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), edited by Morris Rossabi, pp. 151-172; Kang Taeryang (later known as Kang Chinch'ol 姜晉哲), "Koryō ch'ogi-ūi tae-Kōran kwan'gye 高麗初期의 對契丹關係," in *Sabae* 史海 1 (1948); Yi Yongbōm 李龍範, "10-12segi-ūi kukche chōngse 10-12世紀의 國際情勢," *Han'guksa* 韓國史 4 (Seoul: Kuksa pyōnch'an wiwōnhoe, 1981); Sō Sōngho 서성호, "Koryō T'aejodae tae-Kōran chōngch'aeg-ūi ch'u'i-wa sōngkyōk 고려 태조대 대거란정책의 추의와 성격," *Yōksa-wa hyōnsil* 34 (1999): pp. 16-49; Han Kyuch'ol, "Hu Samguk shidae Koryō-wa Kōran kwan'gye 後三國時代 高麗와 契丹의 關係," *Pusan sach'ong* 富山史叢 1 (1985): pp. 1-46; Kim Chaeman 金在滿, "Kōran, Koryō kukkyo chōnsa 契丹, 高麗國交前史," *Inmun sabak* 人文科學 15 (1986): pp. 99-136; Kim Chaeman, *Kōran, Koryō kwan'gyesa yōn'gu* 契丹, 高麗國關係史研究 (Seoul: Kukhak charyowōn 國學者料院, 1998); Yi Chōngshin 李貞信, "T'aejo-ūi tae-Kōran chōngch'aek-kwa Koryō kōn'guk inyōm-ūi hyōngsōng 태조의 대거란 정책과 고려 건국이념의 형성," in Yi Chōngshin, *Koryōshidae-ūi chōngch'i pyōndong-gwa taeye chōngch'aek* 고려시대의 정치변동과 대외정책 (Seoul: Kyōngin munhwasa 景仁文化社, 2003), pp. 9-50; Yi Chōngshin, "Koryō T'aejo-ūi kōn'guk inyōm-ūi hyōngsōng-gwa kungnae-oe chōngse 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내외 정세," *Han'guksa yōn'gu* 118 (2002): pp. 35-74. Recently, there have been studies that have attempted to leave this dichotomous framework of Koryō vs. the northern states: An Pyōngu 安병우, "Koryō-wa Song-ūi sangho inshik-kwa kyosōp: 11segi huban-12segi chōnban 고려와 송의 상호 인식과 교섭: 11세기 후반-12세기 전반," in *Yōksa-wa hyōnsil* 역사와 현실 43 (2002): pp. 78-110; Kim Yōngmi 김영미, "11segi huban-12segi ch'o Koryō-Yo oegyo kwangye-wa pulgyōng kyoryu" 11세기 후반-12세기 초 고려-요 외교관계와 불경교류, in *Yōksa-wa hyōnsil* 43 (2002): pp. 47-77; Okamura Shūji 奥村周司, "Kōrai no gaikō shisei to kokka'ishiki 高麗の外交姿勢と國家意識," in *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歴史學研究 (Tokyo: Chūseishibu kai 中世史部會, 1982), special edition, pp. 67-77; Okamura Shūji, "Shisetsu geisetsurei yori mita Kōrai no gaikō shisei: jūichi, jūni seki ni okeru tai-Chū kankei no ichimen 使節迎接禮より見た高麗の外交姿勢: 十一, 十二世紀における對中關係

came to share borders towards the end of the tenth century.<sup>38</sup> During the first half of the tenth century relations between the Liao and Koryŏ were at first cordial though distant, but due to the constant influx of Parhae émigrés into Koryŏ (amounting to between 5 to 10 % of Koryŏ's total population), T'aejo found it prudent to signal his allegiance to his new subjects by cutting of relations with the Liao, who had after all conquered Parhae in 926.<sup>39</sup> When the Liao threat at Koryŏ's borders had become more intense towards the end of the tenth century during the reign of Sŏngjong, the memories of T'aejo's refusal to deal with Khitan envoys was remembered and explicitly praised in Ch'oe Sŭngno's memorials on policy.<sup>40</sup> Even after Sŏngjong's recognition of the Liao Son of Heaven relations between Koryŏ and Liao remained strained; frequent border incursions back and forth kept the frontier situation tense. Both sides built fortifications at places the other side found threatening; both sides refused to give in.<sup>41</sup> The increasing pressure on its frontiers prompted Koryŏ to complain to the Song court in 999 that "the people in Koryŏ took Chinese culture as their example" and that they were "still being pressured by the Khitan".<sup>42</sup>

At the same time, it is clear that bristling trade took place between Koryŏ and the Liao. As discussed in chapter four, this took also place through embassies, but mainly through the frontier market established at the border in Poju 保州 (Ŭiju 義州) between 1008 and 1010.<sup>43</sup> Through trade and travel, Liao products, Liao émigrés (particularly wood workers) and Liao customs were spread in Koryŏ.<sup>44</sup> There were enough causes for Koryŏ, then, to be worried about the increasing Liao influence, not merely militarily, but also commercially and culturally.

The expansion of the Liao empire finally resulted in the 1010 invasion of Koryŏ, after the Liao emperor had received news that Mokchong had been murdered by one of his military commanders. Under the pretext of avenging the death of a vassal and punishing the murderer, Kang Cho, the Liao invaded, sacking Kaegyŏng and burning it down. Its palaces, temples,

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の一面" in *Shikan* 史觀 110 (1984): pp. 27-42.

<sup>38</sup> Despite the fact that Koryŏ and Liao came closer to each other in the first half of the tenth century, they did not yet share borders and there was little contact between them. Jurchen tribes were still in practical control of the border areas; an area that was furthermore still not very well defined during this period. It should not be forgotten that remnants from Parhae's ruling stratum had established a new state called Chŏngan-guk/Tienan-guo 定安國 right at the border between Koryŏ and the former Parhae territories. Liao influence did not stretch as far as Koryŏ during T'aejo's lifetime, which is why the Liao needed Koryŏ's active approval for establishing a suzerain-vassal relationship. See Dennis Twitchett and Klaus Peter Tietze, "The Liao", in *The Cambridge history of China: Volume 6, Alien regimes and border states, 987-1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), ed. Herbert Franke and Dennis Twitchett, pp. 43-153.

<sup>39</sup> No Myŏngho, "Koryŏ chibaech'ŭng-ŭi Parhae yumin-e taehan inshik-kwa chŏngch'aek", pp. 147-187. T'aejo was in all probability not fond of the Liao, but up to 942 when he broke off relations by starving the camels, he endeavoured to maintain peaceful relations. Right after the conquest of Parhae, T'aejo sent a congratulatory embassy to the Liao. He even sent one right after the fall of Parhae in 926. *Liaoshi* 遼史 [hereafter LS ] 2: 6b; LS 115: 1a. For a more detailed analysis of this thorny subject and the historiographical discussions surrounding it, see Breuker, *Forging the truth*. For the references to the Liao embassies visiting Koryŏ, see LS 3: 12a; LS 4: 3a; LS 115: 1a.

<sup>40</sup> Yi Kibaek, *Ch'oe Sŭngno*, pp. 10-11, 14-15.

<sup>41</sup> Twitchett and Tietze, "The Liao", pp. 100-104, 111-112. See chapter four.

<sup>42</sup> *KS* 3: 32b-33a.

<sup>43</sup> An Kwisuk 안귀숙, "Koryŏ shidae kŭmsok kongye-ŭi tae-Jung kyosŏp 高麗時代 金屬工藝의 對中 交渉" in *Koryŏ misur-ŭi taeye kyosŏp* 高麗美術의 大外 交渉 (Seoul: Yegyŏng 예경, 2004), ed. Han'guk misulsa hakhoe 韓國美術史學會, pp. 153-192, esp. pp. 156-158.

<sup>44</sup> See chapter four.

archives and libraries went up in flames. Initial successful resistance against the Khitan quickly gave way to a series of devastating losses and, perhaps even more worrisome, to the defection of several able Koryŏ commanders to the Liao.<sup>45</sup> It did not take the Liao emperor long to capture the general accused of regicide, Kang Cho. Defeating Kang Cho's army, the Liao ruler captured the commander and his second-in-command Yi Hyŏnun 李鉉雲 alive. As with earlier defeated Koryŏ commanders, this time, too, the Liao emperor was more interested in turning Kang Cho than in executing him for the murder of Mokchong:

The Khitan emperor loosened Kang Cho's bonds and asked him: "Will you become my servant?" Kang Cho answered: "I am a Koryŏ man (*Koryŏin* 高麗人), how could I become your servant?" The emperor asked again, but the answer was the same. He then had flesh cut off from Kang's body with a sword, but when he asked again, the answer was still the same. But when he asked Yi Hyŏnun, Hyŏnun answered as follows: "Now that I have seen the bright new sun and moon with my own two eyes, how could I persist to think of the old streams and mountains?" Kang Cho was enraged when he heard this and kicked Hyŏnun with his feet, saying: "You are a Koryŏan, how can you say that?" In the end the Khitan killed Kang Cho.<sup>46</sup>

I shall leave the matter of the relatively favourable treatment Kang Cho is accorded in his biography for what it is and concentrate on the message the biography conveys and how it is related to the fourth injunction.<sup>47</sup> His biography portrays Kang Cho as a loyal and brave warrior, whose integrity and gullibility were taken advantage of, resulting in the death of Mokchong. The way in which he died suited his status as a faithful Koryŏ commander and, perhaps more importantly in the context of the fourth injunction, as a Koryŏan (*Koryŏin*); somebody who is different from either a Chinese or a Khitan and who cannot change his identity, even if he can switch his allegiance.

A similar example is furnished by Ha Kongjin 河拱辰, a subordinate of Kang Cho. In contrast with Kang, his record is spotless because he was not involved in Mokchong's death. According to his biography Ha pretended to have surrendered when the Liao held him captive. After several attempts to persuade him to serve the Liao and an unsuccessful escape, he was killed when he refused to swear loyalty to the Liao emperor. His heart and liver were then eaten by the Khitan soldiers.<sup>48</sup> Ha was revered by later generations for his heroism, which was impossible in the case of Kang, who despite his heroic death had still committed regicide:

This time Ha answered the Khitan emperor true to the facts: "I cannot have two minds

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<sup>45</sup> Some frontier commanders were overwhelmed by the Liao forces and decided surrender was the best option; this had a devastating effect on morale as well as on Koryŏ's military strength. See *KS* 94: 21a-b for a particularly poignant example.

<sup>46</sup> *KS* 127: 7b; the same story has also been recorded in the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*. See *KSC* 3: 5b-6a.

<sup>47</sup> For a more detailed treatment of Kang Cho and his representation in historical sources, see Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>48</sup> This may be a later embellishment of the original story. Stories about cannibalism among Khitan warriors were part of the demonization that befell them during their wars against Koryŏ and the Song. Liao sources attest to the fact that cannibalism only occurred in times of extreme famine, as it did in Koryŏ and the Song. See Karl A. Wittfogel and Fêng Chia-sêng, *History of Chinese society: Liao (907-1125)* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1949), pp. 381, 396, 425 and n., 560-570.

about my fatherland. Even if I have to die ten thousand deaths, I do not wish to live and serve your greater country (*sadae* 事大)<sup>49</sup>

The second part of the fourth injunction, then, was inspired by the devastating Liao invasions; in it, a distinct sense of being different from both the Liao and the Song is clearly detectable.<sup>50</sup> The first part of the injunction prohibits the slavish imitation of Chinese customs in no uncertain terms. It, too, has roots in earlier policies and ideas. As shown in a previous chapter, Ch'oe Sŭngno criticized Kwangjong for his exaggerated fondness of Sinitic civilization.<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, later interpretations of the fourth injunction seem mainly to have focused on the inhibition against contact with the Khitan - or with others considered to be northern barbarians. The use of the rather vehement terms in which the Khitan were described (*kŭmsujiguk* 禽獸之國 or a 'state of birds and savage beasts') is echoed in later comments on northern tribes, most prominently in that of Hwang Churyang in 1034.<sup>52</sup> The fourth injunction was often used to support arguments similar to that of Hwang to reject, keep out or attack Khitan and Jurchen and their customs. When Yejong attempted to continue his father's monetary policies which promoted the use of money, his officials opposed him by appealing to the fourth injunction.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *KS* 94: 28a-30a. The same story has also been recorded in the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*, see *KSC* 3: 18a-b. His example was remembered. His descendants received high appointments and privileged treatment; as late as the reign of Yejong his great-great-grandson was given a promotion on the basis of his forefather's merit. The honours that befell Ha were also bestowed on Sŏ Hŭi 徐熙, the successful negotiator of the 993 peaceful settlement with the Liao, and on Kang Kamch'an 姜邯贊, the general who had inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Liao troops in 1018. No other meritorious subjects were honoured as frequently and as long as those who fought against the Khitan. Ha Kongjin was honoured by Hyŏnjong for his loyalty to the country. See *KSC* 3: 49b. Munjong bestowed high rank on his son in honour of his father's exploits. Still later, he received posthumous promotions. His loyalty and valour at the frontier was even mentioned in a letter to the Liao in 1088. In his first year on the throne Sukchong secured protected appointments for a descendant of Ha Kongjin and Yejong promoted Ha's great-great-grandson. See *KS* 75: 29b-30b; *KS* 75: 29b-30a; *KS* 13: 15a-b. After glorious careers with many honours and accolades, both Sŏ and Kang also received many posthumous tributes. They were officially honoured as late as the reign of Ch'ungsŏn-wang 忠宣王 (r. 1298 and 1308-1313). See *KS* 84: 23b. Along with these two heroes, Yang Kyu 楊規, the fortress commander who had refused to surrender his fortress to the Liao army carrying a forged letter from Kang Cho, was also mentioned.

<sup>50</sup> With regard to the fourth injunction, it should not pass unnoticed that in 983 Yi Chibaek 李知白 (d.u.) had already submitted a memorial to Sŏngjong, in which he protested against Sŏngjong's sinophile policies and urgently advised the ruler to rely on Koryŏ's native traditions to defeat the Khitan threat. Yi Chibaek's advice was not heeded at that time, but his ideas are similar to those expressed in the injunctions. See *KSC* 2: 51a-b; *KS* 94: 3a-b. Yi Chibaek's memorial has been translated in Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 430.

<sup>51</sup> Yi Kibaek, *Ch'oe Sŭngno*, pp. 55, 60. In his *Appraisal of the political achievements of the five reigns*, Ch'oe criticized Kwangjong directly. See Yi Kibaek, *Ch'oe Sŭngno*, p. 71. Also see chapter two.

<sup>52</sup> "This bunch may have submitted to us and become our vassals, but they are still savage beasts with human faces, unfamiliar with civilized customs and not fit to be tried by civilized law. According to the codex, non-aculturated foreigners (*hwaoein* 化外人) must be judged according to their own laws if the crime has been committed against a person of the same race." See *KS* 95: 19b-20a; *KSC* 4: 20a. Hwang held the minority opinion in 1034, but during the reign of Hyŏnjong, the expression "savage beasts with human faces" was used to refer to Jurchen and other barbarians with some frequency. See for instance *KSC* 3: 54a; and *KSC* 4:30b. In both cases the references are extremely negative; the second one even proposes the extermination of Jurchen who were considered bothersome.

<sup>53</sup> "The monetary law was aimed by former rulers at enriching the country and making the people comfortable. My father did not intend to increase property and capital. Let alone now that the Great Liao have started to use money! If a law is proclaimed, slander and abuse of it will follow automatically. That is why it is said that the people cannot understand something that has just been started. But unexpectedly, many officials are boycotting the use of money,

A similar instance can be found during Injong's reign. In 1129, when the Khitan threat had been replaced with the Jurchen threat, Injong issued an edict criticizing the widespread adoption of Khitan customs. According to the edict, T'aejo had propagated Sinitic culture and prohibited the customs of the "Khitan barbarians". For Khitan, Jurchen must probably be read. The term "Khitan" had by now become a generic term for "northern barbarians". This interpretation of T'aejo's instructions is obviously at odds with the original text, which clearly established limits on the adoption of Sinitic culture as well as prohibiting the adoption of Khitan customs. During a time when the decaying Song dynasty was seen as a friendly country, the Liao empire had collapsed and the Jurchen Jin empire was aggressively demanding Koryŏ's subservience, this reinterpretation of T'aejo's injunctions is understandable.<sup>54</sup>

The fourth injunction was composed to underline Koryŏ's distinctiveness vis-à-vis the Liao and the Song. The contents of the biographies of the Koryŏ military commanders, products of the same time and circumstances, who died while defending their country, confirm this. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that the reason the Liao and the Song were mentioned in the injunction was not only because Koryŏ was different from them. Here, it is instructive to quote a statement by Michel de Montaigne: "[I]f our faces were not alike we could not tell man from beast: if they were not unlike we could not tell man from man."<sup>55</sup> In other words, Koryŏ's need to distinguish itself from the Liao and the Song was precisely because it had borrowed so much from both neighbours. Later references to the fourth injunction bear this out: depending on the circumstances the injunction was referred to as anti-Khitan, anti-Chinese, both anti-Khitan and anti-Chinese, or pro-Chinese and anti-Khitan.

## NUMBER FIVE

The fifth injunction emphasized the importance of the Western Capital for the longevity of the Koryŏ dynasty. In doing so, it also underlined the significance of geomantic ideas in governing the country.

Fifth injunction: I relied on the mysterious help of the mountains and streams of the Three Han to bring the great enterprise to completion. In the Western Capital [P'yŏngyang] the aquatic force is balanced and smoothly flowing and it is the root of the terrestrial arteries of our country. It is the place of the great dynastic undertaking for ten thousand generations – therefore, royal visits to the Western Capital should be made four times a year in the second, fifth, eighth, and eleventh months – and reside there a total of more than one hundred days. By this means secure peace and prosperity.<sup>56</sup>

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using T'aejo's injunction not to copy Tang and Khitan customs as a pretext. But [T'aejo's] proscription actually aimed at nothing but decadent customs. If we were to do away with Chinese civilization and institutions, what then?" See *KS* 79: 12a.

<sup>54</sup> *KS* 16: 2b-3a.

<sup>55</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *The essays of Michel de Montaigne*, trans. and ed. M. A. Screech (London etc., 1991), book 3, essay 13, 'On Experience', p. 1213.

<sup>56</sup> *KS* 2: 15b-16a. This is the text of the original injunction: 其五曰, 朕賴三韓山川陰佑, 以成大業. 西京, 水德調順, 爲

The fifth injunction served a triple purpose: it cemented the position of the Western Capital, it stressed the importance of Koryŏ's landscape to the well-being of the dynasty and it confirmed the accuracy of the principles that guided geomantic thought in Koryŏ.

This injunction was most probably written by Hyŏnjong to stress the importance of the Western Capital to Koryŏ and to his own reign. Twice, he was saved by military intervention from the Western Capital.<sup>57</sup> Nonetheless, the Western Capital had been important from the beginning of the Koryŏ dynasty, when T'aejo restored it and settled it with people:

I have recently restored the Western Capital and moved people there to fill [its streets]. I have relied on its terrestrial force to pacify the Three Han. Consequently, I wanted to establish my capital there.<sup>58</sup>

T'aejo visited the Western Capital at least ten times and probably more.<sup>59</sup> The reasons for its importance were partly of a strategic nature: P'yŏngyang defended the rest of the peninsula against invasions from the north.<sup>60</sup> Partly, they were historical. P'yŏngyang had figured as a capital on the Korean peninsula since the dawn of civilization. And partly, because of the fact that the Western Capital's geomantic qualities were considered excellent.

The Western Capital's strategic location defended both the frontier and the capital against internal and external enemies. A strong Western Capital and strict central control over it were prerequisites for the safety of the Koryŏ state. Rebellion was always a potential threat in the Western Capital, making its continuous inclusion and participation in Koryŏ politics absolutely necessary.<sup>61</sup> Interpreting the injunction in this manner makes sense, then, because control over the Western Capital contributed to the securing of peace and prosperity of the

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<sup>57</sup> For more details, see Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>58</sup> *KS* 2: 2a-b; *KSC* 1: 31a-b.

<sup>59</sup> According to the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*, T'aejo visited the Western Capital in 921 (*KS* 1: 16a), 922 (*KS* 1: 16b; *KSC* 1: 18b), 925 (*KS* 1: 17b; *KSC* 1: 19b), 926 (*KS* 1: 19b; *KSC* 1: 21a), 929 (*KS* 1: 26a; *KSC* 1: 27b), twice in 930 (*KS* 1: 27a; *KSC* 1: 29b; *KSC* 1: 30a), 931 (; *KSC* 1: 30b), 932 (*KS* 2: 2a), 934 (*KS* 2: 6a; *KSC* 1: 34a) and 935 (*KS* 2: 8b; *KSC* 1: 37a).

<sup>60</sup> The Western Capital functioned as the central defensive location in the case of a northern invasion. The Liao never managed to capture the city. During the invasion of 992-993, the Western Capital was the rallying point of Koryŏ's defence. During the invasions of 1011 and 1018, again P'yŏngyang played a crucial role in the defence of Koryŏ. Although the capital of Kaegyŏng was captured and sacked, P'yŏngyang was not.

<sup>61</sup> The powerful families from the region around P'yŏngyang yielded considerable influence in the capital. Some of these lineages had resettled in the Western Capital shortly after the founding of Koryŏ. These lineages tried to maintain as much independence as possible during the Koryŏ dynasty, which made the Western Capital a place of frequent (attempted) rebellion. They were strengthened in their (relative) independence by the fact that P'yŏngyang possessed a history that was infinitely richer than that of Kaegyŏng, not to mention the facts that P'yŏngyang's geomantic features were as close to ideal as one could expect, that its strategic location was superior to that of Kaegyŏng (hence Kaegyŏng's sacking) and that it was the former capital of Tongmyŏng-wang 東明王, the mythical founder of Koguryŏ. Myoch'ŏng's 妙淸 rebellion of 1135 was the most ambitious and destructive rebellion of the Western Capital, aimed at overthrowing Koryŏ's ruling stratum and effectively using the Western Capital's rich historical, religious and symbolical heritage. See Yi Hyeok, "Koryŏ ch'ogi Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-e taehan il koch'al" ; Kang Ogyŏp, "Yŏch'o Sŏgyŏng kyŏngyŏng" ; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng chedo" ; H.W. Kang, "The first succession struggle of Koryŏ, in 945", pp. 411-428.

entire country.

The Western Capital's significance was reinforced by the fact that it had played an important role in the history of the peninsula. According to legend, Ko-Josŏn's capital had been located in P'yŏngyang. P'yŏngyang was also the location that had been defended to the last when the Han conquered Wiman Chosŏn. Subsequently, it became the place of the Lelang (Nangnang) commandery. When Koguryŏ sacked the last remaining commandery in the fourth century, it became Koguryŏ's capital. Again according to contemporary legend, the place where Koryŏ ruler Yejong built the Yŏngmyŏng-sa temple was the site of the palace of the great Koguryŏ ruler Kwanggaet'o. And P'yŏngyang again proved its strategic importance when Koguryŏ general Ŭlchi Mundŏk won a decisive victory against the invading Sui forces in front of its gates in 612. The historical heritage associated with the Western Capital, then, was impressive.

To the strategic and historical importance of the Western Capital, its geomantic qualities must be added. Geomantically, it functioned as a counterbalance for Koryŏ's supreme capital of Kaegyŏng. Geomancy occupied an important place in Koryŏ; although the legends associating Tosŏn with the Koryŏ royal family date from Hyŏnjong's reign at the earliest, geomantic thought already played a significant role in Shilla.<sup>62</sup> The currency of geomantic concepts soon revealed to Wang Kŏn that the new capital of Kaesŏng, his family's place of origin, left much to be desired.<sup>63</sup> A possible solution was offered by the promotion of P'yŏngyang to the status of Western Capital. In this manner, P'yŏngyang's abundant water virtue and terrestrial force were used to 'remedy' Kaegyŏng's defects. During the reign of Munjong, a third capital, the Southern Capital 南京 (present-day Seoul) was established in order to use its wood virtue force (*moktŏk* 木德) to prolong the life of the dynasty by complementing Kaegyŏng's geomantic features.<sup>64</sup>

In geomantic terms, P'yŏngyang left little to be desired. It was protected by high mountain ranges in its back and on its sides, embraced by mountains that were connected to the Paektu 白頭 mountain range, as a mother that embraces a child.<sup>65</sup> In front of it the Taedong river 大同江 flowed, embracing a wide plain. Strategically, P'yŏngyang was a defender's dream, which was something one ruler after the other realized. For most of its history, P'yŏngyang served as a capital and virtually impregnable fortification.

The Western Capital's historical, strategic and geomantic features notwithstanding, it was never made Koryŏ's capital, despite occasionally avowed intentions to do so on the part of Koryŏ's early rulers. T'aejo had considered it and Chŏngjong was only withheld from doing so by an outcry of popular opposition.<sup>66</sup> Throughout early and middle Koryŏ, P'yŏngyang was consistently seen as a subordinate capital, vital for the well-being of the dynasty, but not suited

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<sup>62</sup> Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu*, pp. 28-30; Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp.67-71; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", pp. 72-80; Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>63</sup> Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", p. 93.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>65</sup> I owe this metaphor to dr. Yoon Hong-key (personal communication).

<sup>66</sup> Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng ko", pp. 139-174; Ogyŏp, "Yŏch'o Sŏgyŏng kyŏngyŏng-gwa Sŏgyŏng seryŏg-ŭi", pp. 3-27; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", pp. 69-01, esp. p. 95.



as its supreme capital.<sup>67</sup> In 932, T'aejo withdrew his plans to move the capital to P'yöngyang:

[....] But seeing that now hens have transformed into roosters in the houses of the people and that a strong wind has made government buildings collapse, I wonder what kind of calamities can be more serious than this.<sup>68</sup>

The same characteristics that had given the Western Capital its privileged position, now worked against it. The same terrestrial force that had helped unify the peninsula now caused strange and worrisome things to happen. The extraordinary events that took place in the Western Capital made a convenient excuse for abandoning the proposed move of the capital. It should be noted, however, that this was not mere rhetoric. Although it is improbable that these strange occurrences by themselves would have prompted T'aejo to abandon his plans to move the capital, combined with other pertinent reasons, they were probably decisive. Had he moved the capital, he would have lost his secure power base in the Kaegyöng area. Moving the capital also meant taxing the populace, which was not desirable right after decades of destructive warfare and in a political situation in which T'aejo was little more than the first among his equals.<sup>69</sup> Accordingly, T'aejo did not move the capital to Sögyöng and neither did his successors.

When the injunctions were written, Hyöjong faced a situation that was similar to the one T'aejo had been confronted with. Hyöjong needed the Western Capital under his control; he had been saved twice by interventions coming from it. Strategically, too, the Western Capital had proved its value in the wars with the Liao.<sup>70</sup> Although the Liao armies had defeated the Koryö armies, the Western Capital was not taken. This made the difference between surrender and continued resistance against the Khitan. In order to ensure that his successors would recognize that the Western Capital was essential to Koryö's well-being, but only as a subordinate capital and not as the supreme capital, the fifth injunction was written. Alongside it, many activities were undertaken to ensure that the Western Capital was up to its strategic, historical and geomantic tasks. The reign of Hyöjong recorded the greatest number of newly created administrative offices in the Western Capital.<sup>71</sup> The city walls were fortified, temples (the Sach'önwang-sa 四天王寺 temple complex) and palaces built and a portrait of T'aejo was enshrined in Changnak-kung palace 長樂宮.<sup>72</sup> T'aejo's portrait was also enshrined in the Söngyong-jön hall 聖容殿, along with a statue; memorial rites were performed there in

<sup>67</sup> Yi Chöngshin, "T'aejo-üi tae-Köran chöngch'aek", pp. 27-31.

<sup>68</sup> *KS* 2: 2a-b; *KSC* 1: 31a-b.

<sup>69</sup> *KSC* 1: 31b.

<sup>70</sup> *KS* 4:6a-b; *KS* 4: 9b; *KS* 94: 22b; *KSC* 3: 7b-8a.

<sup>71</sup> Ch'oe Pyöngghön, "Hyönhwa-sa", p. 239; Yi Hyeok, "Koryö ch'ogi Sögyöng seryöng-e taehan il koch'al", pp. 105-132, esp. p. 106; No Myönggho, "Yi Chagyöim ilp'a-wa Han Anin ilp'a-üi chok seryök: Koryö chunggi ch'injok-tür-üi chöngch'i seryökhwa yangta'e 李資謙一派와 韓安仁一派의 族黨勢力; 高麗中期 親屬들의 政治勢力化 樣態," (Ph.D. diss., Seoul National University, 1988), p. 134; Kang Ogyöp, "Koryö shidae-üi Sögyöng chedo 高麗時代의 西京制度," in *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 92 (2000): pp. 93-118, esp. p. 95.

<sup>72</sup> Most of the building was supervised by Ch'oe Sawi 崔士威, who had earlier built Pongün-sa, Hyönhwa-sa temple and the royal ancestral shrines. *Ch'oe Sawi myojimjöng* in *KMC* 26: 10-14; *KS* 4: 10b.

honour of the dynasty's founder.<sup>73</sup>

Apart from history, strategy and geomancy, the fifth injunction also focuses attention on Koryŏ's landscape. Here, it is useful to distinguish between geomancy, the art of reading the landscape and if necessary remedying baleful influences, and landscape, the entirety of the natural sceneries or one particular scenery. To put it differently, geomancy is a means by which a landscape may be interpreted and adapted.

Landscape in Koryŏ is a difficult subject. One perspective from which it may be approached is offered by the many accounts of ancient temples, monasteries, and pavilions that have been neglected for a long time and are now restored (or not; in that case the account functions as a plea to restore the building in question). These accounts were usually written with explicit references to contemporary history and present a clear picture of the bond between landscapes, the buildings people built in it and the influence these exercised upon the fate of the country. These stories functioned on different levels: historical, geographical, geomantic, spiritual, local and national. In most cases, the influence that a geographic feature, certain scenery or a building exercised was imagined in terms of the state and the country, only in rare cases merely in terms of the local. Let us take a look at some particular instances.

The record for the reconstruction of a monk's cave at Samgak-san reveals the importance of places like this. Starting with T'aejo, all Koryŏ rulers went there to celebrate Buddhist rituals for the good of the country. The cave was also important historically: Shilla literatus Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn had written about it in a text later included in his *munjip* 文集, his collected literary writings.<sup>74</sup> The record also mentioned Chinese and Indian examples, positioning Koryŏ and its Buddhism in an international context.

A similar but longer account by Im Ch'un shows the elements that made up the perception of landscape in Koryŏ and the shaping influence it exercised upon the well-being of man and country.<sup>75</sup> In this account that chronicles the achievements of Yi Chungyak (pennname Chajin), it is first of all clearly explained that Yi was a holy man, with characteristics of the Daoist immortal and the Buddhist hermit. Having studied Daoism, Buddhism and geomancy both in Koryŏ and abroad, he approached the famous geomancer Ŭn Wŏnch'ung<sup>76</sup> and well-known Sŏn master Ikchong<sup>77</sup> to ask counsel for the best place to build his hermitage

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<sup>73</sup> KSC 3: 31a; KS 4: 10b; KS 4: 25a. Probably, this statue was similar to the one worshipped in the Pongŭn-sa. See No Myŏnggho, "Koryŏ T'aejo Wang Kŏn tongsang-ŭi yujŏn-gwa munhwajŏk pae'gyŏng 高麗太祖 王建 銅像의 流轉과 문화적 배경," *Han'guk saron* 50 (2005): pp. 150-215.

<sup>74</sup> *Samgak-san chungsu ch'inggagul ki* 三角山重修僧伽囉記 in TMS 64: 23a-27a. The account was written by Yi Ye 李預 in 1106. The extensive restorations had taken place during the reign of Sŏnjong in 1089.

<sup>75</sup> *Ilje-gi* 逸齋記 in TMS 65: 6a-10a.

<sup>76</sup> Ch'ŏsa Ŭn Wŏnch'ung 處士 殷元忠 is mentioned as having submitted a memorial similar to that of Kim Wije during the reign of Yejong. In the biography of Kim Wije, he appears as Ŭn Wŏnjung 殷元中 (KS 122:1a-3b), but given the orthographic and phonic similarity of the characters *ch'ung* and *chung* and the correspondence in period, place and activities, it is safe to conclude that the same person was meant. Other entries in the *Koryŏsa* reveal that Ŭn lived as a hermit a Mudŭng-san 無等山, when he was summoned by Sukchong in 1103. In 1105 he conducted a geomantic land survey in the Eastern military border district (Tonggye東界) on behalf of Yejong. At that time he was accompanied by palace attendant 內侍祇候 Chi Nog'yŏn 智祿延 and deputy directors of the Bureau of Astronomical Observation Hŏ Shin'gyŏng 許蠡卿 and Ch'oe Chaho 崔資顥. KS 12: 4b; KS 12: 18a.

<sup>77</sup> Ikchong was a Sŏn master who joined Ŭich'ŏn when Ŭich'ŏn founded the Ch'ŏnt'ae sect. See *Pak Kyŏung*

and temple. These two counselled him to build it at a place where he would be sure to get a summons from the capital, which subsequently happened. Yi went to the capital to cure the ailing Sukchong. He later established the Daoist Pogwŏn-gung 福源宮 temple in Kaesŏng.<sup>78</sup> Of importance here in the account of Yi is the implicit assumption that the essential and spiritual bond between man and landscape is shaped by sagacious hermits such as Yi. They ‘interpret’ the landscape for other people. Im Ch’un explained that “I do not know whether the master waited for this landscape or if the landscape waited for the master”, suggesting that these ‘interpreters’ are bound to a certain landscape by something akin to predestination.

Other writings confirm the idea that the influence of the landscape, its force, must be channelled through suitable persons and buildings.<sup>79</sup> This influence was not to be underestimated. According to the account written on the occasion of the restoration of the Yongam-sa temple, T’aejo had been able to unite the Three Han owing to the fact that Tosŏn had established three mountain hermitages at Yŏngbong-san 靈鳳山 at the behest of the Holy Mother Heavenly Queen of Chiri-san 智異山 主人 聖母天王.<sup>80</sup> If the right person built a proper building on the proper location, a direct and pertinent bond between the land and the fate of the country was established.

It should be noted, however, that the spiritual role of the landscape often came to be partly or completely historical. This did not diminish its importance; it merely changed the way in which its force should be “appealed” to. After the demise of Yi Chungyak, his temple was neglected and fell into disrepair, but his son Ch’ungsu 允脩 restored it and furnished it to the extent of including implements to welcome the Buddha, while Ŭijong sent a painting of Kwanŭm as a gift for the newly restored temple.<sup>81</sup> A similar fate of ruin and subsequent restoration befell the three hermitages at Yŏngbong-san. After a period of neglect, they were restored as a historical reminder of the Hwaŏm teaching of uniting the Three Vehicles into one 三歸之法.<sup>82</sup> When Im Ch’un toured the country, he seemed to be more impressed with the historicity of certain places than with their spiritual significance per se.<sup>83</sup> Instead of seeking to

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*myojimyŏng* in KMC 76: 4.

<sup>78</sup> This shrine has been described in the *Gaoli Tujing*, chapter 18.

<sup>79</sup> Im Ch’un’s *Chogam-gi* 足庵記 stresses the importance of exquisite landscapes for the well-being of man and his country, an assessment that is repeated in his *Tonghaeng-gi* 東行記. Im also mentioned the habitual touring of the country by literati in order to appreciate the landscape and how it influenced the country and the people. See TMS 65: 10a-12b; TMS 65: 12b-15b. The section about the five phases in the *Koryŏsa* explains the importance of mountains for Koryŏ in terms of their ubiquity in the landscape. If Koryŏ’s mountains would collapse, the country would inevitably perish together with its mountains. See KS 101: 20a.

<sup>80</sup> Pak Chŏnji 朴全之, *Yŏngbong-san Yongam-sa chungch’ang-gi* 靈鳳山龍岩寺重創記 in TMS 68: 12b-14b. The establishment of the Immortal’s Hermitage 仙岩, the Cloud Hermitage 雲岩 and the Dragon Hermitage 龍岩 signalled to people then that these hermitages greatly benefited the country. This idea often resurfaced in the Koryŏ period. In 1254, Kjong read a prayer text during memorial services in honour of Koryŏ’s mountains and streams, beseeching the spirits of the mountains and streams to do their sacred duty: to protect the people who inhabit the country made up by the spirit’s mountains and streams. See KS 24: 18b-20a.

<sup>81</sup> TMS 65: 6a-10a.

<sup>82</sup> TMS 68: 12b-14b.

<sup>83</sup> Im visited the places where Wŏnhyo and Ŭisang had seen Kwanŭm and wrote a poem about these two monks. He further lamented that no historical remains of Shilla were to be found. See TMS 65: 12b-15b.

relive the spiritual events of the past, Im evoked them in a historical manner.<sup>84</sup> By respecting and honouring the historical significance of the landscape and its buildings, its beneficial force could be appealed to. The extant examples suggest that this transition from a spiritual to a historical appreciation of the landscape was common.

The entire state was often perceived as its landscape. The *P'abanjip* accommodates an account of when Yi Chayön visited the Southern Song. Comparing the landscapes of south China and Koryö, Yi perhaps predictably concluded that Koryö's landscape was much superior to that of south China.<sup>85</sup> Asserting that the landscapes of a country directly influence the people living in them, Yi implicitly referred to the difficult international position the Southern Song found itself in, confronted with the ever-expanding Liao empire at its northern borders. The reason for Koryö's successful resistance to the Liao lay, partly at least, in the superior nature of its landscape.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps the most telling instance of the identification of the Koryö state with its landscape is the poem quoted earlier and uttered by Yi Hyönun to indicate his defection to the Liao: "Now that I have seen the bright new sun and moon with my own two eyes, how could I persist to think of the old streams and mountains?"<sup>87</sup> In this poem, the sense of the landscape, the streams and mountains, as the own space is clearly expressed. This expression simultaneously delimits the landscape as Koryö and distinguishes it from other possible landscapes such as that of the Liao or the Southern Song. Similar examples are often encountered.<sup>88</sup>

The landscape was a unique and delimited space. Often, the adjective "domestic" (*kungnae* 國內) is used to differentiate it from other landscapes. During the siege of the Western Capital in 1136, Kim Pushik pledged an oath to his subordinates which started as follows: "I swear by the heaven and the earth, the mountains and streams and the gods and spirits".<sup>89</sup> The mountains and streams, the landscape, are a subdivision of heaven and earth; as a part of it, the landscape was by definition particular. The particularity of the landscape was both underscored and put in perspective by the fact that the state ultimately presided over it in its entirety. The shrines dedicated to mountains and streams were local, but these were appropriated by the state, which sent envoys or had envoys come to the capital to celebrate memorial services, hold rain ceremonies or offer prayers.<sup>90</sup>

The landscape of the country, its mountains and streams, was nonetheless not identical to the country. As has been shown in chapter one, the term 'Samhan' or 'Three Han'

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<sup>84</sup> The same approach to ancient sacred places is also shown by most Koryö literati whose travelogues have survived.

<sup>85</sup> But when necessary Koryö quickly denounced the virtues of its landscape. The inaccessibility of Koryö's mountainous landscape and its people's unfamiliarity with the sea (sic!) was a convincing reason for Chöng Kashin 鄭可臣 to appeal to the Yuan emperor not to levy rice tribute. See *KS* 105: 26b-27a.

<sup>86</sup> *PHJ* 2: 27-28.

<sup>87</sup> *KS* 127: 7b

<sup>88</sup> Kyöngjong declared in his will when he was dying that he "had received the right to rule the Three Han and protect its landscape (*sanch'ön* 山川) and territory (*t'oji* 土地). See *KS* 2: 34a.

<sup>89</sup> See *KS* 98: 7b. For similar examples, see *KS* 12: 28b; *KS* 15: 28a-b; *KS* 24: 18b-20a. When during the reign of the Ch'oe house Ch'oe Chunghön established the Directorate for Landscape Remediation (山川裨補都監), he summoned geomancers (*sulgaek* 術客) and had them discuss ways to extend the life of the dynasty by remedying the domestic landscapes through geomantic means. See *KS* 77: 26b

<sup>90</sup> See for instance *KS* 59: 38a-b; *KS* 63: 20b; *KS* 63: 23a-b.

was the enveloping concept used to denote the entirety of country, state and people in past, present and future. Landscape was an indispensable constituent part of this concept, just like the altars for the gods of land and grain were. In fact, shrines dedicated to geographical features played roles similar to that of the state altars. At the altars, as at the shrines, sacrifices were made to secure good harvests, timely rain, success in battle and peace.<sup>91</sup> The association of the landscape with the state was thus secure, as was its association with the rulers of Koryŏ. In addition to the royal ancestral shrines and the shrines dedicated to mountains and streams as places of prayer and worship, the tombs of former rulers were simultaneously used for this purpose.<sup>92</sup>

This detour through Koryŏ's landscape is necessary to appreciate its important presence in Koryŏ life. The idea of landscape or "mountains and streams" was operative on different levels. It influenced how Koryŏ people thought of themselves both in a domestic and in an international context; how they thought they needed to protect or change Koryŏ; how the people were connected to their surroundings. The fifth injunction codifies the perception of the landscape as an essential element of Koryŏ life. It does not do so by only mentioning this fact, but by introducing it in an organic manner, together with the introduction of two closely related subjects, the discipline of geomancy and the position of the Western Capital in Koryŏ.

The fifth injunction establishes the Western Capital as a man-made structure (like a temple, hermitage or palace, only infinitely larger and more powerful) on one of the most forceful pieces of landscape in Koryŏ. Similar to the accounts relating the rebuilding and restoration of old places of worship, the Western Capital is set up as the place where the landscape's force is channelled through to P'yŏngyang's historical, spiritual and geomantic significance. The comparison with the accounts of dilapidated temples goes further; P'yŏngyang lay in ruins when T'aejo decided to rebuild it. And like for instance the three hermitages on Yŏngbong-san, P'yŏngyang had also played a geomantic role in the unification of the peninsula under Koryŏ. Finally, similar to what the accounts disclose about the restoration of their subjects, the Western Capital was not only established as the "the source of the terrestrial force of our country", but also imagined in historical terms, with clear reference to its longstanding historical significance.

The contents of the fifth injunction were repeatedly confirmed during the Koryŏ dynasty. Despite the fact that the Western Capital fulfilled different roles during different periods, it was permanently considered to be a mainstay of Koryŏ stability, both in terms of strategy and in terms of identity. The famous geomancer Kim Wije 金謂碑 (fl. late eleventh century) submitted a memorial to Sukchong, requesting that Yangju (present-day Seoul) be

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<sup>91</sup> Prompted by a continuing drought, prayers were offered at Buddhist temples and monasteries and memorial rites were performed at the shrines dedicated to mountains and streams in 991 (*KS* 3: 23b). In 1012, prayers were offered at spirit shrines and landscape shrines, again to end a drought (*KS* 4: 12b). When in 1057, the situation was particularly bad, rain ceremonies were held at the shrine on the east slope of Songak mountain, all other shrines dedicated to gods and spirits, all shrines dedicated to mountains and streams and at the Pak Yŏn falls 朴淵 in Kaegyŏng (*KS* 8: 5b-61). In 1087, a directive was issued to all government offices that memorial rites would be performed at the royal ancestral shrines and the shrines dedicated to mountains and streams to pray for the support of spirit soldiers in battle (*KS* 10: 10b). For similar examples, see *KS* 9: 34a; *KS* 10: 8a; *KS* 10: 15b; *KS* 10: 17a.

<sup>92</sup> See for instance *KS* 13: 12b.

re-instated as the country's Southern Capital.<sup>93</sup> He supported his argument with copious quotes from writings attributed to Tosŏn, but added a variation to Tosŏn's assertion that P'yŏngyang should be Koryŏ's Western Capital by asserting that Yangju should be Koryŏ's Southern Capital.<sup>94</sup> According to Kim, the dynasty would only survive if it re-established the Supreme Capital at the site of the former Southern Capital and if P'yŏngyang was maintained as the Western Capital.<sup>95</sup> Kim's insistence on the importance of the Western Capital in balancing the geomantic features of the country, though, came straight from the fifth injunction. His biography in the *Koryŏsa* adds that Ŭn Wŏnch'ung submitted a similar memorial one generation later to Yejong. The memorial has not survived, but this mention makes it clear that it contained the same emphasis on relocation of the Supreme Capital to the south and on the essential position of the Western Capital in Koryŏ.

As mentioned before, during Hyŏnjong's reign much care was taken to embed the Western Capital in Koryŏ's power structure; offices were created and filled with personnel, fortifications were expanded, temples and palaces newly built. Later rulers also repeatedly emphasized the importance of the Western Capital. Sukchong responded to Kim Wije's memorial by establishing a Southern Capital and elevating the importance of the Western Capital. During the reign of Yejong, new palaces and temples were built in the Western Capital "to prolong the life span of the royal undertaking now that it has been more than 200 years since the establishment of the capital at Songdo."<sup>96</sup> And Injong continued the policies of his predecessors by trying to benefit from the Western Capital's terrestrial force after the aftermath of Yi Chagyŏm's failed rebellion in 1126 reduced his palace to ashes. Swayed by geomancer Myoch'ŏng's insistence that building new palaces in the Western Capital would restore order in Koryŏ's badly shaken politics, he issued the following edict:

It has been thus from olden times on that palaces were not restricted to certain sites, but varied depending on the times and circumstances. An ancient sage from Haedong said that the life span of the country would be prolonged if a palace was built on a "force of great flowering". I intend to disseminate my benevolence by building a palace on a site already chosen and reside in it according to the seasons.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Yangju was first established as the Southern Capital in 1076. The royal palace was completed the following year. After a few years, however, the Southern Capital was abolished again. At the prompting of Kim Wije, it was re-established in 1104. Kim Wije had submitted his memorial in 1096. In 1099, official deliberations on whether to re-establish the Southern Capital were started and in 1101 the Directorate for the Establishment of the Southern Capital 南京開創都監 was created. Yannick Bruneton, "Séoul à l'époque Koryŏ," *Revue de Corée* 101 (1997): pp. 230-260.

<sup>94</sup> It is highly improbable that Tosŏn did indeed write the texts associated with him. Although the contents of the texts can be shown to predate the reign of Sukchong, there is no evidence available which suggests that they date back to the end of Shilla and the beginning of Koryŏ. The earliest references to the idea that Koryŏ's geomantic balance was best served by Kaegyŏng as the Supreme Capital, P'yŏngyang as the Western Capital and Yangju as the Southern Capital dates from the reign of Munjong.

<sup>95</sup> *KS* 122: 1a-3b; for a translation, see Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, pp. 434-436.

<sup>96</sup> *KS* 96: 39b-40b. This undertaking was harshly criticized by O Yŏnch'ong 吳延寵 for three reasons. First, the fact that Yejong allowed himself to be misled by geomantic hocus-pocus; second, that it had been eight years since a new palace had been built in the Southern Capital, but that no auspicious signs had been observed; and third, that the old palaces were located in the vicinity of the new palace, making it impossible for appreciable geographical differences to exist between these locations, as well as rendering the demolition of the commoners' dwellings there unnecessary.

<sup>97</sup> *KS* 16: 1b-2a.

In his quest to regain stability for Koryŏ after Yi Chagyŏm's attempt to overthrow the ruling house and faced with the pressure exerted by the Jin at the northern borders, Injong failed to recognize the dangers inherent in an overly favourable treatment of the Western Capital.<sup>98</sup> Bolstered by the support of the king and by a large segment of Koryŏ's ruling stratum, Myoch'ŏng went too far. His insistence that the Western Capital be made Koryŏ's supreme capital was sharply at odds with Koryŏ tradition which had always attributed P'yŏngyang an essential role in the Koryŏ polity, but which had also consistently stopped short of establishing it as the supreme capital. Revolt ensued in the Western Capital and it took a bloody and protracted war effort to pacify Myoch'ŏng and his supporters.<sup>99</sup> In effect, the idea that was codified in the fifth injunction of P'yŏngyang's importance as the Western Capital and not as the Supreme Capital, was grossly violated by Myoch'ŏng's claim for supreme glory for P'yŏngyang. Naturally, this does not imply that Myoch'ŏng's transgression of the fifth injunction sparked the sudden and widespread resistance to his plans, which also included the conquest of the Jin empire. It merely suggests that the contents of the fifth injunction made sense in Koryŏ during most periods and for most people; rather than an injunction, then, it is closer to a codification of an existing situation that was considered valuable or necessary.

The fifth injunction codified three truths in Koryŏ: that the Western Capital was of great importance for the country and the dynasty, that the landscape of Koryŏ was an essential and distinctive part of Koryŏ and that application of the principles that guided geomantic thought in Koryŏ were a plausible way of dealing with the fundamental problems arising from or connected to Koryŏ's landscape. The injunction in fact also established that Koryŏ's destiny was –partly– in the hands of its rulers; it offered them a means of securing peace and prosperity by paying attention to Koryŏ's landscape.

## NUMBER SIX

The sixth injunction is probably the injunction that was most faithfully adhered to during the Koryŏ dynasty. Its contents uphold the importance of the Yŏndŭng and P'algwan festivals for Koryŏ. It reads as follows:

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<sup>98</sup> Injong's son Ūijong also attached much significance to the remedial qualities of geomancy. He chose to rely on the Western Capital's terrestrial force to solve Koryŏ's problems. In the eleventh year of his reign, Ūijong went to inspect the *chise* 地勢 or the state of the terrestrial force at places about which geomancer Yŏngŭi 榮儀 had predicted the monasteries on it needed to be repaired if the country was to avert a disaster (KS 18: 8b). He heeded a counsel from master of meteorology (*t'aesa kambu* 太史監候) Yu Wŏndo to build a new palace near the Western Capital; if this was done, the northern barbarians would be conquered within seven years (KS 18: 11b-12b). There was much dissension about the accuracy of this verdict; another geomancer predicted that the building of a palace on the recommended site would trigger a disaster for the dynasty in the next year. Unlike his father, however, Ūijong established a full-blown program aiming at the revival of ancient peninsular customs, such as the use of geomancy, the way of the *hwarang* and the celebration of the P'algwanhoe.

<sup>99</sup> I shall make a analysis of Myoch'ŏng's rebellion in a separate chapter.

Sixth injunction: My most intense wish concerns the two festivals of Yöndüŋ 燃燈 and P'algwān 八關. The Yöndüŋ festival is to worship Buddha. The P'algwān is to worship the spirits of heaven, the five sacred peaks, the major mountains and streams, and the dragon god. If, at some future time, villainous courtiers propose an increasing or decreasing of these festivals, this should be absolutely prohibited. Also, from the beginning I made the earnest oath that the days of the festival should not coincide with days of mourning and that the ruler and his ministers should celebrate together. This should be carried out with reverend respect.<sup>100</sup>

This injunction was composed as a response to the abolishment of these two festivals by Söngjong in 987 and as a warning to later rulers to not abolish the festivals again. Hyönjong and the faction that had put him on the throne attached much importance to the proper performance of the Yöndüŋ and P'algwān festivals.<sup>101</sup> The future abolition of the festival the injunction warns against is a *vaticinium ex eventu*, a prophecy from the event, written after the event foretold had actually already taken place.<sup>102</sup> Söngjong's abolition of the two festivals had met with considerable opposition. When Hyönjong ascended the throne, the erstwhile opponents of the abolition had positioned themselves behind Hyönjong and managed to reinstate the festivals. The reinstatement was tied to the prevailing anti-Khitān atmosphere in Koryō at the time of Hyönjong's ascension. The Yöndüŋ and P'algwān festivals were associated with Koryō's native customs as well as with the protective powers of Buddhism. As such, performing the festivals was thought to have a beneficial influence upon Koryō, both spiritually and propaganda-wise; these festivals were attended by foreign visitors, envoys and traders.

The native origins of the P'algwān festival have been discussed in detail in other studies.<sup>103</sup> Here it suffices to point out that people in Koryō were aware of these origins and perceived the P'algwān festival as a native custom, despite its Buddhist name. Responding to Söngjong's abolition of the two festivals, Yi Chibaek 李知白 (d.u.) submitted the following memorial, in which he expressed his view that these festivals were essential to Koryō's continued existence:

Since our august ancestor's inception of the dynasty, we have preserved our sovereignty to this day. Now, without a single loyal official voicing objection, we rashly want to surrender land to the enemy. Is this not lamentable indeed? The ancients had a poem:

A vast territory is disposed of in a casual manner,  
The civil and military officials of the two courts reproached Jiao Zhou 焦周

Jiao Zhou was a great minister of Shu 蜀 in China who urged his young ruler to give up land to Wei 魏, thus becoming the joke of eternity.

<sup>100</sup> KS 2: 16a. 其六曰，朕所至願，在於燃燈八關，燃燈，所以事佛，八關所以事天靈，及五嶽名山大川龍神也，後世姦臣，建白加減者，切宜禁止，吾亦當初誓心，會日，不犯國忌，君臣同樂，宜當敬依行之。

<sup>101</sup> Ch'oe Hang was arguably the most important of these officials. He was also the one who was asked for the reinstatement of the two festivals. See KS 93: 30b.

<sup>102</sup> Breuker, *Forging the Truth*,

<sup>103</sup> See chapter eight for references.



I propose that we bring Xiao Xunning 蕭遜寧<sup>104</sup> with gold, silver, and other treasures to discover his real intentions. And rather than rashly cutting off land and handing it over to appease an enemy, is it not better to renew practice of the Lantern Festival 燃燈, the Assembly of the Eight Prohibitions 八關, and the Immortal Lad 仙郎 to elicit spiritual protection, as was done under our former kings? Is this not a better way to preserve the state and achieve peace than to resort to the strange practices of others? If we are to do this, we ought first to report to our deities. As to whether there be war or peace, Your Majesty alone should decide.<sup>105</sup>

Although many officials had been unhappy with Söngjong's decision to no longer celebrate the expensive festivals, Söngjong pursued his Confucianist policies according to which frugality was considered a prime virtue.<sup>106</sup> The memorial of Yi Chibaek shows why many officials were so attached to the P'algwan and Yöndüŋ festivals and the Koryö traditions they represented. When Söngjong abolished the festivals, they had come to belong to Koryö's most important state festivals and were also festivals with deep roots in the peninsula, particularly in the case of the P'algwan festival.

While the Yöndüŋ festival mainly seems to have been celebrated to honour the royal family on the birthday of the historic Buddha<sup>107</sup>, the P'algwan festival had emerged from several native, especially Shillan traditions. It was dedicated to the worship of the ubiquitous spirits of the land, the mountains and the streams of Koryö.<sup>108</sup> In Koryö, it "subsumed various traditions under a very loose Buddhist framework: the Shilla *hwarang* tradition, spirit worship, the Tongmaeng 東盟 festival of Koguryö, and the worship of merit subjects."<sup>109</sup> It was this mix of traditions that Yi Chibaek had referred to in his memorial, particularly to the Shilla *hwarang* tradition that was kept alive in Koryö, albeit in a mutilated and much contracted form.<sup>110</sup>

The P'algwan and Yöndüŋ festivals were established by T'aejo, perhaps with the

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<sup>104</sup> This is his style, his proper name was Xiao Hengde 蕭恒德.

<sup>105</sup> KSC 2: 51a-b; KS 94: 3a-b. Translation borrowed from Peter Lee, *Sources*, p. 430. I changed the Romanization of the Chinese names to pinyin.

<sup>106</sup> Ever since witnessing the festivals performed in 981, Söngjong had been disgusted with the lavish expenditure that accompanied these two festivals. His objections to the P'algwan and Yöndüŋ festivals concerned the economic burden they generated. Other Buddhist festivals were continued during his reign and even participated in by the ruler himself. To all appearances, Söngjong was a devout Buddhist. Ch'oe Süngno disapprovingly noted the ruler's personal participation in several Buddhist rituals. See KS 93: 15b-19b. For a translation, see Peter Lee, *Sources*, p. 239. For Söngjong's witnessing of the festivals in 981, see KS 3: 13a; KS 3: 1b. Ch'oe Süngno had warned Söngjong in *On current affairs* that the state spent too much time and money on seemingly random commemorations: "It has been long established at our court that at the prayer meetings in summer and winter and at the memorial days for deceased kings and queens commemorative rites are performed. This cannot be done away with anymore. But I beseech Your Majesty to reduce everything that can be reduced and if reduction is impossible to make sure that [the commemorative rites] are performed according to the proper season as in the *Book of Rites*." See KS 93: 19b.

<sup>107</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 75-77; also see Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 83; Hō Hüngshik 許興植, "Koryö sahoe-üi pulgyojök kiban 高麗社會의 佛教의 基盤," in *Koryö pulgyosa yön'gu* 高麗佛教史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1986), pp. 47-102. The portrait of T'aejo was kept in the Pongün-sa temple where the Yöndüŋ festival was customarily celebrated, suggesting that the celebration of the Yöndüŋ festival there may have encouraged the identification of T'aejo and the historical Buddha.

<sup>108</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 75-77. Also see chapter three.

<sup>109</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 82.

<sup>110</sup> See chapter three.

example of his former lord, Kungye, in mind.<sup>111</sup> They were abolished by Sōngjong and re-established by Hyōnjong in 1011.<sup>112</sup> After 1011, these festivals never gave up their place among the most important state festivals of Koryō; when the capital was evacuated to Kanghwa-do during the Mongol invasions, it was made certain that the four most important Buddhist state rituals could be performed in the new capital. Two of these rituals were the P'algwān and Yōndŭng festivals; the other two rituals were the *punhyang* 分香 or *haenghyang* 行香 and the *toryang* 道場 rituals.<sup>113</sup> All Koryō rulers after Hyōnjong frequently held the festivals and never again was there any mention of abolishing them.<sup>114</sup> Sōnjong, Munjong and Injong in particular took care not to break the sixth injunction and to celebrate the two festivals exactly as had been laid down in the injunction.<sup>115</sup> During Myōngjong's reign, the sixth injunction was referred to as the ground to send deputies to the Western Capital to have the P'algwān and Yōndŭng festivals performed.<sup>116</sup> By sending his ministers to perform the festivals in the Western Capital while he himself performed it in the Supreme Capital, T'aejo emphasized the importance of the Western Capital, but in relation to that of the Supreme Capital. The submitter of the memorial that referred to this practice during the reign of Myōngjong, aimed at achieving a similar goal: regaining control of the Western Capital by the Kaesōng elite.

Another aspect of these festivals which should not pass unnoticed is their splendour. The Yōndŭng festival was grand in scale: it was celebrated over two days, a sufficient amount of dancers participated for groups of dancers to be able to form slogans in Chinese characters (such as "Long live the ruler" or "Great peace in the world") and the personal bodyguard of the ruler who accompanied him everywhere during the festivities counted as many as 3000 soldiers.<sup>117</sup> The P'algwān festival was celebrated in an even more grandiose manner. The festivities accompanying the rituals performed at the festival were larger in scale and the royal guard consisted of no less than 5500 soldiers.<sup>118</sup> Despite the absence of commoners during the festivities in the palace or at the monasteries where the ancestor worship rituals took place, the scale of the festivals reminded all on-lookers in unmistakable terms of the ruling house's power and wealth. The display of wealth and power was not only meant for domestic eyes: from Hyōnjong's reign on, the P'algwānhoe started to incorporate clear references to Koryō's

<sup>111</sup> *KS* 14: 35b; Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, p. 80.

<sup>112</sup> *KS* 4: 6b; *KS* 69: 11a; *KSC* 3: 3:1a; *KSC* 3:2b-3a.

<sup>113</sup> This was among other things done by renaming private houses with temple names, so that the dynasty's most important festivals could continue to be held according to precedent. See *KS* 23: 27b-28a.

<sup>114</sup> According to the *Koryōsa*, the Yōndŭng festival was celebrated frequently during the reigns of the successors of Hyōnjong, with the exception of short-reigning monarchs such as Sunjong and Hōnjong. Munjong, Sukchong, Injong, Ūijong and Myōngjong held the festival particularly often. The statistics for the celebration of the P'algwān festival show a similar tendency. Monarchs who reigned for a short period did not celebrate it, while the same monarchs who celebrated the Yōndŭng festival often, also frequently celebrated the P'algwān festival. For a convenient table of the frequency of both festivals by reign, see Jongmyung Kim (Kim Chongmyōng), *Buddhist rituals in medieval Korea (918-1392): Their ideological background and historical meaning* (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1994), pp. 136, 193.

<sup>115</sup> *KS* 10: 2a; *KSC* 5: 44b-45a; *KSC* 10: 53b.

<sup>116</sup> *KS* 96: 26b-27a; *KSC* 12: ; *KS* 63: 23b

<sup>117</sup> Jongmyung Kim, *Buddhist Rituals*, pp. 145-146.

<sup>118</sup> Jongmyung Kim, *Buddhist Rituals*, pp. 206-207. Also see chapter three of this study.

international position and the reception of tribute was made an important part of the festival.<sup>119</sup> At the Yöndünghoe, meanwhile, foreign guests were entertained, but the emphasis was much more on the domestic situation and the Koryö royal family.<sup>120</sup>

It goes without saying that the reasons for celebrating these two festivals over such a prolonged period of time were diverse and changed over time. During the reigns of Hyönjong and his immediate successors, faith in the Buddha and in the spirits of Koryö's mountains and streams was mobilized to ward off further Khitan invasions; the splendour of the P'algwanhoe was furthermore used to impress upon foreign visitors that Koryö was not to be taken lightly.<sup>121</sup> Legitimation of Hyönjong as Koryö's ruler was also a prominent feature. During Munjong's reign, the threat of imminent foreign invasion had abated and the focus of the celebration of the festivals consequently shifted towards luxurious extravagance inspired by a very ostentatious faith in Buddhism and an equally visible veneration of the ruling family.<sup>122</sup> The general prosperity of Koryö during the reigns of Sukchong and Yejong was reflected in the frequency with which both festivals were held: the reign of Sukchong is unequalled with regard to the sponsoring of Buddhist festivities. Ūijong tried to make use of the festivals to emphasize Koryö's native customs and to spark a spiritual and administrative renaissance of the dynasty; hence his insistence on the *hwarang* origins of the P'algwan festival, which was mentioned earlier.<sup>123</sup> The rulers after the military coup of 1170, finally, celebrated the festivals as tributes to deceased rulers and as displays of Koryö power, all firmly controlled by the military rulers.<sup>124</sup>

The contents of the sixth injunction were faithfully obeyed during the early and middle Koryö dynasty. The reasons for keeping the commands in the sixth injunction were diverse and depended on the circumstances; Buddhist faith, faith in Koryö's indigenous spirits, display of power, glorification of the ruling house, warding off of foreign invasions. Whereas the fifth injunction codified existing situations, the sixth injunction restored what had been lost. It did so with considerable success, because it remained valid until the demise of the Koryö dynasty, responding to several needs of state, ruler and ruling house.

## NUMBER SEVEN

The seventh injunction is of a general nature and harks back to classical Confucian statecraft. It reads as follows:

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<sup>119</sup> Okamura Shūji, "Korai ni okeru Hachikan'e teki chitsujō to kokusai kankyō 高麗における八関会の秩序と国際環境," in *Chōsen shi kenkyūkai ronbunshū* 朝鮮史研究會論文集 16 (1979): pp. 71-100.

<sup>120</sup> Vermeersch, *Power of the Buddha*, pp. 83.

<sup>121</sup> Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>122</sup> Jongmyung Kim, *Buddhist Rituals*, pp. 206-207.

<sup>123</sup> An Chiwōn 安智源, *Koryō-ūi kukka pulgyo ūrye-jōk munbwa* 高麗의 國家佛教 儀禮的 文化 (Seoul: Sōul taehakkyo, 2005), pp. 124-139.

<sup>124</sup> An Chiwōn, *Koryō-ūi kukka pulgyo ūrye-jōk munbwa* (Seoul: Sōul taehakkyo, 2005), pp. 124-139.

Seventh injunction: It is very difficult for a ruler to win over the hearts of his officials and the people. If you want to win over their hearts, the essence lies in heeding sincere remonstrance and keeping a distance from slanderous gossip and that is all. If you accept sincere remonstrance, you will be like a sagacious ruler. Slanderous gossip is sweet as honey, but if you do not believe it, it will cease of its own accord. And, if you use the people's labour choosing the time wisely, if you lighten the corvée duty, lower the taxes and know the difficulties of agricultural production, you will win over the people's hearts as a matter of course, the state will become prosperous and the people comfortable. The ancients said that that under a tempting bait a fish will certainly hang; under a generous reward there will certainly be an able general; under a drawn bow a bird will certainly not dare to fly; and under a virtuous and benevolent rule there will certainly be good subjects. If you administer rewards and punishments moderately, the interplay of yin and yang will indeed be harmonious.<sup>125</sup>

This injunction is a completely general statement, in which in contrast with the previous ones no mention is made of Koryŏ, the Three Han or specific problems or circumstances a Koryŏ ruler may be confronted with.<sup>126</sup> This is not to say that the seventh injunction existed in a vacuum in Koryŏ; an edict by Mokchong of 1002 uses the exact same metaphor (“under a tempting bait a fish hangs”) followed by a slightly changed version of “under a generous reward an able general wins victory”.<sup>127</sup> The ideas expressed in this memorial are identical to those in the injunction. A decade or so earlier, Kim Shimŏn 金審言 (?-1018) submitted a detailed proposal on governing the state to Sŏngjong which contained the same metaphors and ideas.<sup>128</sup>

These writings were Confucian in character, and the political philosophy expressed in them is classical. The ideas contained in them are well-attested to in Korea, as well as in China, Japan or Vietnam. Nor are they unique to this period: T'aejo's edict issued at Yesan-jin 禮山鎮 in 934 articulates much the same ideas.<sup>129</sup> The seventh injunction displays the classical idea that agriculture is the basis of the state (農本) and that the state was responsible for making sure that farmers could cultivate their crops according to the seasons. Hence, the injunction's emphasis on “knowing the difficulties of agricultural production”, which is a quotation from the *Against luxurious ease*, a section in the *Book of documents*. *Against luxurious ease* is also mentioned separately in the tenth injunction; Kim Shimŏn in his proposals, too, stressed the importance of this manual of how to govern benevolently.<sup>130</sup>

The idea that the ruler should “administer rewards and punishments moderately” has an equally classical pedigree. It is found in the *Spring and autumn annals* and later classics. It was a staple notion of good government to the extent that bad rulers were reproached with

<sup>125</sup> KS 2: 16a-b. The original text is as follows: 其七曰, 人君, 得臣民之心, 爲甚難, 欲得其心, 要在從諫遠讒而已, 從諫則聖, 讒言如蜜, 不信, 則讒自止, 又使民以時, 輕徭薄賦, 知稼穡之艱難, 則自得民心, 國富民安, 古人云, 芳餌之下, 必有懸魚, 重賞之下, 必有良將, 張弓之外, 必有避鳥, 垂仁之下, 必有良民, 賞罰中, 則陰陽順矣。

<sup>126</sup> The reason to compose this injunction was however most probably occasioned by the very specific problems Koryŏ rulers were confronted with. For an analysis, see Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>127</sup> KS 3: 33b-34a.

<sup>128</sup> KS 96: 26b-29b.

<sup>129</sup> KS 2: 6a-7b. A translation can be found in Peter Lee, *Sources*, pp. 161-163.

<sup>130</sup> KS 96: 26b-29b.

meting out whimsical punishment. The legal equivalent of slander and flattery versus remonstrance, rewarding virtue and punishing vice was the mainstay of the ideal at the bottom of Koryŏ government. Its practical execution may be doubted, but it was a powerful rhetorical tool that unfailingly appeared in royal edicts and like documents.<sup>131</sup> Other examples of the application of these ideas are Hyŏnjong's guilt-ridden admission that he had listened to flattery and slander and his promise to do better henceforth<sup>132</sup>; Chi Ch'aemun's 智蔡文 advise to Hyŏnjong to act like T'aejo had done when he had unified the Three Han and hold out the prospect of rewards to everyone who helped the king<sup>133</sup>; and the criticism Ch'oe Sŭngno voiced with regard to Kwangjong's purges that had been instigated by Kwangjong's tendency to listen to slander and gossip.<sup>134</sup>

Koryŏ's use of classical Confucian statecraft to govern the state has been well documented and researched.<sup>135</sup> And although most historians of Koryŏ Confucianism tend to overstate its influence and prevalence, these classical ideas that imagined the country as an agricultural society to be regulated by the state in the best interest of the farming populace were very important in Koryŏ. The seventh injunction represents this ideal of classical government and its pursuit during the Koryŏ dynasty. A perhaps apocryphal anecdote<sup>136</sup> about T'aejo's conception of the role of Confucian statecraft illustrates the position of the seventh injunction amidst the other injunctions very well:

Counsellor Ch'oe Ŭng (898-932) remonstrated, saying: "The *Isŏ Commentary* says, 'At the time of disorder, cultivate letters to gain the hearts of man.' Even during warfare, the ruler must cultivate civil virtues. I have yet to hear of anyone relying on Buddhism or yin/yang ideas to win the world."

The king said: "How could I not know it? Yet, the mountains and streams of our country are divine and extraordinary. Set in an out-of-the-way place, far removed from China, Koreans by nature love Buddha and spirits and expect blessings and prosperity. These days, war never ceases, and peace is never certain. Day and night, the peasants are troubled and at a loss as to what to do. I only think of the hidden help of Buddha and the spirits as well as the divine response of the mountains and streams in the hope that they may yield results through my indulgences. How could this not be the great principle of ruling the country and win the people? After we settle these conflicts and live in peace and justice, then we can change our ways and enlighten the people."<sup>137</sup>

The seventh injunction should be seen against the background of this anecdote; the

<sup>131</sup> See for example two edicts by Yejong; the first was issued when he ascended the throne, the second one dates from the end of his reign. Both emphasize the need to "administer rewards and punishments moderately" in order to keep the peasants satisfied and productive. See *KS* 12: 19a; *KS* 14: 11a-b.

<sup>132</sup> *KS* 4: 8a-b.

<sup>133</sup> *KS* 94: 25b-26a.

<sup>134</sup> This was the customary explanation of Kwangjong's terrible purges, originating with Ch'oe Sŭngno. See *KS* 93: 15b-19b. For a translation, see Peter Lee, *Sources*, p. 239.

<sup>135</sup> *KS* 94: 21-28a.

<sup>136</sup> Whether or not this anecdote is apocryphal, it was recorded in the *Pobanjip*. Its contents accordingly reflect one prevailing attitude towards Confucian statecraft during early to middle Koryŏ. Interestingly, Yun Sojong and Kim Chasu, both statesmen from later Koryŏ, referred to this anecdote having Ch'oe Ŭng plead with T'aejo to abolish Buddhism outright. See *KS* 120: 14a-b.

<sup>137</sup> *Pobanjip* 1: 1-b. I borrowed the translation from Lee, *Sources*, 433-434.

ideals of classical Confucian statecraft were important to Koryŏ, and its scholars, officials, monks and priests were well-versed in its classic literature. On the other hand, it was but one avenue open to exploration and use by Koryŏ, as its position in the *Ten injunctions* suggests. Nonetheless, its tenets remained valid until the end of the Koryŏ dynasty, supplying both an ideal to pursue and a rhetoric tool to use.

## NUMBER EIGHT

In an ironic twist of fate, the eighth injunction has become the most hotly debated injunction. Although, as I have argued elsewhere, originally nothing more than the distillate of Hyŏnjong's traumatic experiences acquired during his ignominious flight south from the invading Liao armies in 1011, the eighth injunction was given a new lease of life during the colonial period. Imanishi Ryū at that time suggested that the injunctions had been forged.<sup>138</sup> According to him, the eighth injunction was a confirmation of the regional schisms that had traditionally plagued Koryŏ. Since Imanishi published his findings during the first two decades of the twentieth century, Korean historians have frequently devoted their efforts to proving him wrong, resulting in a relatively large body of work focused almost exclusively on the eighth injunction. The eighth injunction reads as follows:

Eight injunction: The shape of the mountains and the propensity of the earth of the territory south of the Ch'ahyŏn ridge 車峴以南 and beyond the Kongju river 公州江 all tend to be treacherous; the hearts of its inhabitants are also thus. For that reason, if people from the towns and counties down there are allowed to participate in the affairs of state, to intermarry with the royal family, aristocracy and royal relatives, and to take the power of the state, they will either throw the state into disorder or transgress against the royal carriage and instigate a rebellion – being resentful of the unification. Furthermore, those who have been government slaves, worked at forts, postal stations, and other dishonourable trades often surrender to the powerful in order to change their social class and evade prescribed duties. And there will surely be others who will attach themselves to the royal family, the aristocracy, to palaces or to the monasteries. It will certainly be the case that, speaking treacherously and craftily, they will then abuse their authority and create disorder in government, going so far as to bring about political disaster. Even if they belong to the status of free commoners, they must not be admitted into government service or put to work.<sup>139</sup>

The eighth injunction never played a role of significance during the Koryŏ dynasty. Contrary to the other nine injunctions to which both direct and indirect references were made and the contents of which were reflected in contemporary policy, extant sources do not offer

<sup>138</sup> Imanishi Ryū, “Kōrai Daisho kunyō shichijō ni tsukite 高麗太祖訓要十條に就きて”, reprinted in *Kōrai oyobi Rinchōshi kenkyū*, pp. 25-26; for my analysis of the *Ten injunctions* as a forgery, see Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

<sup>139</sup> *KS* 2: 16b. The original text reads as follows: 其八曰, 車峴以南, 公州江外, 山形地勢, 並趨背逆, 人心亦然, 彼下州郡人, 參與朝廷, 與王侯國戚, 婚姻, 得秉國政, 則或變亂國家, 或統合之怨, 犯蹕生亂, 且其曾屬官寺奴婢, 津驛雜尺, 或投勢移免, 或附王侯宮院, 姦巧言語, 弄權亂政, 以致災變者, 必有之矣, 雖其良民, 不宜使在位用事。

any materials that verify the contents of the eighth injunction.<sup>140</sup> This injunction only became important after the Koryŏ period. During the colonial period, the potential contemporary usefulness of the eighth injunction was acknowledged by Imanishi, who used it as a tool to reinforce the then prevalent idea that Korea had historically always been a divided country. After Imanishi's analysis of the eighth injunction as a Koryŏ period reflection of the peninsula's regional tensions, it came to figure prominently in the analyses of Korean historians as well.<sup>141</sup>

The eighth injunction deals with the territory south of the Kongju river 公州江 and the “treacherous and disharmonious” nature of both terrain and inhabitants. Discrimination against this territory did not take place during the reign of T'aejo, or during later reigns.<sup>142</sup> The injunction was consequently not composed by T'aejo. It is a product of the reign of Hyŏnjong, occasioned by his traumatic experiences during his flight south. When Hyŏnjong travelled through the area fleeing from the Liao armies, he was harassed, attacked, deceived and abysmally treated; he was deserted by his soldiers and most of his officials. If anything, the “travel south” (*nambaeng*) as the flight south was later euphemistically named served as a litmus-test for the loyalty of Hyŏnjong's officials. The lavish rewards he later bestowed on those few officials who had accompanied him and served him during those dark hours, confirm the impact the flight south had on Hyŏnjong.<sup>143</sup>

Contrary to the other injunctions, this one was devoid of substantial contents; it was a reflection of the most difficult period of his reign. The injunction's lack of valid content meant that it was henceforth never referred to, nor were its contents in any sense reflected in Koryŏ

<sup>140</sup> Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>141</sup> Most contemporary Korean historians accept the injunctions as authentic. Any discussion surrounding the *Ten injunctions* is still aimed at Imanishi's challenging of their authenticity. See Imanishi Ryū, “Shiragi sō Dōsen ni tsukite 新羅僧道説に就きて,” reprint in *Kōrai oyobi Ri-chō shi kenkyū* 高麗及李朝史研究, ed. Imanishi Haruaki 今西春秋 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai 國書刊行會, [1918] 1974), pp. 32-49; Imanishi Ryū, “Kōrai Daisho kunyō shichijō ni tsukite 高麗太祖訓要十條に就きて,” reprint in *Kōrai oyobi Ri-chō shi kenkyū*, 23-31; Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ūi yŏn'gu: t'ŭkbi to 'cham sasang-ŭl chungshim-ūro* 高麗時代の研究—특히 圖讖 思想을 中心으로, revised edition (Seoul: Asea munhwasa 亞細亞文化史 [1948] 1980), pp. 55-74; Kim Sanggi 金庠基, “Koryŏ T'aejo kŏn'guk-kwa kyŏngnyun 2 고려태조 건국과 경륜,” in *Kuksasang-ūi chemunje* 國史상의 제문제 (Seoul: Kuksa p'yonch'an wiwŏnhoe 國史編纂委員會, 1959), pp. 60-83; Kim Sŏngjung 金成俊, *Han'guk chungse chŏngch'i pŏpchesa yŏn'gu* 韓國中世政治法制史研究, (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1985), pp. 3-10; 50; Yi Chaebŏm 李在範, “Koryŏ T'aejo-ūi hunyo shipcho-e taehan chaegŏmt'o 高麗太祖의 訓要十條에 대한 再檢討,” in *Sŏngdae sarim* 成大史林 12-13 (1997): 83-108; Yi Chŏngshin 李貞信, 고려 태조의 건국이념의 형성과 국내의 정세,” in *韓國史研究* 118, 2002: 35-74; Kim Kaptong 김갑동, “Wang Kŏn-ūi 'hunyo shipcho' chaehaesŏk: wijaksŏl-gwa Honam chiyŏk ch'abyŏl 왕건의 '훈요 10조' 재해석 -위작설과 호남지역 차별,” in *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 역사비평 60 (2002): 249-268; Shin Hoch'ŏl 申虎撤, “Koryŏ T'aejo-ūi Hu Paekche yumin chŏngch'aek-kwa 'hunyo che8cho' 高麗太祖의 後百濟 遺民政策과 '訓要 제8조,’” in *Ihwa sahak yŏn'gu* 梨花史學研究 30 (2003): 137-154; Yi Chŏngshin, *Koryŏshidae-ūi chŏngch'i pyŏndong-gwa taeye chŏngch'aek* 고려시대의 정치변동과 대외정책 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa 景仁文化社, 2003), pp. 9-50.

<sup>142</sup> To begin, the identification of “the territory south of the Kongju river” with present-day Chŏlla-do is not correct. Recent research has shown that contemporary geographical names and administrative units have consistently been ignored by historians. For the rebuttal of the traditional identification of the area under consideration, see Kim Kaptong “Wang Kŏn-ūi 'hunyo shipcho' chaehaesŏk,” pp. 262-265. For an overview of previous research and a review of the various points of view concerning the eighth injunction, see Breuker, *Forging the Truth*.

<sup>143</sup> The flight south made a lasting impression on Hyŏnjong, as he was confronted with his own inexperience and panicky reactions and with real hostility from his subjects, often merely subordinate officials, postal station workers and foot soldiers. For references with regard to the *nambaeng* and its later mythification, see *KS* 94: 28a; *KS* 125: 2b; *KS* 4: 6a; *KS* 75: 31a-b. For an analysis, see Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

policies. The reason why the eighth injunction nonetheless received so much attention from historians is because of the abundance of interpretational possibilities it offers with regard to contemporary Korea (twentieth century Korea), rather than with regard to early Koryŏ. As a result, it has been persistently overemphasized. If one endeavours to look at this injunction in its original historical context, it loses the ambiguity that made it such an attractive target for Imanishi.

The lack of credible contents notwithstanding, there is one feature of the eighth injunction which rewards closer examination in this context. The exclusion of the territory south of the Kongju river was explained in geomantic terms. This in itself confirms the persuasiveness geomantic arguments possessed in Koryŏ. A closer look at the reasons why the “territory south of the Chahyŏn ridge and beyond the Kongju river” was “treacherous” reveals much about the way geomantic reasoning was used in the injunctions.

There seems to be little disagreement among commentators of the injunctions that the geomantic features of the area under consideration in the eighth injunction were not advantageous and left much to be desired.<sup>144</sup> One possible explanation of the injunction’s contents was offered by assuming that T’aejo was not trying to suppress the area’s people, but the area’s geomantic features.<sup>145</sup> This argument firstly ignores the widespread use of remedial geomancy in Koryŏ: analogous to the way in which the Western Capital and later the Southern Capital functioned as geomantic remedies for the Supreme Capital’s geomantic deficiencies, the “treacherous and disharmonious” features of the “territory south of the Kongju river” might have been remedied by establishing temples and monasteries. Such an approach would have been the obvious solution to this problem, especially since remedial geomancy would have exerted its influence through the landscape onto the people, thereby obviating the need to bar people from the area from government service. The second reason is more important in this context: apart from the eighth injunction, the territory south of the Kongju river was not associated with geomantic disharmony during the rest of the Koryŏ dynasty. This is confirmed by extant writings of Koryŏ literati who were either stationed in Kongju or Chŏnju or passed through the region. The obstinacy of the inhabitants is habitually noted, but there is no mention of the treacherous or disharmonious nature of the landscape.<sup>146</sup> On the contrary, the area’s status as the heartland of Paekche and site of the former capital of Later Paekche is prominently mentioned and the area itself is commemorated as historically important for Koryŏ.<sup>147</sup> The peasants of the area were considered obstinate and stuck in their old ways, but an able magistrate who knew how to alternate between sternness and lenience could rule them

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<sup>144</sup> Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ sbidae-ŭi yŏn’gu*, pp. 56; Shin Hoch’ŏl, “Koryŏ T’aejo-ŭi Hu Paekche yumin chŏngch’aek-kwa ‘hunyo che8cho’”, p. 145; Yi Chaebŏm, “Koryŏ T’aejo-ŭi hunyo shipcho-e taehan chaegŏmt’o”, pp. 83-108.

<sup>145</sup> Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ sbidae-ŭi yŏn’gu*.

<sup>146</sup> Im Ch’un (d.u.) wrote about the landscape of Kongju in some detail, but he did not refer to it being treacherous. He was positive about the land and its people. See *Kongju tongjŏnggi* 公州東亭記 in TMS 65: 21b-23a.

<sup>147</sup> Yi Kyubo 李奎報 (1168-1241) was appointed in Chŏnju as its magistrate and he also was positive about the land, the people (although they were not easy to govern) and the region’s history. See *Yŏ Masŏgi sŏ* 與某書記書 in TMS 60: 25b-26b. Late Koryŏ scholar 李穀 (1298-1351) also stressed the region’s historical importance. See *Chunghŭng taehwaŏm Pogwang-sa ki* 重興大華嚴普光寺記 in TMS 70: 16a-17b; *Chŏnju Kwanp’ungnu ki* 全州觀風樓記 in TMS 71: 26b-29a.



well, without turning the populace either impervious to sanctions or insensitive to rewards.<sup>148</sup>

There is no available evidence that points to the innate treachery or disharmony of people or terrain. In fact, Chosŏn dynasty intellectual giant Yi Ik argued that the geomantic qualities of Chŏnju, the lineage seat of the royal Yi's, were outstanding, confirming the Koryŏ literati's positive appraisal of the region.<sup>149</sup> The contents of the eighth injunction are 'doubly' empty, then: there is no evidence of discrimination against the "territory south of the Kongju River" and the geomantic reasoning upon which the argued necessity for the area's exclusion was based was not supported by contemporary sources. The use of a geomantic argument in this injunction, then, was less occasioned by real geomantic deficiencies than by the cogency of geomantic rhetoric in general, especially with regard to an area that may have been suspect or not clearly positive in geomantic terms.

It has recently been argued that the geomantic principles contained in the eighth injunction would have generated similar results had they been applied to Kaesŏng instead of the "territory south of the Chahyŏn ridge and beyond the Kongju river".<sup>150</sup> In the same analysis, it was also observed that Koryŏ geomancy was inherently contradictory, because it relied on various contradictory principles, making it impossible to assess Koryŏ geomancy logically.<sup>151</sup> The presence of several contradictory principles in Koryŏ geomancy does not pose a serious problem; geomantic thought and its practical applications were well-established in Koryŏ, signalling that the presence of contradictory principles was not considered a major difficulty by geomancers.<sup>152</sup> If, however, this presence causes the relation between input and output in Koryŏ geomancy to disappear or become arbitrary, a serious problem does arise. This would mean that Koryŏ geomancy would lose all significance; not because of its inclusion of contradictory principles, but because of its arbitrariness. The reason why geomancy was relied on for such a long period by so many people during the Koryŏ period was located in its usefulness: reading a landscape according to geomantic principles offered clear advantages in terms of the usability of the landscape for different purposes. It is not hard to imagine that contradictory principles may have been used, depending on the purpose of the reading of the land; these purposes ranged from strategic to agricultural or constructional in nature. It is hard to imagine, though, that the outcome of such a geomantic consideration would be unconnected to the input, or concretely speaking, the landscape. Evidence from Koryŏ geomantic practice belies such unconnectedness between the landscape and the way in which

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<sup>148</sup> *Nambaeng wŏrilgi* 南行月日記 in *TMS* 66: 6b-13a.

<sup>149</sup> Yi Ik 李瀾 (1682-1764) for instance denounced Tosŏn's 道誥 geomantic theories on the basis of the eighth injunction which forbade people from the southwest to be employed by the state because of the treacherous nature of the landscape there. Since the clan seat of the royal Yi 李 family was in Chŏnju 全州, in the south, Tosŏn's theories concerning the influence of landscape upon people had to be false. The royal family was evidently the most meritorious clan of the country. See "Yŏjo hunyo 麗朝訓要" in *Sŏngbo sasŏl* 星湖僊說 12: 36b-37a.

<sup>150</sup> Hong Sŏnggi, "Koryŏ ch'ogi chŏngch'i-wa p'ungsu chiri 高麗 初期 政治 斗 風水 地理," in *Koryŏ T'aejo-ŭi kukka unyŏng*, pp. 424-454.

<sup>151</sup> Hong Sŏnggi, "Koryŏ ch'ogi chŏngch'i-wa p'ungsu chiri", pp. 426-434.

<sup>152</sup> The presence of contradictory principles in engineering, medicine and other sciences has been well-established. Despite the lack of an explanation that unifies these different principles, the principles work in their respective fields of application. See Paul Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance: A tale of abstraction versus the richness of being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

the landscape was used or altered according to geomantic principles.<sup>153</sup>

The conclusion regarding the contents of the eighth injunction, then, is that since the input (the landscape of the “territory south of the Chahyŏn ridge and beyond the Kongju river”) bears no relation to the output (the landscape is “treacherous”), the geomantic rhetoric is empty. The internal logic does not stand up to scrutiny, which is confirmed by the fact that no contemporary has ever attached significance to the eighth injunction. The geomantic angle was chosen purely for its intrinsic value as legitimating device. It was little more than a rhetoric means, widely understood and accordingly very persuasive, but in this case detached from valid contents. The eighth injunction does show, however, how important geomantic reasoning was thought to be. Despite the failure of this injunction to convince its contemporaries, the choice to clothe the arguments for the exclusion of the area under consideration in geomantic terms illustrates that geomancy was a logical choice to persuade people of the urgency and truthfulness of the eighth injunction.

As the distillate of Hyŏnjong’s traumatic flight southward the eighth injunction does not codify the exclusion of the “territory south of the Kongju River”, but rather unsuccessfully stipulates it in opposition to the prevailing perception of this area. It was consequently never referred to during the Koryŏ period, only to gain prominence during the colonial period. Its rhetoric was furthermore based on empty geomantic reasoning, as opposed to the practical geomancy of the second injunction, which meant that this injunction quickly came to be considered unnecessary and contrary to the needs of the Koryŏ state. Its prominent inclusion in modern studies of the injunctions and other aspects of Koryŏ is related to modern issues, such as that of modern Korean regionalism; it is unconnected to Koryŏ issues.

## NUMBER NINE

The ninth injunction is reminiscent of the seventh injunction; it also puts forward very general ideas about governing a state and does so in classical Confucian concepts and without specific reference to Koryŏ. It reads as follows:

Ninth injunction: The salaries and allowances for the aristocracy and the bureaucracy have been set according to the size of the state. They should not be increased or diminished. Furthermore, the classics say that salaries and allowances should be determined by the merits of those who receive them and government appointments should not be made on the basis of personal preferences. If those without merit or one’s relatives or friends are undeservedly given salaries, not only will the people come to resent and criticize such abuses, but those who enjoy salaries undeservedly will also not be able to enjoy them for long. You should strictly forbid this. Since our country shares borders with strong and evil

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<sup>153</sup> See for instance the cases of the Western Capital and Kaegyŏng. Although a certain flexibility or available bandwidth with regard to different geomantic interpretations certainly existed and was made use of, there is no arbitrariness in contemporary Koryŏ geomantic analyses of the two capitals, merely disagreement and difference.

countries, you should never forget the danger they pose, even in peaceful times. Treat the soldiers kindly and take good care of them; relieve them of their burden of forced labour; inspect them every autumn; give honours and promotions to the brave who stand out from the mass.<sup>154</sup>

This injunction was prompted by a military revolt during Hyōnjong's reign, which had broken out on account of two high civil officials who had stolen plots of land belonging to the underpaid military.<sup>155</sup> Its contents prescribe the measures the state has to take in order to avoid a possible recurrence of a revolt by the military. Guarding the borders is one of the crucial tasks of any state; failing at it in one way or another threatens its continued existence. The origins of the military revolt are mentioned implicitly in the first half of the injunction: corruption and nepotism. Guarding the state's finances and distributing salaries was as important as guarding its borders; failure to do so properly meant that "those who enjoy salaries undeservedly will also not be able to enjoy them for long" or, in other words, revolt and riots ensue.

The experience of military revolt and ensuing military government in early Koryō left an indelible mark upon the dynasty and its ruler. Neglect of the military and corruption among the state's highest officials had proven to have disastrous effects; Hyōnjong clearly realized how vital it was for the state to keep its military satisfied. Hyōnjong's reign after the suppression of the military revolt is characterized by constant care and attention for the military. This was not only occasioned by the military revolt, but naturally by the Liao invasions of 1010 as well. After the revolt, Koryō policy was aimed at creating strong borders and a strong army. The crushing defeat inflicted upon the Liao armies in 1018 was made possible because of the care for and investments in the military in the preceding years. Before the revolt, military expenses had risen exorbitantly in response to the Liao threat, but apparently little of that ended up with the soldiers who actually stood guard in the garrisons and who fought the battles. This was changed, when it had become clear that the state and its ruler were personally vulnerable if the capital guards rebelled. The lesson taught by the rebelling military was not forgotten by Hyōnjong. After suppressing the revolt, Hyōnjong made sure to invest much time in the military. He visited his armies on a regular basis and also held frequent inspections during which he rewarded brave soldiers, gave gifts to parents, wives and children of soldiers and showed his concern. Welfare policies such as releasing soldiers with parents over eighty years old from active duty were implemented. Hyōnjong also heavily invested in the construction of fortresses and garrison towns: he had several defensive fortifications and strongholds built during each year of his reign.<sup>156</sup> Garrisons and a static border defence were

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<sup>154</sup> *KS* 2: 16b-17a. The original text is as follows: 其九曰, 百辟群僚之祿, 視國大小, 以爲定制, 不可增減, 且古典云, 以庸制祿, 官不以私, 若以無功人, 及親戚私昵, 虛受天祿, 則不止下民怨謗, 其人, 亦不得長享福祿, 切宜戒之, 又以強惡之國, 爲隣, 安不可忘危, 兵卒, 宜加護恤, 量除徭役, 每年秋閱, 勇銳出衆者, 隨宜加授。

<sup>155</sup> Breuker, *Forging the Truth*. After the revolt, the leaders of the revolt took control of the state. A year later, they were assassinated in the Western Capital by Wang Kado, a high official close to Hyōnjong. The assassination took place with Hyōnjong's knowledge.

<sup>156</sup> *KS* 82: 30b-31b.

finally completed during the first two years of the reign of Tökchong, Hyönjong's successor, after decades of frontier fortifications.<sup>157</sup> Expenditure on pay for frontier soldiers increased enormously during the reigns of Söngjong, Hyönjong and Tökchong: the destructive Liao invasions and the continuing tension at the frontier were to blame for this. It was only during the eleventh century that it became necessary to maintain strict and permanent guarding of the frontier.<sup>158</sup>

Hyönjong's active and visible involvement with the military was continued by Tökchong, Chöngjong and Munjong.<sup>159</sup> Sukchong and Yejong also followed policies similar to those of Hyönjong. An edict from 1016 spells out what kind of significance Yejong attached to the military:

[Proper administration] should not do away with or incline too much to either one side of diplomacy or warfare. Lately, however, the brigands of our vassal territories are becoming increasingly restless. I deem it to be [an] urgent [task] for our civil and military officials to mend their suits of armour and drill their troops. I remember with longing how emperor Shun used to propagate civilized virtue and have both the dances of the military and of the civilians danced at both of these two branches. He thus appeased the Yumo barbarians in no more than seventy days. [...]<sup>160</sup>

None of the early to middle Koryö monarchs after Hyönjong tried to turn Koryö into a martial dynasty. All of them, however, realized the importance of strong borders and powerful armies. The reign of Yejong is usually described as one of the most splendid periods of Koryö, in which philosophy and the arts greatly flourished. This is certainly true, but it does not exclude the simultaneous existence and maintenance of a strong military apparatus.

The distribution of salaries and allowances, too, was an issue that was important through the whole Koryö dynasty. The meritocratic ideas expressed in the ninth injunction were ostensibly adhered to, although actual practice often deviated from the ideals professed. T'aejo had devised a provisional system to solve this problem by rewarding officials and soldiers according to their standing with him,<sup>161</sup> but it was not until 976 that Koryö came to possess a system that officially determined the stipends of officials with the introduction of the *Field and Woodland Rank System* 田柴科.<sup>162</sup> The *Field and Woodland Rank System* was adapted

<sup>157</sup> In these two years a long wall was completed which stretched from the north-west to the north-east. See *KSC* 4: 5a.

<sup>158</sup> *KS* 82: 30a-32a; *KSC* 4: 5a.

<sup>159</sup> *KS* 81: 4a-11a. A decree from 1016 reads as follows: "If a soldier should die while on active duty guarding the frontiers, the state will then provide the necessary items to wash and clothe the body and send the remains to the soldier's home. If he has died in strange territory and his name and place of origin is not known, he will be buried temporarily by the concerned local government office. His age and his physical appearance must be recorded, so that there need not be any worry lest he be mistaken for someone else." See *KS* 3: 16a-b.

<sup>160</sup> *KS* 70: 13b-14a.

<sup>161</sup> *KS* 2: 33b; *KS* 78: 6b; Kim Yöngdu 金泳斗, "Koryö T'aejodae-üi yökpunjön 高麗 太祖代의 役分田," in *Koryö T'aejo-üi kukka unyöng*, pp. 322-362.

<sup>162</sup> *KS* 2: 33b. *KSC* 2: 14a-b. The classical study on the Koryö land system is still Kang Chinch'öl's study, which has been revised numerous times. The last edition dates from 1996. See Kang Chinch'öl. *Kaejöng Koryö t'oji chedo yön'gu* 改訂 高麗土地制度史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1996). For a useful overview of the different opinions, see Yu Hant'aek 尹漢宅, "Chönshigwa ch'eje-esö sajön-üi söngkyök 전시과 체제에서 사건의 성격," in *Han'guk chön'gūndasa-üi chuyö chaengchöm* 한국 전근대사의 주요 쟁점 (Seoul: Yöksa Pip'yöngsa 역사비평사, 2002), ed., Yöksa pip'yöng p'yönjip

several times; each period fitted it to meet its own needs.<sup>163</sup> The worry over creating a system that was both workable and sufficiently fair not to arouse resistance and revolt, however, was a constant factor. Concerns from the military that they were consistently and structurally underpaid and discriminated against were one of the factors that underlay the military coup in 1170, confirming the vital importance of the contents of the ninth injunction.

The ninth injunction was written with the early eleventh-century military revolt and the Liao threat in mind. It warned against the effects of corruption and nepotism on the strength of the military and strongly urged the ruler to take care of Koryŏ's border and the men who stood guard at those borders. T'aejo had succeeded in keeping Koryŏ's borders safe with ad hoc rotation of the armies, but in response to the growing threat from the Liao, Hyŏnjong was forced to invest in a static border defence. This brought with it a much higher expenditure on military affairs, but after the military coup of 1014, this was never again to be paid for by the soldiers themselves. Hyŏnjong became a monarch who actively and visibly invested in the military by visiting his armies, rewarding the brave and helping those whose families needed support. Hyŏnjong's policies bore fruit: the Liao were routed in 1018 and the Koryŏ military were reasonably satisfied. Hyŏnjong's successors paid heed to the lessons that the ninth injunction taught; until the reign of Ŭijong, most rulers took care of the military. Although civilian officials were in all respects better off than their military counterparts, the importance of a strong and motivated military and the consequences of mistreating soldiers were not forgotten for 150 years.

## NUMBER TEN

The tenth injunction is a fitting conclusion to the *Ten injunctions*. It speaks of the fundamental prerequisites for a wise ruler in the classical Sinitic tradition. It reads as follows:

Tenth injunction: In preserving a household or a state, one should always be on one's guard, even if one has no immediate worries. Read widely in the classics and in history; take the past as a warning for the present. The Duke of Zhou 周公 was a great sage, yet he sought to admonish his nephew King Cheng 成王, with *Against luxurious ease* 無逸一篇. Draw a diagram of *Against luxurious ease*, post it on the wall and reflect upon it when entering and leaving the room.<sup>164</sup>

In a way, this injunction has perhaps been the most successful one, since Koryŏ rulers have always abided by the ideal type of ruler as sketched in this short injunction.<sup>165</sup> The contents of the injunction are best summarized by referring to the contents of *Against luxurious*

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wiwŏnhoe, pp. 151-166.

<sup>163</sup> KS 78: 6a-13; KSC 2: 60a.

<sup>164</sup> KS 2: 17a. This is the original text: 其十曰, 有國有家, 儆戒無虞, 博觀經史, 鑑古戒今, 周公大聖, 無逸一篇, 進戒成王, 宜當圖揭, 出入觀省. Strangely, all translators of the tenth injunction, irrespective of the language they translate into, seem to have missed the fact that it refers to a diagram and not to a reproduced text.

<sup>165</sup> See chapter eight.

*ease*, a part of the *Book of documents* that by using historical examples sketches a picture of the ideal ruler; not indulging in luxurious ease, he understands the painful toils of the peasant (which was also alluded to in injunction number seven). The ideal ruler is furthermore grave, humble, frugal and referential towards Heaven. Lastly, he allows his ministers to admonish and lecture him, and he listens to them. As an afterthought, the study of *Against luxurious ease* is added to the list of desirable qualities in a ruler.

The ideal ruler of *Against luxurious ease* is a well-known person in East-Asian history. This archetype did not represent all possible desirable qualities in a ruler; especially in Koryŏ, a ruler was also expected to possess virtues that would bring the grace of the Buddha to the country.<sup>166</sup> Nonetheless, rulers were trained in the virtues of *Against luxurious ease* and they tried to propagate those virtues. At the very least they paid these virtues lip-service. *Against luxurious ease* provided a model for Koryŏ's ruler and after their deaths, their reigns were measured against this yardstick. Ch'oe Sŭngno's appraisal of the reigns of Koryŏ's first five rulers does precisely this. The model that inspired Ch'oe's criteria came from *Against luxurious ease*.<sup>167</sup> The historical commentaries in the *Koryŏsa* are similar. Explicitly or implicitly, the words and deeds of each ruler were held up to ancient China's sage rulers as depicted in *Against luxurious ease*.

The text itself, too, was considered very important in Koryŏ. Although the diagram format in which it figures in the tenth injunction was only introduced into Koryŏ during Hyŏnjong's reign,<sup>168</sup> the text itself is part of the *Book of documents* and as such already well-known well before Koryŏ. *Against luxurious ease* was used as a text to instruct the ruler in early Koryŏ: Kim Shimŏn had urged Sŏngjong to read it in the policy proposals he submitted to Sŏngjong. Sŏngjong was glad to take note of it.<sup>169</sup> In the eleventh century, it was reintroduced from the Song dynasty in the form of a diagram written on folding screens.<sup>170</sup> Such folding screens were to be placed behind the throne of the ruler in the main audience halls of the palace. During the reign of Sukchong in 1103, famous calligrapher and historian Hong Kwan was ordered by the monarch to write in calligraphy *Against luxurious ease* on a folding screen for use in the Hoegyŏng-jŏn hall 會慶殿.<sup>171</sup> In 1106, Yejong ordered Yun Kwan 尹瓘 to hold a royal lecture on the contents of *Against luxurious ease*: twenty-one high-ranking officials were instructed to attend the lecture.<sup>172</sup> And in 1129, Injong had Kim Puch'ŏl 金富轍 lecture on this text. After the lecture he had a discussion on its contents instigated by Yun Ŏni 尹彦頤.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> See chapter eight.

<sup>167</sup> See chapter six.

<sup>168</sup> Breuker, *Forging the truth*.

<sup>169</sup> *KS* 96: 26b-29b.

<sup>170</sup> Breuker, *Forging the truth*. Koryŏ was not the only recipient of the diagram. According to the *History of the Jin*, the Jin dynasty also came to know the diagram of *Against luxurious ease* through Song envoys, suggesting that explaining it by means of a diagram was a well-known device in Song China and easily exported. One probable reason for this was that, since it was customarily written in calligraphy on folding screens, it made an excellent as well as easily portable gift. Song emperor Renzong (1022-1063) had two screens with the diagram of *Against luxurious ease* made and placed in two recently built audience halls.

<sup>171</sup> *KS* 12: 2a.

<sup>172</sup> *KS* 16: 2a-b 1129.

<sup>173</sup> *KS* 12: 26b-27a.

There is also a thirteenth century poem by Kim Yanggyōng extant which talks about writing a calligraphy of *Against luxurious ease* on a folding screen.<sup>174</sup> The list of examples of the currency and significance of this text stretches all the way to the end of the dynasty in the late fourteenth century.

The tenth injunction codified the prevalent conception of how a ruler should rule its country. It explicitly referred to classical texts from shared Sinitic resources that specified the proper conduct of a ruler. The ideas expressed in the injunction were relevant until the very end of the Koryō dynasty; the injunction's ideal was emulated by each and every ruler.

### THE *TEN INJUNCTIONS* IN THEIR ENTIRETY

The *Ten injunctions* have been interpreted in many different ways, as a Confucian manifesto, nativist program, a testimony to Buddhism, a plea for independence or as a statist and practical guide. The injunctions contain elements of Confucian statecraft, Buddhism, geomancy, practical concerns, military strategy, economic reasoning and historical remembrance. They are a clear product of the eleventh century and show the vision of Koryō's past, present and future that Hyōnjong and his minister shared. At the same time, there is a strong continuity present in the injunctions. The fact that Hyōnjong's policies contradicted those of T'aejo does not belie this. Apart from the fact that this continuity would have been necessary at the time of the forgery to have the injunctions accepted as authentic, there was a more compelling factor in this regard. The simultaneous reliance on Buddhism and indigenous spirits of the mountains and streams, the importance of Confucian statecraft, the pressing need for border security in the north, the multi-dimensional importance of the Western Capital; these were all truths during the entire Koryō dynasty, despite the fact that their particulars varied over time. The same continuity is found in the fact that many of the injunctions refer to earlier edicts, proposals, memorials and so forth and do so in exactly the same language, relying on the same metaphors and expressing the same ideas.

An important reason for the longevity of the injunctions, that is, the long period during which they were referred to as examples to be followed, is that the injunctions drew upon earlier truths, which they did not try to refute, but instead replaced by Hyōnjong's notions with regard to Koryō, dressed up as T'aejo's instructions. The *Ten injunctions* in their entirety present several truths which are at odds with each other, both directly within the injunctions as a text and indirectly, within the historical context of each truth or essential element represented by each injunction.

The injunctions contain a pluralist message. In each of the injunctions, a message different from and perhaps contradictory to one or more of the other injunctions may be read. Even if the injunctions in themselves would not give rise to contradictory interpretations, the

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<sup>174</sup> TMS 19: 4b.

historical context of the themes expressed in them often does. An evident example is the emphasis on the P'algwan and Yöndüng Festivals of the sixth injunction and the need for careful spending of state resources of the ninth injunction. In practice, the lavish spending associated with the festivals stood at odds with the need to distribute state funds evenly and wisely; both festivals were primarily aimed at the capital elite, while the ninth injunction stressed the need to pay the ordinary garrison soldier adequately. Another example is the reliance on Buddhism preached in the first injunction and the contents of the tenth injunction which stress a classical Confucian approach to matters of importance. Again, both the internal principles of the injunctions and their respective historical backgrounds clash.

The injunctions have too often been studied as a text that needs to be explained, as a bundle of contradictions waiting to be solved. Consequently, Buddhologists analyze injunctions one, two and six; scholars of nativism and shamanism (often conflated) choose injunctions five and six; scholars concerned with regional schism concentrate on injunction number eight; specialists on Confucianism focus on number three, seven, nine and ten. As a result, the contradictions of the injunctions are explained away; as is the significance of the text. The history of the Koryö dynasty clearly shows how vital the presence of different ideas, competing thought and belief systems and inconsistent views of the world were. The injunctions served as a guide to make this bewildering abundance coherent enough for humans to handle. The injunctions were never meant to be a final codification of the one way (or the ten ways) to rule Koryö. This is abundantly clear when it is realized that if the injunctions are taken to their logical extremes, they contradict each other on fundamental points. They would become mutually exclusive. The standing point of the interpreter is then the yardstick according to which significance is attached to the individual injunctions.

To be sure, extreme interpretations of the injunctions did occur from time to time in Koryö. Injong's interpretation of the fourth injunctions as an exhortation to embrace Sinitic culture and to reject northern culture is such an instance. An instance, moreover, easily understood against the background of the emergence of the Jin state.<sup>175</sup> Other contemporary examples include Im Wan's 林完 interpretation of the injunctions as Confucian.<sup>176</sup> Ch'oe Kiu 崔奇遇 made a similar interpretation. Military ruler Ch'oe Ch'unghön 崔忠獻 used the injunctions as an example of reformatory policies; he also issued a ten-point reform program<sup>177</sup> to support his own ten-point proposal by stressing the reforming nature both policies shared. Later in the Koryö dynasty, the injunctions were used as a stick to beat Buddhism with.<sup>178</sup> It will be remembered that one neo-Confucian Chosön scholar interpreted the second injunction as a call to build, while Buddhists from the Koryö period had seen it as a restrictive measure.

The injunctions were of eminent practical importance to Koryö, because they were multi-interpretable. As historiography on this subject has shown, they offer starting points to

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<sup>175</sup> KS 16: 2b-3a.

<sup>176</sup> KS 98: 35b; KS 98: 38b

<sup>177</sup> KS 129: 4b

<sup>178</sup> Pak Ch'ö 朴礎, too, interpreted the injunctions as essentially Confucian. KS 120: 34b-39a (a translation of this memorial is in Peter Lee, *Sources*, pp. 373-377).



allow Buddhist, Confucian, statist, nativist, geomantic or other interpretations. The question whether these interpretations are correct is besides the point; a historical inquiry into the nature of the injunctions has to ask this question, but for those people who relied on the injunctions for legitimation, support and possible paths to be travelled, the correct interpretation was the one that fitted the circumstances of the times and that could be tied to the injunctions. In this way, the Three Han were equipped with a framework for its members across generations; the injunctions communicated the intentions of the dead to the living and created a bond between the different generations that inhabited the lands of the Three Han. The injunctions contributed much to the emergence of a historical community on the Korean peninsula, because “to an extraordinary degree ethnic symbolic communication is communication over the *longue durée*, between the dead and the living.”<sup>179</sup>

The dominant ideology of early to middle Koryŏ clearly surfaces in the injunctions; ambiguity was preserved, instead of eradicated, which gave rise to a state in which various latent potentialities co-existed. The presence of potentialities was utilized in Koryŏ in times of domestic and international crises. Depending on the direction and kind of pressure, tentative boundaries as sketched in the injunctions, hardened, only to soften again with relief of pressure. Besides the codification of different potentialities for Koryŏ’s rulers to make use of, the injunctions in their entirety also furnished the state with a bandwidth of possible actions. Despite the leeway that the injunctions had built into them, a claim towards the absolute domination of Confucianism over Buddhism (or vice versa), or a proposal to adopt Liao customs indiscriminately were not supported by the text. Another instance is the position of Confucian statecraft in Koryŏ: despite the importance of Buddhism in all aspects of life, the injunctions clearly codified Confucian statecraft as the preferred way of government. Rulers as incarnations of the Buddha (like in Shilla or like Kungye) did not fall within the parameters set by the injunctions. The injunctions, then, provided their interpreters both guidance and leeway at the same time.

The injunctions were one of the bases of constantly renegotiated and redefined views on Koryŏ and the world. Worldviews per se are always in flux, maintaining some elements and discarding other ones. This is not a haphazard process, but one regulated by necessity, practicality and historical precedence. The injunctions contributed to practical and necessary views on the world by presenting historical precedence combined with T’aejo’s charisma. The injunctions set the parameters within which Hyŏnjong and his ministers envisioned Koryŏ; they set both the outer boundaries, beyond which Koryŏ identity would dissolve, and created room for manoeuvre, the flexibility in virtually all matters that characterized eleventh and twelfth-century Koryŏ. A pluralist conception of the world was enshrined in the injunctions and continually confirmed on account of the injunctions’ position as the most authoritative guide available to those who ruler the country. A guide that combined the authority of the dynasty’s founder with those elements of reality that Koryŏ found important, indispensable even, for the kind of life it preferred for its members. To paraphrase Paul Feyerabend, the injunctions codified those things as real which played an important role in the kind of life its

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<sup>179</sup> Armstrong, *Nations before nationalism*, p. 8.

writers preferred.<sup>180</sup>

The role the injunctions played in codifying a pluralist view on the world, in sanctioning the explicit presence of contradiction and incommensurability in Koryŏ policy, thought, and general perception of the world can hardly be overestimated. Until the end of the dynasty, the injunctions told their readers different stories, but most importantly they told their readers that the existence of different stories was the norm.

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<sup>180</sup> Paul Feyerabend, *Conquest of abundance: A tale of abstraction versus the richness of being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### MYOCH'ÖNG'S CHALLENGE: THE BID FOR THE 'IMPOSSIBLE GOOD'

The rebellion of Myoch'öng (?-1135) is one of the most often discussed incidents of the Koryö period. Opinions on the character of Myoch'öng's rebellion have been presented and defended with a fervour more often associated with the political arena than with academic endeavours. Myoch'öng's rebellion and its significance were catapulted into the forefront of Korean historiography by Shin Ch'aeho 申采浩 (1880-1936), whose dichotomous analysis of the rebellion, its motives, significance and most important characters set the tone for the debate until now. Quite apart from the historiographical significance the rebellion has acquired, however, an examination of Myoch'öng, his movement and his rebellion provide a fitting conclusion to a discussion of Koryö pluralism, as it puts Koryö pluralism into relief because it essentially denied and negated Koryö pluralism. An examination of the rebellion is accordingly a very convenient way of showing what Koryö pluralist Weltanschauung was and how it operated. Before discussing the historiography on the rebellion, let us first briefly delve into the circumstances that led to the rise of Myoch'öng, his rebellion and his defeat.

Myoch'öng was a Buddhist monk and a geomancer, whose rapid rise to importance in the late 1120's, just after the quelling of the Yi Chagyöm's abortive attempt to seize power, worried many court officials, among whom Kim Pushik. At the instigation of Myoch'öng, Injong held several large-scale rituals, had a new palace built in the Western Capital (the Palace of Great Flowering 大華宮) and journeyed there several times, hoping to prove the monk's prophecies of national prosperity true. Myoch'öng had had Injong's ear for eight years when the antagonism built up during this time between his faction and that of Kim Pushik reached a dramatic conclusion. No longer satisfied with the half-hearted promises of a ruler who had only just managed to wrestle himself free from his grandfather and former father-in-law Yi Chagyöm and who now had to deal with the powerful officials who had saved him, Myoch'öng demanded the immediate realization of his proposals: relocation of the capital from Kaegyöng to the Western Capital; the unambiguous elevation of the status of the Koryö ruler to emperor (which would make him the equal of the Jin emperor); and the attack and conquest of the Jin. Injong's failure to comply, due to the strong resistance at court from Kim Pushik, Im Wönae and Yi Chijö, created an explosive situation. In 1135, Myoch'öng revolted in the Western Capital, while he was simultaneously deserted by most of his prominent supporters. Myoch'öng called his new state Taewi (大爲), issued the reign name Ch'ön'gae (Heavenly Opening 天開), organized an army (called Loyal Righteousness 忠義) and fortified

the Western Capital.<sup>1</sup> After many attempts from the court to reach a peaceful solution, Kim Pushik was finally sent out with an army to defeat Myoch'öng and retake the Western Capital. After a year of destructive warfare, he succeeded in doing so. Myoch'öng and most of his followers were killed, the survivors branded and exiled. The Western Capital was finally conquered, the rebels killed or banished and the country returned from the brink of civil war.

### THE COLOURFUL HISTORIOGRAPHY ON MYOCH'ÖNG

The rebellion of Myoch'öng was given an eternal lease on life when Shin Ch'aeho described it as the “greatest event in the thousand years of Chosön history”.<sup>2</sup> In *Chosön sasang ilch'önnyöllae cheiltae sakkön* 朝鮮史上一千年來第一大事件 (*The greatest event in the thousand years of Chosön history*), Shin launched the thesis that Korea's destiny had changed for the worse when Kim Pushik defeated Myoch'öng. Shin's thesis possesses some merits: it made sense in the repressive environment of a society that had recently been forced into the Japanese empire. It also offered a clear-cut answer to a complicated problem. And it can be imagined that such a thesis offered some form of consolation for the deplorable situation Koreans found themselves in as subjects of the Japanese empire. Shin's thesis was eminently suited to the colonial period. Unfortunately, Shin's thesis not only survived the colonial period, but it was also established as the dominant paradigm of Koryö history after the war. His condemnation of Kim Pushik and praise for Myoch'öng made it into Korean history primers and most contemporary historians trace the modern study of the Koryö period back to him and his study of Myoch'öng's revolt. Due to its radical approach, its 'clean' break with the past and attractive dichotomous reasoning, which divided the world in progressives and reactionaries, the influence of Shin Ch'aeho on the study of the rebellion of Myoch'öng has been long and enduring. It is probably no exaggeration to state that every study of the rebellion begins with a rehashing of Shin Ch'aeho's thought on the matter. Shin's influence is not restricted to Myoch'öng's rebellion; the paradigm he created writing on the rebellion became the normative prism through which most of Koryö history came to be viewed.

The influence of Shin Ch'aeho has biased historians with regard to the motives of the persons involved in the rebellion and with regard to their respective ideological orientations, but even so many valuable analyses of the underlying conditions in Koryö society have been made. It is generally agreed upon that Myoch'öng represented a segment of Koryö society that tried to revitalize Koryö by steering a course independent from the Song and the Jin. It is further agreed upon that there were two factions in Koryö at that time; Shin Ch'aeho

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<sup>1</sup> KSC 10: 15b; TMS 23: 18a-b.

<sup>2</sup> Originally published in 1929, “Chosön sasang ilch'önnyöllae cheiltae sakkön” 朝鮮史上一千年來第一大事件 was part of *Chosönsa yön'gu ch'o* 朝鮮史研究草 (Research notes on Chosön history). It was republished in 1972 and re-edited in 1995 in the collected works of Shin Ch'aeho. See Shin Ch'aeho, *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho chönjip* 丹齋申采浩全集, edited by *Tanjae Shin Ch'aeho sönsaeng kinyöim saöpboe* 丹齋申采浩先生記念事業會 (Revised edition in 4 volumes, Seoul: Hyöngsöl ch'ulp'ansa 螢雪出版社, 1995), vol. 2, pp. 103-124.

described these as Myoch'ong's nativist and independent faction and Kim Pushik's Confucian, rationalist and sinophile faction.<sup>3</sup> Yi Pyongdo applied the same dichotomous reasoning, but divided the two factions in the independent-minded faction of Myoch'ong that sought relocation of the capital to P'yongyang and Kim Pushik's faction that wished to preserve Koryo's sinophile foreign policies.<sup>4</sup> Another reading of the events distinguished yet another dichotomy, between the revolutionary aims of Myoch'ong and the reactionary goals of Kim Pushik.<sup>5</sup> An early study interpreted the rebellion as the result of personal antagonism between Chong Chisang and Kim Pushik<sup>6</sup>, while a significant number of historians have concluded that structural friction between Koryo's capital Kaegyong and its economically underprivileged Western Capital led to the rebellion.<sup>7</sup> The most recent research acknowledges that Myoch'ong cannot be simply identified with the rebellion and has made clear distinctions between the roles of Chong Chisang and Myoch'ong in its outbreak.<sup>8</sup> Another study, which looks at Myoch'ong from a religious point of view, presents Myoch'ong as the probable author of the Tan'gun myth.<sup>9</sup> Finally, in two studies a direct connection between the rebellion in the Western Capital and the compilation of the *Samguk sagi* is made.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Shin Ch'aeho, "Choson sasang ilch'onnyollae cheiltae sakkon", pp. 103-124.

<sup>4</sup> Yi Pyongdo 李丙燾, *Koryo sbidae-üi yon'gu: t'ukbi to'cham sasang-ül chungshim-üro* 高麗時代의 研究 - 특히 圖識 思想을 中心으로 (Seoul: Asea munhwasa 亞細亞文化史, 1980).

<sup>5</sup> Kang Songwon 姜聲媛, "Myoch'ong-üi chae kömt'o 妙清의 再檢討," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 13 (1990): pp. 177-96.

<sup>6</sup> Seno Umakuma 瀨野馬熊, "Korai Myosei no ran ni tsuite 高麗妙清の亂に就いて," *Tōyō gakubō* 東洋學報 18.4 (1930): p. 580.

<sup>7</sup> Ha Hyongang, "Koryo Sogyong ko 고려 西京考," *Yōksa hakpo* 歷史學報 35:36 (1967): pp. 139-174 (reprinted in Ha Hyongang, *Han'guk chungsesa yon'gu* 韓國中世史研究 (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1988); Yi Chongshin 李貞信, "Koryo-üi taeye kwangye-wa Myoch'ong-üi nan 고려의 대외 관계와 묘청의 난," *史叢* 45 (1996): pp. 81-89; Kang Ogyop 姜玉葉, "Yoch'o Sogyong kyongyong-gwa Sogyong seryog-üi ch'ui 麗初 西京經營과 西京勢力的 推移," *Tongdae sabak* 東大史學 1 (1995): pp. 3-27; Kang Ogyop, "Koryo Sogyong-üi p'ungsujirijok koch'al 高麗 西京의 風水地理의 考察," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 71 (1996): pp. 69-101; Kang Ogyop, "Myoch'ong nan-üi yon'gu tonghyang-gwa seroun inshik mosaek 妙清亂의 研究動向과 새로운 認識 摸索," *Paeksan hakpo* 白山學報 49 (1997): pp. 169-208; Kang Ogyop, "Injong-dae Sogyong ch'ondoron-üi taedu-wa Sogyong seryok-üi yökhal 인종대 서경천도론의 대두와 서경세력의 역할," *Sabak yon'gu* 史學研究 55-56 (1998): pp. 109-130; Kang Ogyop, "Koryo Injong-dae Sogyongmin-üi hangjaeng-gwa Sogyong seryog-üi punhwa 高麗 仁宗代 西京民의 抗爭과 西京勢力的 分化," *Sabak yon'gu* 史學研究 58-59 (1999): pp. 571-590; Kang Ogyop, "Koryo shidae-üi Sogyong chedo 高麗時代의 西京制度," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 國史館論叢 92 (2000): pp. 93-118; Michael E. Rogers, "Factionalism and Koryo policy under the Northern Sung," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 79.1 (1959): pp. 16-24; Rogers, "The Chinese world order in its transmural extension: The case of Chin and Koryo," *Korean Studies Forum* 4 (1978): pp. 1-22; Rogers, "National consciousness in medieval Korea: The impact of Liao and Chin on Koryo," in *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its neighbors, 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), edited by Morris Rossabi, pp. 151-172; Rogers, "Notes on Koryo's relations with 'Sung' and 'Liao'," *Chindan hakpo* 71-72 (1991): pp. 310-335.

<sup>8</sup> Kim Tangtaek, "Koryo Injong-dae-üi Sogyong ch'ondo, ch'ingje konwon, Kunguk chongbolon-gwa Kim Pushig-üi 'Samguk sagi' p'yonch'an," *Kuksagwan nonch'ong* 170 (2005): pp. 1-23; Kim Namgyu 金南奎, "Koryo Injong-dae-üi Sogyong ch'ondo undong-gwa Sogyong pallan-e taehan il koch'al 高麗 仁宗代의 西京遷都運動과 西京叛亂에 대한 一考察," *Kyongdae saron* 慶大史論 1 (1985): pp. 5-30.

<sup>9</sup> John Jorgensen, "Who was the author of the Tan'gun myth?," in *Perspectives on Korea* (Sydney: Wild Peony, 1998), edited by Lee Sang-oak and Duk-soo Park, pp. 222-255.

<sup>10</sup> Edward J. Shultz, "Kim Pushik-kwa Samguk sagi 金富軾과 三國史記," *Han'guksa yon'gu* 韓國史研究 73 (1991): pp. 1-20; Kim Tangtaek, "Koryo Injong-dae-üi Sogyong ch'ondo", pp. 15-30.

These studies have done much to elucidate the mechanisms and dynamics of the rebellion in the Western Capital, but most analyses unduly stress the existence of a crude dichotomy between Myoch'ong and Kim Pushik and identify Myoch'ong with progressive ideas and Kim Pushik with conservatism. In the previous chapters, I have demonstrated that such a dichotomous approach of Koryŏ society is not conducive to understanding Koryŏ society and that persons such as Kim Pushik were anything but the sinophile toadies they have often been made out to have been.<sup>11</sup> I have also shown that Koryŏ's foreign policy was only dependent upon what was judged to be best for Koryŏ.<sup>12</sup> I shall accordingly not refute such arguments in this chapter. I shall limit the argument to Myoch'ong and the rebellion, while accepting the following conclusions made in previous studies; that Myoch'ong and the rebellion should be approached as separate issues, that the background of the rebellion must for a large part be located in tension between the capital and the Western Capital in the aftermath of Yi Chagyŏm's failed coup and the demise of the Liao, and that Chŏng Chisang *cum suis* used Myoch'ong instead of the other way round.

### WHAT HAPPENED?

The first time we hear about Myoch'ong is relatively late, in 1127.<sup>13</sup> Apparently, he already possessed something of a reputation as a geomancer and thaumaturg by that time, although there are no sources that explain his background.<sup>14</sup> Myoch'ong is described as a monk and some of the rituals he performed at the Koryŏ court and the names he gave the eight spirits whom he thought would protect the country seem to imply a reasonably intimate knowledge of Koryŏ Buddhism.<sup>15</sup> Myoch'ong also claimed to be a disciple of a disciple of Tosŏn, although his insistence that he was a third generation disciple of someone who had lived three centuries earlier is entirely unconvincing.<sup>16</sup> His geomantic prowess, however, seems

<sup>11</sup> Shin Ch'aeho, "Chosŏn sasang ilch'ŏnnyŏllae cheilae sakkŏn", pp. 103-124; Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu*; Kang Sŏngwŏn, "Myoch'ong-ŭi chae kŏmt'o", pp. 177-196; Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30.

<sup>12</sup> See chapter nine.

<sup>13</sup> KSC 9: 29b-30a; KS 127: 26b-27a; KS 16: 22a.

<sup>14</sup> The fact that Kim Pushik, who opposed Myoch'ong from the beginning and who led the pacification of the rebellion, compiled the Veritable Records for the reign of Injong has biased the description of Myoch'ong. Unfortunately, there are no other sources concerning Myoch'ong's background.

<sup>15</sup> KS 15: 22a; KS 127: 28b-29b; KSC 9: 29b-30a; KSC 9: 54b-55a. According to John Jorgensen, Myoch'ong not only "specialized in geomancy, *yin-yang* numerology and magic", but he also speculated that "Myoch'ong was probably a leader of the Shininjong 神印宗 (Divine Seal or Divine Mudra) School of Esoteric Buddhism that apparently existed in Koryŏ times." Although I do not think that the extant sources allow such a conclusion, I do agree with Jorgensen's description of Myoch'ong's activities, which "combined a Buddho-Taoist geomancy, astrology and prognostication with the Buddhist theories of *ponji sujŏk*, the assimilative identification of non-Buddhist with Buddhist deities, all in an Esoteric Buddhist framework". See Jorgensen, "Who was the author of the Tan'gun myth?", pp. 225-227.

<sup>16</sup> Due to the absolute lack of other sources, nothing about Myoch'ong can be verified, but his insistence that there was only one other person between him and Tosŏn must either have been a symbolical statement situating him in the lineage of Koryŏ's most important geomancers or otherwise a less than generous representation of Myoch'ong's

to have been wholly convincing to his contemporaries, many of whom attached credence to his prophetic statements that if the Koryŏ capital would be moved to the Western Capital, where the earth force had not been exhausted, the dynasty would prosper and thirty-six states would come and pay tribute to Koryŏ.<sup>17</sup> As a result, a new palace was built in the Western Capital in 1132 and preparations were made to move the capital.<sup>18</sup> The ruler also toured to the Western Capital frequently. Pleading Myoch'ŏng's case in the central capital were Chŏng Chisang 鄭知常 (?-1135) and Paek Suhan 白壽翰 (?-1135).<sup>19</sup> Chŏng, though still very young, was one of Koryŏ's most celebrated poets and Confucian scholars, who had already had the honour of giving the royal lecture.<sup>20</sup> Paek was a court astronomer about whom nothing is known except for his association with Myoch'ŏng.<sup>21</sup> Myoch'ŏng's supporters included people from different regions, ranks and occupations; Kim An 金安 (?-1135) was a personal attendant of Injong 仁宗<sup>22</sup>, while Mun Kongin 文公仁 (also known as Mun Kongmi 文公美; ?-1137) was a state councillor, a personal attendant to Injong and one of Koryŏ's most influential bureaucrats.<sup>23</sup> Hwang Chuch'ŏm 黃周瞻 (fl. early twelfth century) held the office of left editor

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lineage by Kim Pushik. As will be shown, Myoch'ŏng was part of a tradition of Koryŏ geomancers who habitually traced their professional lineage back to Tosŏn. The geomantic manuals ascribed to Tosŏn were the Koryŏ geomancer's most important theoretical tools. See chapter thirteen for details.

<sup>17</sup> *KSC* 9: 42a-b; *KSC* 9: 44b; *KSC* 9: 56a-b; *KSC* 10: 2a-b; *KS* 127: 27b. Tosŏn was also credited with a similar prophesy. In a memorial submitted by Kim Wije, Tosŏn is credited with the following prophesy: 'In Koryŏ there are three capitals. Songak 松嶽 (Kaesŏng) is to be the central capital, Mongmyŏngyang 木覓壤 (Seoul) the Southern Capital, and P'yŏngyang the Western Capital. If in the eleventh, twelfth, first and second months the king resides in the central capital, in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth months the king resides in the southern capital, and in the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months the king resides in the Western Capital, then the thirty-six states of the world will offer tribute.' See *KS* 122:1a-3b. Translation borrowed from Peter Lee, *Sourcebook*, p. 434.

<sup>18</sup> *KSC* 9: 42b; *KSC* 9: 43a. The building of the new palace apparently strained the local resources in a disastrous manner (*KSC* 9: 44b). The Western Capital was eventually given a tax and corvée reprieve on account of the difficulties during the building (*KSC* 9: 45a). The completion of the palace was reason for a festive occasion, at which time Chŏng Chisang *cum suis* insisted that they heard sacred music coming down from heaven. When the present state councillors refused to sign a document saying that such an auspicious event had indeed taken place, he was outraged (*KS* 127: 27b; *KSC* 9: 44b-45a). For more details, see Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", pp. 69-101; Kang Ogyŏp, "Injong-dae Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndoron-ŭi taedu", pp. 109-130; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Injong-dae Sŏgyŏngmin-ŭi hangjaeng", pp. 571-590; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng chedo", pp. 93-118.

<sup>19</sup> *KS* 16: 32a; *KSC* 9: 42a-b; *KSC* 9: 56a-b; *KSC* 10: 2b.

<sup>20</sup> *KS* 15: 22b. Chŏng had finished first in the state examinations (*hyŏllyang-gwa* 賢良科) during the reign of Yejong after being educated at the National Confucian Academy 太學. His mother was honoured by the ruler himself on account of her son's accomplishments. Chŏng, who was a native of the Western Capital, also accompanied Injong to the Western Capital. Chŏng was further described as a royal favourite who pledged "to be steadfast in his loyalty until he would die and his bones be bleached white". See *TMS* 34: 19b-20b. For helpful tables that explain the personal circumstances of the people connected to Myoch'ŏng, see Kim Tang'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 4-6.

<sup>21</sup> He seems to have been appointed at court at the behest of Chŏng Chisang and Yun Ōni and had a son called Paek Ch'ŏng 白淸. Nothing else is known about his background. See *TMS* 35: 11a-16a; *KS* 127: 26b-27a; *KS* 127: 33a-b. Other sources also describe Paek as an astronomer. See *Ch'oe Ham myojimyŏng* 崔誠墓誌銘 in *KMC* 95: 18-21.

<sup>22</sup> According to the epitaph for Ch'oe Ham 崔誠, Kim An was a native of Milsŏng. See *Ch'oe Ham myojimyŏng* in *KMC* 95: 18-21.

<sup>23</sup> His biography is in the section for treacherous ministers in the *Koryŏsa* (*KS* 123: 1b-2b). Mun served as head examiner of the state examinations in 1128 together with Ch'oe Yu 崔儒 (*KS* 73: 27b). He was impeached by Yi Chijŏ 李之臣 in 1135 and temporarily relieved from office, but reinstated because statesmen of his calibre were needed (*KS* 95: 16b; *TMS* 29: 16b-17a; *KSC* 10: 28a-b). He died in 1137, restated to high office (*KS* 6: 42a). His association with Myoch'ŏng did not hurt him in the long run.

右正言<sup>24</sup>; Im Kyöngch'öng 林景清 (fl. early twelfth century) served as an administrator to the security council.<sup>25</sup> Yi Chejöng 李齊挺 (fl. early twelfth century) was a retired bureaucrat; Hong Isö 洪彝紱 (fl. early twelfth century) and Yi Chungbu 李仲孚 (fl. early twelfth century) were also personal attendants to the ruler.<sup>26</sup> The faction associated with Myoch'öng also included military officials; Ch'oe Hongjae 崔弘宰 and Ch'oe Pongshim 崔逢深 were both high-ranking military officers.<sup>27</sup> Yun Öni 尹彦頤 was known as a Confucian scholar of unequalled stature, a gifted writer of expositions on the calendar and the son of Yun Kwan, Koryö's most important statesman of the early twelfth century. This diverse company was even joined by a eunuch (Yu Kae 庾開). Other persons mentioned in connection with Myoch'öng were residents of the Western Capital who only came to be associated with him (as far as can be ascertained) around the outbreak of the rebellion. Of these people, which included Myoch'öng's co-leader Cho Kwang (?-1136), there is no evidence that they were seen as or belonged to Myoch'öng's faction before the armed struggle against the capital forces.<sup>28</sup>

In the opposing camp, Kim Pushik, Yi Chijö 李之臣, Mun Kongyu, Im Wönae and their supporters were found.<sup>29</sup> Despite the fact that modern historiography has unanimously characterized this faction as Confucian, pro-Chinese, anti-nativist and rationalist, these labels tell us little about the actual motivations of these persons.<sup>30</sup> Kim Pushik, Im Wönae and Yi Chijö belonged to established capital lineages with competing interests. Kim Pushik, moreover, endeavoured to restrain the influence of these lineages. Mun Kongyu had been affiliated with Han Anin's faction, which had mainly been composed of scholars and officials from the

<sup>24</sup> Hwang Chuchö'm and Chöng Chisang petitioned Injong in 1134 to adopt imperial status and an independent reign name (*KSC* 10: 2b; *KS* 16: 32a). In 1140 Hwang was sent as an envoy to the Jin to congratulate the Jin emperor on the new year. This points to the fact that Hwang had left Myoch'öng at the right time and was not or not severely punished (*KS* 17: 4b).

<sup>25</sup> Im retired after he was accused by Yi Chijö of being in league with Myoch'öng. He was associated with Mun Kongin (*KS* 95: 16b; *KSC* 10: 28a-b).

<sup>26</sup> Hong was administrator of memorials (*chijusa* 知奏事) and a respected scholar, since he took part in royal lecture debates (*KS* 16: 24a-b). Yi Chungbu was punished for his support of Myoch'öng. He and his family were banished to Ch'öngju 清州. The remarkable medical gifts of his son Yi Sangno 李商老 led to a rehabilitation of the family when he successfully treated Üijong, but the family seems to have suffered considerably after the rebellion. Despite criticism at court on account of the lack of scholarly achievements by Yi Sangno, he was appointed as minister of the Ministry of Civil Personnel (*ibusangö* 吏部尙書) in 1185. (*KSC* 13: 10bh-11a). His biography is in the *Koryösa* (*KS* 122: 4b-5b).

<sup>27</sup> Ch'oe Hongjae was born in a military family, but his career was successful to the extent of reaching high civilian office; a most rare occurrence in Koryö. He accompanied embassies to the Liao (*KSC* 8: 3a-b), was steadily promoted to increasingly high offices and experienced political banishment together with Mun Kongin in the aftermath of the political murder of Han Anin. After Koryö had recognized the Jin as its new suzerain state, Ch'oe was still in favour of sending official envoys to the Song and assisting the Song envoys to reach the Jin in order to negotiate the release of the captured Song emperors. (*KSC* 9: 53a). Ch'oe Pongshim was a hawk who famously boasted that he would conquer the Jin if the court would only give him thousand soldiers. He worried people like An Chiksung (who had served as an envoy to the Song and had brought back the Song's new ritual music), who insisted upon his removal from office (*KSC* 9: 55b-56a).

<sup>28</sup> There is in fact a sharp bifurcation between Myoch'öng's supporters before the rebellion and after the outbreak of the rebellion. In the extant sources, not one of the pre-rebellion supporters can be verified as a supporter of Myoch'öng during the rebellion.

<sup>29</sup> Kim Pushik, Yi Chijö and Im Wönae were the only three officials who refused to sign a petition declaring Myoch'öng to be a saint in 1127 (*KSC* 9: 42b).

<sup>30</sup> The same labels can be applied to Myoch'öng's supporters with equally much (or little) significance.



provinces.<sup>31</sup> Other officials simply did not enter the debates between Myoch'ong's supporters and detractors, but bided their time.<sup>32</sup> The pro-Myoch'ong atmosphere in the capital seems to have been extremely intimidating. The criticism that was voiced was necessarily uncompromising: Im Wan petitioned Injong to have Myoch'ong beheaded. In an eloquent memorial to the throne, Im (who was a Song émigré) began his argument in a well-known manner. Observing that strange cosmological phenomena had been happening, he expounded upon the cosmological interconnectedness between heaven and man, quoting from Han cosmologist Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒. The strange phenomena that had been observed (crop failures, white rainbows piercing the sun, the moon looking abnormal) were caused by the insincerity with which the ruler performed his rituals at court (*ch'o* 醮 and *che* 祭).<sup>33</sup> Im also offered a solution: Injong had to follow the examples codified in T'aejo's teachings and Munjong's laws. Munjong's reign in particular was not far in the past. According to Im, who had emigrated to Koryŏ during the reign of Munjong, Munjong did not favour his in-laws and was wise in choosing his personal attendants. Injong was different;<sup>34</sup> the revolt of his father-in-law and Yi Chagyŏm had shown that he was powerless with regard to his in-laws and the abundance of arrogant personal attendants who made the people suffer showed his lack of restraint in choosing them. If the ruler would get rid of his unreliable personal attendants, who after all had recommended Myoch'ong at court and stopped listening to *üm-yang* theories like those of Myoch'ong, Koryŏ would avoid the fate the Song suffered when its emperor had listened to the far-fetched theories of a geomancer. Like Myoch'ong, Lin Lingsu 林靈素 had risen to sudden fame and influence. According to Im, Lin was directly responsible for the Song's military collapse and defeat at the hands of the Jin. Heaven was warning Koryŏ, sending its portents. Bad omens and disasters abounded, such as the calamitous building of the Taehwa-gung palace. Moreover, the people suffered greatly due to the increased corvée duties. Im concluded his plea with the recommendation that Myoch'ong be executed, so that both the people and heaven would be reassured and satisfied.<sup>35</sup>

Such criticism aimed at the specific abuses of power perpetrated by the ruler's personal attendants and by Myoch'ong and did so in familiar language.<sup>36</sup> As such, as the

<sup>31</sup> Shultz, "Han Anin p'a-üi tungjang-gwa kü yökhal: 12segi Koryŏ chŏngch'isa-üi palchon-enat'ananün myötkkachi t'ükjing 韓安仁派의 登場과 그 役割 -12世紀 高麗 政治史의 發展에 나타나는 몇가지 特徵," *Yöksabakpo* 歷史學報 99-100 (1983): pp. 147-183; Shultz, "Twelfth-century Koryŏ politics: The rise of Han Anin and his partisans," *Journal of Korean Studies* 6 (1988): pp. 3-38; No Myŏngho 盧明鎬, "Yi Chagyŏm ilp'a-wa Han Anin ilp'a-üi chŏktang seryök: Koryŏ chunggi ch'insok-tür-üi chŏngch'i seryökhwa yangt'ae 李資謙一派와 韓安仁一派의 族黨勢力; 高麗中期 親屬들의 政治勢力化 樣態," *Han'guksaron* 韓國史論 17 (1987): pp. 167-225.

<sup>32</sup> Among these officials was Ch'oe Ham 崔誠, a prominent member of one of the leading lineages of Koryŏ. While the pro-Myoch'ong faction was in power, he remained in the background, only to emerge when the rebellion had broken out. See *Ch'oe Ham myojimyŏng* 崔誠墓誌銘 in *KMC* 95: 18-21

<sup>33</sup> Im alluded to the terrible storms that caused havoc when Injong visited the newly built Taehwa-gung palace (*KSC* 10: 10b-11a) and to the burning down of the pagoda of the Chungŭng-sa temple there (*KSC* 9: 51a-b).

<sup>34</sup> A judgment repeated by Yi Chehyŏn, who praised Munjong for the care and restraint he exhibited in choosing personal attendants. See *KS* 9: 37a-b.

<sup>35</sup> *TMS* 52: 18a-21b. Im was awarded for his outspokenness with a successful career at court and in 1147 he was appointed administrator to the Security Council (*chich'umilwŏnsa* 知樞密院事). Also see *Im Kwang myojimyŏng* 林光墓誌銘 in *KMC* 67: 10-11.

<sup>36</sup> It was in effect echoed by the edict issued by Injong during the rebellion in which he held himself responsible for

reiteration of well-known objections to equally well-known alternative ways of looking at the world (some of which were less reputable than others), it was not particularly effective in obstructing Myoch'ong's movement. It merely functioned as an indication where the boundaries between the different factions were drawn. A different kind of criticism was needed to draw back Myoch'ong's capital supporters into the fold of Kim Pushik's faction. It was not until "the persons who knew realized that it was impossible" that Myoch'ong started to lose his supporters.<sup>37</sup> This, however, did not start until 1135. As will be demonstrated, this kind of classic criticism was mostly rhetoric with regard to Myoch'ong. It was largely ignored when Myoch'ong had the upper hand at court. And it had little to do with the reason why his capital supporters eventually deserted him.

The group of people that supported Myoch'ong and that propagated his theories (whether or not in order to advance their own political causes) was diverse.<sup>38</sup> Their ideological orientations were varied,<sup>39</sup> perhaps in some cases even antithetical, and the offices and ranks they held also defy easy categorization.<sup>40</sup> Also, and this is worth noting, their places of origin differ. Until the rebellion in the Western Capital broke out and many of its officials joined Myoch'ong's banner, Myoch'ong supporters who were from the Western Capital made up only half of the faction.<sup>41</sup> Finally, the lineage backgrounds of Myoch'ong's faction's members were also far from similar. Yun Ŏni was the son of Yun Kwan and belonged to one of Koryŏ's most powerful lineages, the P'aju Yun. Chŏng Chisang only had an old mother to fall back upon.<sup>42</sup> Mun Kongin came from an established lineage and had married into the influential Suju Ch'oe lineage.<sup>43</sup> Ch'oe Hongjae belonged to a military lineage, and was hence a member

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the situation, having neglected the portents of heaven. See *KS* 16: 33b-35a; *KSC* 10: 23a-24b; *TMS* 23: 18a-b. For other criticisms such as above, see *KSC* 9: 55b-56a; *KSC* 10: 10a-b.

<sup>37</sup> This phrase from the *Koryŏsa* refers to the realization of some experienced central officials that what Myoch'ong wanted would be disastrous for Koryŏ. *KS* 127: 28a

<sup>38</sup> Chŏng Chisang for instance seems to have propagated the idea of revitalizing Koryŏ politics by moving the capital to the Western Capital even before the emergence of Myoch'ong, suggesting that he used Myoch'ong's charisma to further his own causes. See *TMS* 34: 19b-20b. Kim Tangt'aek has reached a similar conclusion. See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30.

<sup>39</sup> Kim Tangt'aek has characterized the members of Myoch'ong's faction as belonging to the irrational, anti-Confucian camp; Kim Pushik and his supporters were according to him Confucian and rationalist. Even a cursory examination of the persons making up both sides shows that these crude divisions hide more than that they elucidate. Yun Ŏni and Chŏng Chisang, for instance, were both lauded for their knowledge of Confucian scholarship. Kim Pushik, as has been shown in the previous chapters, was anything but a 'pure' Confucian scholar. See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30.

<sup>40</sup> It has been noted, though, that a significant number of Myoch'ong's supporters in the capital were personal attendants of Injong. See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30.

<sup>41</sup> This fact seems to play down the importance of the Western Capital in the movement of Myoch'ong and its less privileged position (when compared to Kaegyŏng) in the origins of the revolt. The outbreak of Myoch'ong's rebellion in the Western Capital has (understandably) biased interpretations of the rebellion with regard to the significance of the Western Capital, but the early stages of Myoch'ong's career suggest that some care must be taken not to automatically assume the Western Capital's overriding significance. See Kang Ogyŏp's articles for elucidations of the importance of the Western Capital. For more details, see Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Sŏgyŏng-ŭi p'ungsujirijŏk koch'al", pp. 69-101; Kang Ogyŏp, "Injong-dae Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndoron-ŭi taedu", pp. 109-130; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Injongdae Sŏgyŏngmin-ŭi hangjaeng", pp. 571-590; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng chedo", pp. 93-118.

<sup>42</sup> *TMS* 34: 19b-20b.

<sup>43</sup> *KS* 125: 1b-2b.

of a by definition relatively powerless lineage, regardless of Ch'oe's personal power. Yu Kae, as a eunuch, was a slave. And, perhaps even more surprisingly, the division between Myoch'ong's supporters and his denouncers also cut across family ties; Mun Kongyu was the brother of Mun Kongin, but found himself in the camp of Kim Pushik, ardently denouncing Myoch'ong.<sup>44</sup>

From 1127 onwards, Myoch'ong's case was advanced by the frequent pleas of Chong Chisang *cum suis* who supported Myoch'ong's insistence that the capital be moved to the Western Capital and that the Koryo ruler would thenceforth be known only as emperor. With the northward move of the capital and the Koryo claim to imperial status, thirty-six countries would come in submission to Koryo and Koryo would be able to destroy the Jin. The opportunity at renewed glory and prosperity for Koryo, badly shocked after the demise of the Liao and the bloodshed of Yi Chagyom's failed coup, was welcomed by most people at court. Injong and his personal attendants were fully caught up in the almost frenzied atmosphere that pervaded the Koryo court at this time:

A foolish person, I have succeeded to the undertaking of my ancestors. I have met adverse times and I have experienced upheavals several times. Accordingly, I have worked day and night in order to revitalize the country. An ancient precept says: "Once in every several ten thousand years the day of the winter solstice will meet the *kapcha* 甲子 day. The moon, the sun and the five planets will gather in the north. This is the fifteenth of the first month of the lunar calendar and with it, our calendar starts. Since the creation of heaven and earth the way of the sages has started from there." This year the winter solstice is the sixth day of the eleventh month and that night is a *kapcha* day. It is the first *kapcha* day of the three *kapcha* days. On this occasion, I intend to get rid of the old institutions and create new ones. Based upon the teachings of the ancients, I have accordingly ordered officials to build the Taehwa-gung palace in the Western Capital. Let the princes, nobles and all officials and the people work together to revitalize our politics and let us forever bestow felicity upon the following generations!<sup>45</sup>

Such edicts were by no means exceptional during the time of Myoch'ong's ascendancy at court. Revitalization of Koryo was seen as a necessity for survival as a state and society.<sup>46</sup> According to Chong Chisang and Myoch'ong, the world was centred in the Western Capital and now that "at last, you have obtained the forces of the great flowering<sup>47</sup> by relying on fortune-telling. [...Y]ou will also have your capital in the middle of Heaven and Earth."<sup>48</sup> By moving the

<sup>44</sup> Politically, also, the faction was diverse. Yun Oni belonged to one of the old lineages of Koryo, but Mun Kongin had been banished at the time of the purge of Han Anin, who had been an exponent of a new breed of officials from the provinces, not supported by Koryo's capital lineages. See Shultz, "Han Anin p'a-üi tungjang-gwa kü yökhal", pp. 147-183; Shultz, "Twelfth-century Koryo politics", pp. 3-38; No Myongho, "Yi Chagyom ilp'a-wa Han Anin ilp'a-üi chöktang seryök", pp. 167-225.

<sup>45</sup> *KS* 16: 21a-b.

<sup>46</sup> See for instance also *TMS* 23: 18a-b.

<sup>47</sup> In geomancy, *taehwase* 大華勢 is the state when propitious forces gather at a very auspicious place (*kilchi* 吉地), which is likened to a great blossoming of flowers. Injong associated this concept with the prophecy of "a Korean wise man of former days" (*Haedong sönhyön* 海東先賢) who had said that the erection of a palace on the spot of a "great blossoming of flowers" would prolong the life of the dynasty. See *KS* 16: 1a.

<sup>48</sup> *TMS* 104: 8b-10a.

capital to this sacred place, Koryŏ society would be renewed. The situation can be compared to when Hyŏnjong had just ascended the throne a little over a century earlier. Hyŏnjong had faced similar problems; coup attempts at court, factions at war in the capital and an explosive international situation. One of the measures taken then had been the codification of Koryŏ identity and its pluralist Weltanschauung through the apocryphal *Ten injunctions* of T'aejo.<sup>49</sup> The bandwidth of the injunctions had given the policies based on them both flexibility and a clear sense of identity. A century later, however, instead of reinforcing Koryŏ identity through its pluralist Weltanschauung, Myoch'ŏng's unambiguous perception of Koryŏ, its destiny and the world had gained the upper hand. His message elicited both enthusiastic support and strong resistance. While all the time up until the outbreak of the rebellion, Myoch'ŏng's supporters had possessed a comfortable majority at court, the outbreak of the rebellion, or more precisely the threat of imminent revolt, dramatically changed this.

Myoch'ŏng is treated as an enigmatic and mysterious figure, but this treatment is mostly due to the fact that he instigated an armed revolt, not to qualities unique to the man himself.<sup>50</sup> His ideas were not unusual for the early to middle Koryŏ period. The idea of moving the capital to the Western Capital had been a recurrent theme in the political debate ever since the establishment of the dynasty. It was a subject wont to evoke resistance, but not to the extent of running the risk of persecution. Moving the capital to another site based on geomantic considerations was also a popular theme in Koryŏ.<sup>51</sup> Pleas to move the capital either north to P'yŏngyang or south to present-day Seoul had been made before by geomantic experts and none of them paid with their lives for this assertion.<sup>52</sup> Myoch'ŏng's own insistence that he was a disciple of two famous Koryŏ geomancers was also conventional; every geomancer worth his salt would claim to be or consider himself a disciple of Tosŏn.<sup>53</sup> What then distinguishes Myoch'ŏng's assertions from earlier attempts to relocate the capital on geomantic grounds? What factors played into his hands, giving him so much support that the pro-Myoch'ŏng faction was untouchable for years?

Similar questions can be asked with regard to Myoch'ŏng's other proposals. His insistence that Koryŏ adopt a reign name and that the ruler adopt all the trappings of an emperor was not entirely out of style with prevailing Koryŏ custom.<sup>54</sup> Although such a proposal meant the abolishment of Koryŏ's dual system according to which its ruler was both king and emperor, the chances for such a development either way were not insignificant. The proposal to adopt a reign name and the imperial system was made several times by several

<sup>49</sup> See chapter thirteen.

<sup>50</sup> See in particular Shin Ch'aeho, "Chŏsŏn sasang ilch'ŏnnyŏllae cheiltae sakkŏn", pp. 103-124; Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu*; Kang Sŏngwŏn, "Myoch'ŏng-ŭi chae komt'o", pp. 177-196; Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30. For an excellent treatment of monks and geomancy in Koryŏ, see Yannick Bruneton, *Les moines géomanciens de Koryŏ (918-1392), une étude critique des sources* (Ph.D. diss., Université de Paris VII, 2002).

<sup>51</sup> T'aejo and Chŏngjong had at one time tried to move the capital from Kaegyŏng to P'yŏngyang. In 1096, Kim Wije had submitted a memorial asking for the transfer of the capital to the Southern Capital (*KS* 122:1a-3b). During the reign of Yejong, Ūn Wŏnjang submitted a similar memorial. Both geomancers referred to Tosŏn and his writings to legitimize their proposals. See chapter eight for more details.

<sup>52</sup> *KS* 122:1a-3b.

<sup>53</sup> *KS* 127: 30a.

<sup>54</sup> See chapter one.

different people, among whom was Yun Ŏni. When Yun Ŏni defended himself after serving six years of exile after the Myoch'ong rebellion which he himself had helped to pacify, Yun insisted that the idea of the Koryŏ ruler as emperor was entirely justified by Koryŏ's history. He cited the examples of T'aejo and Kwangjong to bolster his case.<sup>55</sup> Koryŏ's institutional history does indeed support him. It may be debatable whether such a policy was wise, as it would antagonize the Jin, but it was certainly not unconventional or in any way unprecedented.

Lastly and perhaps most contentiously, Myoch'ong advocated attacking the Jin. As discussed in chapter nine, the transition from Liao to Jin suzerainty was a painful experience for Koryŏ and both before and after Koryŏ's official recognition of Jin suzerainty in 1126, there had been voices that advocated attacking the Jin, alone or in cooperation with the Song.<sup>56</sup> As late as 1158, when the last remnants of the Liao dynasty had been long defeated, the head of the bureau of astrolonomical observations and master of meteorology (*t'aesa kambu* 太史監候) Yu Wŏndo 劉元度 (d.u.) wrote a memorial to the throne that propagated relocating the capital to the north (to T'osan 兎山 in Paekchu 白州) and conquering the Jin from there.<sup>57</sup> This memorial was eerily similar to what Myoch'ong had suggested Koryŏ should do, yet the astrologer who submitted his memorial in 1158 was not punished. The petition was heeded by the ruler, Ŭijong, who promptly sent assistant chancellor Ch'oe Yunüi to T'osan 兎山 in Paekchu to scout the terrain. Ch'oe reported that the place mentioned by Yu Wŏndo was excellent; it was surrounded by mountains and the aquatic force was smooth (which was identical to P'yŏngyang's geomantic features), and this made it a perfect place to build a palace there.<sup>58</sup> A virtual re-enactment of Myoch'ong's recommendations to Injong thirty years earlier was consequently played out. Myoch'ong had exhorted Injong to build the Palace of Great Flowering in the Western Capital; Yun Wŏndo encouraged Ŭijong to build a palace in Paekchu. The Palace of Great Flowering was built in the Western Capital, as the Palace of Renaissance (Chunghŭng-gwŏl 重興闕) was constructed in Paekchu.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> TMS 35: 11a-16a.

<sup>56</sup> As early as 1117, Kim Puüi emphasized that good relations with the Jin were necessary, but the atmosphere at court was violently anti-Jin. It was actually debated whether the Jin envoys should be beheaded (KS 97:3a-b; KSC 8:20a-b). The Jin, meanwhile, patiently waited for Koryŏ to accept the inevitable (KS 15: 10a; JS 135: 2885). Koryŏ bureaucracy showed signs of resistance, but these were rather innocent and certainly ineffective (KS 15: 10a; KS 17: 24a; KS 17: 18a).

<sup>57</sup> KS 18: 11b-12a. The exact location of the proposed new capital seems to have possessed religious or symbolical significance, perhaps because of the presence of pine forests there. In 1086, the pines on Mount T'o were reported to be invested with bugs, which was taken as a very serious portent that things were wrong. Corrective measures were immediately taken; Munjong prayed to heaven for forgiveness, blaming his own mistakes for this calamity and bestowing amnesty upon convicted criminals.

<sup>58</sup> KS 18: 12a.

<sup>59</sup> KS 18: 11b-12a; KS 58: 9a-b. But after its construction had been finished (ahead of schedule, thanks to the unforgiving harsh working mentality of one of its constructors), geomancers said amongst each other: "This place has what Tosŏn has called the force where the tiger of the north enters with raised head and then disguises his coming. Now that a palace has been built here, I fear that a fatal catastrophe will occur." The name of the palace is reminiscent of the name of the Chunghŭng-sa temple 重興寺 in the Western Capital, where a pagoda had burnt down after Myoch'ong had urged Injong to come to the Western Capital. When asked how such an inauspicious incident could have taken place, Myoch'ong explained that had it not been for him, much worse things would have happened (KS 127: 28b). The Chunghŭng-sa temple was probably destroyed during the siege of the Western Capital (Kim Pushik employed troops in its vicinity, see KS 98: 8b). It was rebuilt by Ŭijong in 1154 (KS 18: 3b). It is plausible that these comments by geomancers are a later interpolation, designed to draw a parallel between what

What distinguished Myoch'ong from his contemporaries, then, was not his ideological motivation, or his political affiliations. Despite the often-encountered tendency to describe him as a mysterious figure, cloaked in enigma and darkness, Myoch'ong was not unique. His ideas had been current in Koryŏ for two centuries and they did not disappear with him. Monks who made a living by selling their geomantic knowledge, moreover, were a common phenomenon in Koryŏ.<sup>60</sup> Nonetheless, even contemporary sources portray him as a 'sorcerer', as somebody whose actions and ideas placed him outside society.<sup>61</sup> When Shin Ch'aeho remembered Kim Pushik as a Confucian rationalist and Myoch'ong as a nativist saint, he was not being very original. He merely switched the ethical judgments associated with both men; Kim Pushik went from saint to villain, Myoch'ong from villain to saint. Their respective attributes stayed unchanged. In late Koryŏ and early Chosŏn descriptions of the rebellion, the historiographical paradigm developed by Shin is foreshadowed. Myoch'ong's rebellion is taken as a lesson from the past to avert similar events from occurring in the future; Kim Pushik is codified as a perfect example of the *yushin* 儒臣, the Confucian minister, while Myoch'ong is not taken very seriously altogether.<sup>62</sup> He is alternately described as a 'sorcerer' (*yoin* 妖人), 'arch villain' (*wŏnbyung* 元兇) and practitioner of 'sorcery' (*yosul* 妖術).<sup>63</sup> As discussed in chapter eleven, Koryŏ's ideological outlook on the world had changed dramatically going into the fourteenth century. The pluralist outlook that had characterized Koryŏ society for three centuries had been replaced by a decidedly monist view of the world; the somewhat rigid judgments of the roles of Kim Pushik (Confucian saint) and Myoch'ong (irrational warmonger) fit better with such an understanding of the world.<sup>64</sup>

Myoch'ong was vilified and Kim Pushik sanctified until Shin Ch'aeho reversed the judgment and blamed Kim Pushik for the subsequent course of Korean history, finally culminating in colonization by Japan. Both excesses of dichotomous reasoning (Kim Pushik and Myoch'ong as either saint or villain) do little justice to either of the protagonists. I have shown in previous chapters that Kim Pushik was much more than a rigid Confucian statesman and scholar. It is not unreasonable to suspect that a similar case could perhaps be made for Myoch'ong,<sup>65</sup> but the absence of source materials makes this impossible. What is possible, however, is an investigation into his leadership of the rebellion. When put against the

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happened to Injong and Ŭijong. Both rulers had listened to geomancers; Injong was consequently faced with the rebellion of Myoch'ong and Ŭijong's reign was cut short by the military coup d'état of 1170.

<sup>60</sup> Bruneton, *Les moines géomanciens de Koryŏ*.

<sup>61</sup> *TMS* 23: 2a

<sup>62</sup> *KSC* 26 1357; *KSC* 28 1366

<sup>63</sup> *KSC* 10: 10a-b; *TMS* 23: 2a; *KSC* 28 1366; *TMS* 39: 21b-22a.

<sup>64</sup> This is not to say that Kim Pushik had not done everything to ensure that such a perception of the rebellion would emerge. He compiled the *Veritable records* for the reign of Injong and his interpretation of what happened and who Myoch'ong was became the standard for later generations. But when this is seen against the background of the time in which this had happened and when the actions and opinions of Kim Pushik's contemporaries are taken into account, it becomes clear that Kim's take on the rebellion was not at all representative. It was the official judgment, since it had entered the *Veritable Records*, but it was not shared by everybody. Too many people had sided with Myoch'ong before the outbreak of the rebellion not to know the currency of his views in Koryŏ. It was only after the shift from a pluralist to a monist worldview that Kim Pushik's view of the rebellion became standard.

<sup>65</sup> It does not seem probable that Myoch'ong's monist orientation would need to be reconsidered, but there is much room for nuance with regard to the picture of Myoch'ong as it emerges from the sources.

background of his ideological position, the tense international situation and the aftermath of the failed coup by Yi Chagyöm, the figure of Myoch'öng will appear in relief.

The first thing that is conspicuous about Myoch'öng's rise to influence is the fact that powerful officials did the speaking for him at court, to an extent that is surprising.<sup>66</sup> The few times Myoch'öng acted directly at court or in the presence of the ruler ended in disaster more often than not. A particularly embarrassing episode involved a giant rice cake filled with oil which was secretly sunk in the Taedong-gang river in the Western Capital. This was done in the hope that the oil would slowly be released from the rice cake and create an effect as if the (now oily) water showed the auspicious legendary five colours spat out by a divine dragon.<sup>67</sup> A man used to working with oil and a diligent diver spoiled the plot.<sup>68</sup> Such incidents suggest that Myoch'öng was not completely cut out for the role historians have traditionally attributed to him.<sup>69</sup> Not much of a sinister and manipulative monk in the vein of Rasputin, Myoch'öng's role seems to have been limited to the Western Capital.

Myoch'öng's supporters can roughly be divided into three groups, if the rebellion is taken as the watershed event defining these three groups. The members of the first group were immediately seized and executed by Kim Pushik as soon as news of the rebellion reached the capital; Chöng Chisang, Kim An and Paek Suhan met their ends this way.<sup>70</sup> Another group actively supported Myoch'öng and advocated his ideas right until the outbreak of the rebellion. To this group belonged Yun Öni, Mun Kongin, Hong Isö and other capital officials.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps taken by surprise by the sudden outbreak of the rebellion<sup>72</sup> and the realization that Myoch'öng had chosen a one-way road that would end in disaster, his most prominent supporters rallied under the ruler's banners, calling for his punishment. I shall return to their desertion later, but this event may very well be the most significant clue we have in understanding the rebellion and its dynamics. Myoch'öng's other supporters, the vast majority of the persons mentioned in the sources, were people with strong ties to the Western Capital. Apart from Myoch'öng, Cho Kwang 趙匡 (?-1136) and Yu Kam 柳崑 (?-1135), both natives of the Western Capital, were seen

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<sup>66</sup> The proposals for policy changes associated with Myoch'öng were submitted by Chöng Chisang, Yun Öni, Hwang Chuch'öm and others. At times Myoch'öng was most probably not even at court. Chöng had been an advocate of moving the capital to the Western Capital before Myoch'öng's rise to eminence.

<sup>67</sup> *KS* 127: 31a-b; *KSC* 10: 2b; *KSC* 10: 4b.

<sup>68</sup> Although the story may have been embellished by Kim Pushik when it was made a part of the *Veritable records*, Myoch'öng's clumsiness when it came to such affairs is also demonstrated in other incidents.

<sup>69</sup> With the exception of Kim Tangt'aek who thinks that Myoch'öng was used by Chöng Chisang. See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryö Injong-dae-üi Sögyöng ch'öndo", pp. 1-30.

<sup>70</sup> *KSC* 10: 17a. Despite the fact that the outbreak of the rebellion came as a surprise in the capital, it seems to have been a well-prepared effort. Kim Pushik's strategy to deal with the Western Capital was based upon his understanding of the rebellion as having been prepared well in advance. The prospective rebels also took care to get rid of officials despatched from the capital who were not sympathetic to their course. Wön Hang 元沆 (d.u.) was very suspicious of Myoch'öng when he served in the Western Capital in the capacity of executive assistant of the Resident-Government of the Western Capital. (*Sögyöng yusu p'an'gwan* 西京留守判官). He was subsequently removed to the Southern Capital at the behest of Myoch'öng and Cho Kwang. Eventually, he was restored to his position, presumably after the rebellion. See *Wön Hang myojimyöng* in *KMC* 55: 6-9.

<sup>71</sup> It is remarkable to see how Myoch'öng's erstwhile supporters turned into hawks the moment they switched sides. Whereas Kim Pushik seems to have earnestly tried to give the rebels a chance to surrender in return for a lenient treatment, Mun Kongin did everything in his power to obstruct a peaceful ending of the rebellion.

<sup>72</sup> See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryö Injong-dae-üi Sögyöng ch'öndo", pp. 7-15.

as the instigators and leaders of the rebellion and are most frequently mentioned.<sup>73</sup> Nonetheless, the list of other important rebels, both civilian and military, found in the *Koryŏsa*, *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ* and the *Tong munsŏn* is longer than for any other rebellion or revolt during the Koryŏ period. It testifies to two important facts. Firstly, the rebellion was a large-scale armed effort. The fact that it took Kim Pushik over a year to quell it points to the same reality,<sup>74</sup> as do the offers from the Jin and the Song to send troops to help pacify the rebels.<sup>75</sup> The second fact it points to is that Myoch'ŏng and his direct supporters, the forces in the Western Capital, and Myoch'ŏng's supporters in the capital were three entirely different entities, which only temporarily and incidentally overlapped.<sup>76</sup>

Kim Tangt'aek has argued that Myoch'ŏng was in fact little more than a figure head for a faction comprised of Chŏng Chisang, Kim An, Mun Kongmi, Yun Ŏni and others.<sup>77</sup> He

<sup>73</sup> Cho Kwang 趙匡 was listed as a local executive of some sort (*punsa shirang* 分司侍郎) in the Western Capital (*KS* 58: 30b; *KS* 127: 32b; *KSC* 10: 30b-31a) and consistently appears as one of the leaders of the rebellion alongside Myoch'ŏng and Yu Kam 柳昂, an executive from the ministry of warfare 兵部尚書 (*KS* 127: 32b), about whom nothing else is known, except for the fact that he was beheaded together with his son Yu Ho 柳浩 and Myoch'ŏng by the people of the Western Capital. Cho Kwang committed suicide with his family by burning themselves to death in their house when the city was taken (*KSC* 10: 30a). Other sources that blame Myoch'ŏng. Cho Kwang and Yu Kam are *TMS* 23: 11a-12a; *TMS* 23: 15b-16b; *TMS* 23: 18a-b; *TMS* 39: 21b-22a; *TMS* 44: 11b-12b; *TMS* 52: 18a-21b; *TMS* 93: 7a-8b; *KSC* 10: 30a-31b.

<sup>74</sup> These persons were listed in the sources as participants in the rebellion and were important enough to warrant special mention by name: Ŭm Chungin 蔭仲寅, Yi Sunmu 李純茂, O Wŏnsa 吳元帥, Ch'oe Pongshim, and Yi Chagi 李子奇 were banished after the rebellion (*KSC* 10: 31a-b). Yi Yŏng 李英, Yu Wihu 維偉侯 he might be the same person as Yu Wihu 維緯侯 who was captured by Yun Ŏni, *KSC* 10: 31a-b, *TMS* 35: 11a-16a), P'aeng Suk 彭淑, and Kim Hyŏn'gŭn 金賢瑾 hanged themselves after the fall of the Western Capital (*KSC* 10: 31a-b; *KS* 98: 14b). Chŏng Sŏn 鄭璇, Wi Hanfun 維漢侯, Chŏng Kŭksŭng 鄭克升, Ch'oe Kongp'il 崔公泌, Cho Sŏn 趙瑄, and Kim T'aeksŭng 金澤升 slit their own throats after the fall of the Western Capital (*KSC* 10: 31a-b, *KS* 98: 14b). Generals Ch'oe Yŏng 崔永, So Hwangnin 蘇黃麟, and Tŏk Sŏn 德宣 were beheaded with their heads put on show for three days (*KSC* 10: 31a-b, *KS* 98: 16b). The same happened to executive assistant 判官 Yu Chuhyŏng 尹周衡, Kim Chi 金智, Cho Ŭibu 趙義夫, and senior scribe 長史 Na Sonŏn 羅孫彦 (*KSC* 10: 31a-b, *KS* 98: 16b). Han Yu'gwan 韓儒瑄, An Tŏkch'ing 安德僞, and Kim Yŏngnyŏng were taken prisoner (*KSC* 10: 31a-b, *KS* 98: 16b). Yun Ŏni took credit for the surrender and capture of general Hong Kŏl, 洪傑 (which led to the capture of general Ch'oe Yŏng), generalissimo So Hwangnin 蘇黃麟, Chŏng Sŏn'gok 鄭先谷, Pak Ŭngso 朴應素 and 90 civilian officials (*TMS* 35: 11a-16a). After the rebellion, the people of the Western Capital (only the *yangban* according to the *Koryŏsa* and the *Koryŏsa chŏryŏ*) were taken to Kaegyŏng where the most vigorous fighters during the siege had the four characters 'Sŏgyŏng yŏkchok 西京逆賊' ('traitor of the Western Capital') tattooed carved and then inked into their foreheads. They were then banished to remote islands. Less prominent fighters had the two characters 'Sŏgyŏng 西京' (Western Capital) carved into their foreheads. These were banished to small regional communities of unfree persons (*hyang* 鄉 and *pugok* 部曲). The rest was made to live in other places where their families were allowed to join them. The families of Cho Kwang, Ch'oe Yŏng, Chŏng Sŏn, Kim Shin 金信, Kim Ch'i 金致, Chŏng Chisang, Yi Chagi 李子奇, Paek Suhan, Cho Kan 趙簡, Myoch'ŏng, Yu Kam, Yu Ho and Chŏng Tŏkhwan 鄭德桓 were reduced to slave status and sent to serve the government in the frontier fortifications in the north east (*KSC* 10: 30b-31a).

<sup>75</sup> *KSC* 10: 27a-b.

<sup>76</sup> Kim Tangt'aek has argued that Myoch'ŏng was used to further the political aims of Chŏng Chisang *cum suis*, but Chŏng's swift execution, alongside Myoch'ŏng's trusted supporters Kim An and Paek Suhan, suggests otherwise. I agree with Kim's argument that Myoch'ŏng's was used by some members of the capital elite, but Chŏng Chisang, Kim An and Paek Suhan must nonetheless be counted as full-fledged Myoch'ŏng supporters, while Mun Kongin and Yun Ŏni must be seen as members of the capital elite, who used Myoch'ŏng for their own gain, while superficially sympathizing with him. See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-15.

<sup>77</sup> Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 7-15.



reinforced the ideological dichotomy by claiming that Kim Pushik's faction advocated Confucian rationalist rule with a limited role for the ruler, while he described Chǒng Chisang's faction, comprised of many personal attendants to the ruler, as advocating royal authority from a non-Confucian nativist point of view.<sup>78</sup> Both Chǒng and Yun were known as outstanding Confucian scholars, so their inclusion into an anti-Confucian faction is somewhat surprising.<sup>79</sup> Part of their identity was that of Confucian scholars, other parts of their identity were formed by Buddhism, Daoism, geomancy, and the pursuits of literature and science.<sup>80</sup> None of these partial identities dominated conclusively, however. The multifaceted careers of Chǒng and Yun underwrite a view of identity that "cannot [...] belong to one person alone", and that is the result of "permanent hybridization and nomadization."<sup>81</sup> Kim Pushik's activities also defy easy categorization. Permanent hybridization and nomadization were constitutive features of the identities of these Koryŏ officials that played such important roles in the rebellion of Myoch'ŏng. This means that Kim Tangt'aek's dichotomous analysis of the factions at court, and of the origins of Myoch'ŏng's rebellion, must be rejected. Faction boundaries did not coincide with ideological, lineage, local or other boundaries. To be sure, Confucian policies, nativist policies, support for royal authority and resistance against royal authority were elements that played their parts in early twelfth-century Koryŏ, but not as clearly distinct units drawn up in battle array on a neatly defined field.

The very different fates of Myoch'ŏng's Western Capital-based allies, his most outspoken supporters at court like Chǒng Chisang and the majority of his capital-based supporters who went over to the camp of Kim Pushik after the rebellion suggest that Myoch'ŏng may indeed have been used.<sup>82</sup> The response to the news that a rebellion had broken out in the Western Capital is revealing in this aspect: no one in the capital seems to have known about it. Not even Paek Suhan, who was probably closest to Myoch'ŏng until the outbreak of the rebellion. Apart from the fragmented attachments of the people who at one time or other had sided with Myoch'ŏng, the surprising ignorance of the pro-Myoch'ŏng faction in the capital alerts us to the fact that Myoch'ŏng himself may have been very well aware of the way he was used. His decision to start the rebellion with so many of his supporters

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<sup>78</sup> The argument that the faction represented by Chǒng and Yun tried to augment royal authority, while Kim Pushik tried to restrain it is also problematic in itself. Kim Pushik attempted to institutionalize the authority of the ruler and the state's highest officials at the expense of Koryŏ's old lineages. The attendants of Injong, on the other hand, tried to maximize the ruler's authority in conjunction with their own informal power, a power based upon direct access to the ruler. It is more helpful to see these two groups as at odds over how the authority and legitimated influence of the ruler might best be used to support other forms of authority, rather than as two factions at war over the authority of the ruler. See Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 7-15.

<sup>79</sup> Yun Ŏni was given the honorary epithet "Confucius of Korea". See *KMC* 56.

<sup>80</sup> See chapter ten.

<sup>81</sup> "[T]here are no 'natural' and 'original' identities, since every identity is the result of a constituting process, but [...] this process itself must be seen as one of permanent hybridization and nomadization. Identity is, in effect, the result of a multitude of interactions that take place inside a space whose outlines are not clearly defined. Chantal Mouffe, "For a politics of nomadic identity," in *Travelers' tales. Narratives of home and displacement* (London: Routledge, 1993), edited by George Robertson et al., pp. 105-113, esp. p. 110.

<sup>82</sup> Kim Tangt'aek's contention that Myoch'ŏng was used by the capital elite as a convenient front man should not be altogether dismissed. Although the motivations Kim Tangt'aek ascribes to Myoch'ŏng, Kim Pushik and others are not persuasive, his analysis of the dynamics of the rebellion and the way Myoch'ŏng's message was spread in the capital carries conviction. Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30.

residing in ignorance in the capital either exposed them to swift reprisals or made it easier for them to switch sides. Both alternatives did in fact take place and Myoch'öng's capital power base (if it had for any real purposes existed in the first place) was gone within days. Myoch'öng's decision begs the question whether he indeed fully trusted his supporters in the capital. His actions suggests that the desertion by Yun Öni and his faction had made Myoch'öng distrust even Chöng Chisang and Paek Suhan, who despite the fact that Chöng had indeed used Myoch'öng to further his own cause, stayed his staunchest supporters.<sup>83</sup>

The development of the rebellion in the Western Capital further points to a less than decisive role for Myoch'öng after the rebellion had broken out. In the negotiations right after the outbreak of the rebellion, Myoch'öng or the people directly associated with him seem to have played no significant role. It rather seems as if the forces in the Western Capital would have halted the rebellion if possible.<sup>84</sup> The negotiations took place between the emissaries of the court and high-ranking officials from the Western Capital.<sup>85</sup> Myoch'öng did not completely disappear from view; when negotiations compelled envoys from the capital to enter the Western Capital Myoch'öng was present. At the time of that meeting in the Kwanp'ung-jön Hall 觀風殿, Myoch'öng was seated facing the west, as befits a monarch, but he did not speak and the envoys of Injong were treated as envoys of the legitimate ruler by those present that did speak.<sup>86</sup> This, again, suggests that Myoch'öng's position as leader of the rebellion was anything but secure and largely ceremonial. Other contacts between the two warring sides also took place without even mentioning Myoch'öng.<sup>87</sup> The clearest indication of the insecurity of his position came when the tide of the war had turned against the Western Capital. In exchange for lenient terms, the commanders of the garrison in the Western Capital had Myoch'öng, Yu Kam and Yu Ho beheaded and presented their heads to Kim Pushik.<sup>88</sup> Amazingly, this was only one month after the outbreak of the rebellion.<sup>89</sup> The rebellion did not

<sup>83</sup> It is telling for instance that when Paek Ch'öng 白淸 sped to the capital to warn his father Paek Suhan of the rebellion in the Western Capital, the letter he carried to give to his father had not been written by Myoch'öng, but by unnamed friends of Paek Suhan. See *KS* 127: 33a-b.

<sup>84</sup> Right after the rebellion, Hong Isö and Yi Chungbu, who had belonged to the Myoch'öng faction, were sent to the Western Capital to negotiate. By sending two former supporters of Myoch'öng, the court made it clear that it wanted to negotiate. The rebels reciprocated by sending acting signatory official 檢校詹事 Ch'oe Kyöng 崔景 to Kaegyöng. Ch'oe reiterated the Western Capital's grievances. He wanted the capital moved and Injong to come to the Western Capital. The majority opinion at the Kaegyöng court had shifted towards hawkish policies with regard to Myoch'öng. His erstwhile supporters had turned around and were clamouring for the head of Ch'oe Kyöng. Injong and Kim Pushik intervened and Ch'oe was promoted and sent back with gifts. In the meantime, Kim Pushik acted on rumours that Kim An had secretly slowed down the preparations for the expeditions against Myoch'öng and had stashed weapons. A few days later, Chöng Chisang, Paek Suhan and Kim An were executed. Im Wönae was ordered to stay behind and guard Injong, while Kim Pushik left Kaegyöng to march on the Western Capital. He had explicit orders to capture the Western Capital with the minimum of casualties among the people of the city. Other sources corroborate this, as well as the fact that Kim Pushik acted with the utmost restraint in order not to obstruct negotiations. Kim Pushik's charm offensive to win over the local population served a similar purpose. See *KSC* 10: 18a-19b; *TMS* 23: 11a-12a.

<sup>85</sup> *KSC* 10: 18a-19b.

<sup>86</sup> *KS* 127: 33b-34a.

<sup>87</sup> Contacts with the negotiators from the capital seem to have been maintained by officials with military tasks from the Western Capital. See *KSC* 10: 15a-19b.

<sup>88</sup> *KS* 16: 32b-33a; *KS* 98: 6b; *KS* 127: 35b; *KSC* 10: 20a-b.

<sup>89</sup> The rebellion broke out in the first month of 1135 and Myoch'öng was beheaded in the second month of the same

end with the death of Myoch'öng nor did it apparently change its character; Myoch'öng and the rebellion were by no means an inseparable unity. Although subsequent machinations in the capital against a successful outcome of the negotiations obstructed a surrender on lenient terms of the Western Capital at this time,<sup>90</sup> this episode again shows the tenuous relationship of Myoch'öng and his inner circle with the commanders and people of the Western Capital.

Myoch'öng's name is prominently connected to all the events surrounding the proposed move of the capital after the trauma of Yi Chagyöm's failed revolt, the difficult transition to a world in which the Jin ruled the international scene, and the rebellion in the Western Capital. But, as we have seen, he certainly does not seem to have been the prime mover in these affairs. His ideas were representative rather than unusual for somebody with his background and in his position. His direct actions, as far as they have been recorded, also do not seem to have merited the abuse they have received. Nor, it should be added, the praise bestowed by Shin Ch'aeho and like-minded historians. In short, Myoch'öng was used by his supporters and his adversaries alike, but serious doubt must be entertained as to whether Myoch'öng was indeed responsible for everything ascribed to him. Myoch'öng was quite literally used as a scapegoat. Several accounts relate how his body and that of Ch'oe Yöng<sup>91</sup> were taken to the capital and exhibited there as visual emblems of the Western Capital's subjection and the state's triumph.<sup>92</sup> Decades after the rebellion, Myoch'öng was still used as a scapegoat. In a diplomatic letter to the Jin court explaining Koryö's laziness in sending tribute, Myoch'öng, who is labelled 'arch villain' in the text, was used as an excuse. The imperial pretences of Myoch'öng are explained. The text further made clear that the rebels had managed to seize five embassies on their way to the Jin capital. Despite the Koryö capital's best efforts, it added, the rebels did not respond to peace offers and the rebellion took several years to quell.<sup>93</sup> This last statement in particular is confounding, since it not only flatly contradicts all other contemporary Koryö documents, but also assumes that the Jin court would not be able to tell fiction from fact. But whatever the merits of this document as a diplomatic letter, it does show how Myoch'öng's rebellion had started to assume a historical status that did not correspond to its realities.

If Myoch'öng indeed was not the prime mover and leader of the revolt that bears his name, the question why he was described as such by supporter and adversary alike needs to be raised and answered. Here, it is helpful to look at the aftermath of the rebellion. While the defenders of the Western Capital were punished with varying degrees of strictness, they were punished as participants in the rebellion of the Western Capital, as was carved into the flesh of

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year. See Kim Namgyu, "Koryö Injong-dae-üi Sögyöng ch'öndo undong", pp. 5-30.

<sup>90</sup> Myoch'öng's erstwhile supporters turned into his most dangerous enemies. While Kim Pushik tried to make it possible for the Western Capital to surrender by allowing its negotiators to go to Kaegyöng, Mun Kongin, Ch'oe Yu and Han Yuch'ung (who had not been a Myoch'öng supporter, but was known for his extreme inflexibility; see chapter ten) had the negotiators chained and put in prison. Kim Pushik's recommendation that the negotiators be treated with leniency was rejected. Although Injong blocked their execution, conditional surrender of the Western Capital had become impossible. See *KSC* 10: 20b-21a.

<sup>91</sup> The body of Cho Kwang would have been preferred to that of Ch'oe Yöng, but Cho had chosen to burn to death in his house when the Western Capital's walls had been breached. See *KS* 98: 14b.

<sup>92</sup> *TMS* 23: 11a-12a; *TMS* 44: 11b-12b.

<sup>93</sup> *TMS* 39: 21b-22a.

the most important surviving rebels. They were not punished as participants in the rebellion of Myoch'öng. While this distinction may seem to belong to the realm of semantics, it does in fact not: the great majority of the sources that relate of the rebellion speak of 'Myoch'öng's rebellion', while few speak of the 'rebellion of the Western Capital'. This is significant, given the fact that the group of erstwhile Myoch'öng supporters who had deserted him after the outbreak of the rebellion were not punished for their involvement with Myoch'öng.<sup>94</sup> The only exception was Yun Öni who, despite his important role in the pacification of the rebellion,<sup>95</sup> was sent into an exile that would last six years, a long time given his importance and lineage background.<sup>96</sup> The reason given for Yun's fall from grace and subsequent exile was his close association with Chöng Chisang; Myoch'öng is not mentioned. Yun's epitaph alleges that he took part in the execution of Paek Suhan and the beheading of Myoch'öng.<sup>97</sup> All other sources unambiguously state that Myoch'öng was beheaded by the rebels in the Western Capital, so this claim can be safely dismissed.<sup>98</sup> Yun's involvement in Paek's execution would have also involved him in Chöng's execution (which took place at the same time and, presumably, at the same place). That this happened is doubtful, because Yun was subsequently accused of being in league with Chöng, making it very unlikely that he was involved in Chöng's execution, while Kim Pushik, who had Chöng executed, was the same person who impeached Yun. What these allegations of Yun's involvement in the deaths of Myoch'öng and Paek Suhan make clear, is that after the rebellion had been quelled, anti-Myoch'öng rhetoric became a powerful means of attack and of defence. The borders of Koryö identity had hardened to the extent of excluding Myoch'öng and everything associated with him. What in effect happened was that the discord in Koryö society (structural discord such as between the powerful lineages and the ruler or between Kaegyöng and the Western Capital, but also discord on individual levels) was glossed over and covered by Myoch'öng's rebellion. By mercilessly eliminating Myoch'öng's die-hard supporters, punishing the survivors of the rebellion as rebels of the Western Capital and excusing those high-ranking capital Myoch'öng supporters who had seen the light in time, the rebellion was basically reduced to a local rebellion. Perhaps the customary story surrounding the death of Chöng Chisang should also be seen in this light. Kim Pushik's biography in the *Koryösa* ends with the incongruent note that many people thought at the time of Chöng's swift execution that Kim Pushik was jealous of Chöng's poetry, which was considered better than his own poetry.<sup>99</sup> At the end of a biography that is closer to a hagiography than anything else, this strikes a strange note. Such anecdotes intimate that there was more to Chöng's death than the official explanation. What they intimate, however, is

<sup>94</sup> Right after the outbreak of the rebellion, there had been calls to punish Mun Kongin, but Injong protected him. The official response to the accusations aimed at Mun was that Mun was a loyal and trustworthy Confucian scholar and that especially in times like this (i.e. Myoch'öng's revolt), such people were indispensable. *TMS* 29: 16b-17a.

<sup>95</sup> All extant sources testify to Yun's importance in this respect.

<sup>96</sup> *TMS* 35: 11a-16a.

<sup>97</sup> *Yun Öni myojimjöng* in *KMC* 56.

<sup>98</sup> *KS* 16: 32b-33a; *KS* 98: 6b; *KS* 127: 35b; *KSC* 10: 20a-b.

<sup>99</sup> *KS* 127: 27a. Yi Kyubo also related the anecdote that Kim Pushik died at the hands of the vengeful ghost of Chöng who dragged him down by his balls into the latrine when Kim was sitting there. This tale can be found in Yi Kyubo's *Paegun sosöl* 白雲小說; see the appendix 附錄 to the *TYSC*.

anything but dangerous: such anecdotes are completely harmless, reducing a potentially dangerous conflict to the personal level, where petty jealousies ruled the lives of men instead of ideologies that can devastate societies.

### THE DANGER OF MYOCH'ÖNG

The name of Myoch'öng was used as a synonym for discord. The events from the reign of Injong had nearly brought the Wang dynasty down and had almost made the Koryö state collapse. The rule of Yi Chagyöm and his attempt at usurping the throne had shaken the dynasty, while the transition from Liao to Jin and Koryö's initial inadequate reaction to it had threatened to destabilize the entire state. When the rebellion in the Western Capital started to gather critical mass, it became a most urgent problem; suddenly, the insistence that Koryö should attack the Jin was no longer an empty threat, a means to blow off steam or an idea to be toyed with.<sup>100</sup> It became a potential threat and was seen as such by the Jin state, which communicated to the Koryö court its intention to help quell the rebellion by sending a large number of troops.<sup>101</sup> The Song did the same, which given the debates on whether to support, contain or attack Koryö,<sup>102</sup> was an offer the Koryö court refused, but the implications of which it took very seriously.<sup>103</sup> Foreign attention raised the stakes of Myoch'öng's ideas and later of the rebellion.

Why then the leniency shown to the deserters from Myoch'öng's camp, when it became clear that the domestic and international political situation, Myoch'öng's ideas and the rebellion in the Western Capital made a highly-explosive cocktail? The potentially most damaging aspect of Myoch'öng's success was not the danger it posed to Koryö's international situation. It was his radically different approach to Koryö society that made Myoch'öng dangerous for the likes of Kim Pushik, but eventually also for Yun Öni and Mun Kongin. It was also the reason why his most prominent supporters left him. For more than a century,

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<sup>100</sup> The potential danger of the rebellion for the state can be gauged from the fact that the cost of warfare was such a great burden on the state that regions close by and far away suffered alike under the increased tax demands and became unruly. Injong acknowledged this and issued a proclamation in which he explained the rebellion, its reasons and development as well as its repression. According to this document, which was issued to "soothe the anger of the Three Han", the court had been under the sway of a geomancer from the Western Capital who was considered to be a wise man. The new palace in the Western Capital had been built in the hope of a revitalizing of Koryö politics in the wake of the Yi Chagyöm revolt. The document further explained why Chöng Chisang *cum suis* had been swiftly dealt with and why the army had been despatched. The edict was to be distributed everywhere. The sense of urgency in the text is underscored by the fact that the edict was written and distributed during the pacification of the rebellion and not, as was usually done, after a successful outcome. See *KSC* 10: 23a-24b. The text is mistakenly attributed to Yi Kyubo in the *Töng munson*. Yi Kyubo had not been born yet and the text is also not to be found in Yi Kyubo's collected works. See *Inwang ch'oegi kyosö* 仁王罪己教書 in *TMS* 23: 18a-b. Another indication of the potential danger of the rebellion was the fact that the rebels issued edicts and decrees that were considered authentic by people in the north. Such edicts could obviously also be taken as authentic by the Jin. See *TMS* 23: 11a-12a.

<sup>101</sup> Yi Chöngshin, "Koryö-üi taeoe kwangye-wa Myoch'öng-üi nan", pp. 81-89.

<sup>102</sup> See chapter nine.

<sup>103</sup> *KSC* 10: 27a-b.

Koryŏ had thrived and one of the important factors of its prosperity was its pluralist Weltanschauung. Within this view of the world, it was permissible to loathe the northern barbarians or to advocate the destruction of the Jin. There were counterideas to every idea, counterpolicies to every policy, counterideologies to every ideology; it was a multitude of voices which by virtue of its diversity ensured that no one voice would dominate or exclude other voices.<sup>104</sup> The eclectic nature of Myoch'ŏng's thought, as far as this can be ascertained, has misled commentators into assuming that it was Myoch'ŏng's worldview that was somehow less conservative and more flexible than that of Kim Pushik *cum suis*.<sup>105</sup> The eclectic nature of his ideas notwithstanding,<sup>106</sup> Myoch'ŏng proved himself to be more of a conservative than Kim Pushik. Kim Pushik energetically worked on his vision of a revitalized Koryŏ, drawing on Song Confucian scholarship, in which power structures would be stable and centralized, by no means a conservative policy, because it meant challenging the authority of the established lineages. The fact that Kim Pushik used Confucian techniques to achieve his goals has drawn attention away from the fact that simultaneously he was open to other ideas, concepts, beliefs and approaches.<sup>107</sup> Myoch'ŏng was not concerned with power politics at this level; he strove for what Chantal Mouffe called the 'impossible good', an unambiguous way of living and acting for Koryŏ and in doing so came to suffer from what Michael Oakeshott has termed *superbia*, an exclusive concern with his own utterances.<sup>108</sup>

Myoch'ŏng and Kim Pushik shared a Koryŏ-centric view of the world, but whereas Kim Pushik was ready to recognize the existence of other states and act accordingly, Myoch'ŏng and his followers knew little of the intricacies of the international situation. None of the people who stayed with Myoch'ŏng had ever been abroad.<sup>109</sup> A Koryŏ-centric worldview propounded by someone who knew the international situation was beneficial to

<sup>104</sup> Oakeshott, Michael, 'The tower of Babel' (1948), in *Rationalism in politics* (London, 1962: Methuen; reprint Liberty Fund expanded edition, 1991), p. 476: "Too often the excessive pursuit of one ideal leads to the exclusion of others, perhaps all others; in our eagerness to realise justice we come to forget charity, and a passion for righteousness has made many a man hard and merciless. There is, indeed, no ideal the pursuit of which will not lead to disillusion; chagrin waits at the end for all who take this path. Every admirable ideal has its opposite, no less admirable. Liberty or order, justice or charity, spontaneity or deliberateness, principle or circumstance, self or others, these are the kinds of dilemma with which this form of the moral life is always confronting us, making us see double by directing us always to abstract extremes, none of which is wholly desirable."

<sup>105</sup> Shin Ch'aeho, "Chŏsŏn sasang ilch'ŏnnyŏllae cheiltae sakkŏn", pp. 103-124; Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu*; Kang Sŏngwŏn, "Myoch'ŏng-ŭi chae komt'o", pp. 177-196; Kim Tangt'aek, "Koryŏ Injong-dae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng ch'ŏndo", pp. 1-30.

<sup>106</sup> It is doubtful whether Myoch'ŏng would have considered his ideas eclectic, given the long association in Koryŏ of elements from Buddhism, geomancy and *ŭm-yang* theories. A lack of sources precludes any conclusions, but this should be kept in mind when analyzing Myoch'ŏng's ideas. It should also not be forgotten that this mix of landscape interpretation, prophecies and active politics was well-known and established in Koryŏ.

<sup>107</sup> See chapter ten.

<sup>108</sup> "For each voice is prone to *superbia*, that is, an exclusive concern with its own utterance, which may result in its identifying the conversation with itself and its speaking as if it were only speaking to itself. And when this happens, barbarism may be observed to have supervened." Michael Oakeshott, "The voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind", p. 492.

<sup>109</sup> Chŏng Chisang, Paek Suhan and Kim An had never left Koryŏ. Neither had the rebels in the Western Capital, as far as the sources allow us to verify this. Chŏng in particular became more and more anxious to have Myoch'ŏng's ideas adopted and executed. His last recorded plea for Koryŏ to embrace its destiny by relocating the capital to Sŏgyŏng is extremely intense and of single-minded purpose. See *KSC* 9: 56a-b.

Koryŏ, but coming from Myoch'ŏng, a monk with no political or diplomatic experience, it had the potential to be disastrous. Myoch'ŏng's Koryŏ-centrism was unmitigated by experience or expedience, while Kim Pushik had been abroad several times and could gauge the strength of Koryŏ to a much more precise degree. Kim Pushik had also tried to preserve Koryŏ's pluralist approach to the world as a consequence of which he had no insurmountable problems with recognizing the Jin as Koryŏ's suzerain. Myoch'ŏng's response, on the other hand, showed his insistence to pursue idealist politics. The resistance against Myoch'ŏng and his eventual defeat do not point at the unpopularity of his ideas. On the contrary, his initial success (which lasted for years) clearly demonstrates their widespread popularity. As discussed before, his ideas were in no sense new or revolutionary, but successfully succeeded older, similar ideas. Along the way, however, Myoch'ŏng lost most of his prominent followers. Significantly, his most important supporters (not his most vocal supporters) were experienced statesmen, diplomats, military officials and scholars, who turned their backs on him when it was clear that he pursued a policy that would turn Koryŏ into a state that would no longer recognize the validity of different worldviews. These persons had all been abroad at least one time, mostly as envoys or accompanying an embassy.<sup>110</sup> The desertion of Myoch'ŏng by his supporters is perhaps the most significant event of the rebellion. It also offers a clue with regard to the contents of his intentions and ideas which are otherwise difficult to gauge.

Yun Ŏni is the prime example of an erstwhile supporter who left Myoch'ŏng; his desertion also shows how pluralism functioned in Koryŏ. As long as Myoch'ŏng was one voice among others and as long as his arguments could serve to further the political goals of Yun Ŏni and others affiliated with him, his Koryŏ-centric message was credible (and as a weapon against Kim Pushik Myoch'ŏng had his uses). As such, Myoch'ŏng functioned as one force in the ever-shifting field that constituted Koryŏ society and that was constantly trying to reach an equilibrium, without ever quite getting there. But when Myoch'ŏng, perhaps as the victim of his own success, seemed to have gained the upper hand at court and was on the verge of tilting the balance, people like Yun and Mun realized the inevitable: the course steered by Myoch'ŏng would reorient Koryŏ around a single fundamental principle. Such a reorientation implied in it the potential ostracism of people like Yun and Mun, who were multi-faceted, simultaneously bound to several sets of values and institutions and, when it came to the crunch, far too realistically minded to pass muster in Myoch'ŏng's eyes. Myoch'ŏng worked to achieve the exclusive domination of one such set of values over all other sets. The realization of Myoch'ŏng's ideas, most prominently the idea that all of Koryŏ's problems could be solved and a final harmony achieved if only Koryŏ would embrace its destiny, attack and destroy the Jin and rule over its corner of the world, would put an end to the pluralist Koryŏ both Kim Pushik and Yun Ŏni supported. Kim and Yun were advocates of pluralism in Koryŏ, but they were also always at each other's throats. As opposed to Myoch'ŏng, whose incessant pleas to relocate the capital so that Koryŏ would achieve its destiny clearly indicate his belief in final resolutions, Yun and Kim did not believe in a final point of equilibrium or in final harmony. They were active in the precarious 'in-between', which is the natural habitat of pluralism. In

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<sup>110</sup> Breuker, "Koryŏ as an independent realm", p. 81: n. 101.

this respect, it is revealing that the feud between Kim Pushik and Yun Ōni was put on hold for the duration of the rebellion, only to be resumed after the Western Capital had been pacified.<sup>111</sup> Myoch'ōng on the other hand believed in a final resolution that would end all conflict and strongly believed in the possibility of the "impossible good" that could be realized here and now, instead of remaining a distant ideal. The actual danger of war with the Jin was in essence but a corollary of Myoch'ōng's strong monist beliefs; and these beliefs were the reason why Myoch'ōng was deserted by his supporters in the capital, with the exception of Chōng Chisang, Kim An and Paek Suhan, whose unrelenting faith in Myoch'ōng cost them their lives.

With the desertion of Yun and others, Myoch'ōng's voice turned into an "excluded voice", "which may take wing against the wind, but it may well do so at the risk of turning the conversation into a dispute."<sup>112</sup> Myoch'ōng turned the conversation into a dispute and paid the price for it. He lost his life and was made into the scapegoat for all discord that existed in early twelfth-century Koryō. The reasons behind this were twofold: it was a convenient way to cover up deep discord in several areas and secondly, in a way Myoch'ōng was indeed to blame for everything. He was not the first one to want a radically different society based on his own vision, but he was the first one whose successes made it look like he might be successful in realizing his vision.

#### KORYŌ SOCIETY IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE REBELLION

Myoch'ōng was defeated, his movement wiped out, the rebels in the Western Capital punished and dispersed. The consequences for Koryō of the appearance and the successes of a person like Myoch'ōng were nonetheless far-reaching. Myoch'ōng's movement had tried to reduce and eliminate otherness in Koryō and in doing so allied itself with forces in the Western Capital which in the end turned out to have their own agenda. Contrary to the dominant opinion in contemporary historiography on Koryō, it was Kim Pushik who had realized that otherness was an inescapable trait of Koryō society and fought to preserve this. He, however, was caught between a rock and a hard place in the aftermath of Myoch'ōng's rebellion. The rebellion had been destructive and had made visible large tears in the fabric of Koryō society. Tolerance for the likes of Myoch'ōng was for the moment out of the question.

Myoch'ōng had played the role of the prophet who knew what was good for the people and who had mapped the road to paradise. The people opposing him, Kim Pushik *cum suis*, focused their energies on creating conducive circumstances for proper conduct and eliminating as many negative conditions as possible. To this end, Kim attempted to restructure Koryō's authority structures to create a stable centralized authority, centred in the ruler and his closest ministers. To this end also, he wrote the *Samguk sagi*. As discussed in chapter seven, the

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<sup>111</sup> This goes to show two important things: one, that the significance both attached to Koryō as a pluralist society temporarily transcended their personal differences. Second, that their personal differences were not in any way soothed or allayed by their inclusive outlook on the world.

<sup>112</sup> Michael Oakeshott, "The voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind", p. 494.



*Samguk sagi* was written to recodify Koryŏ's pluralism, both historically (as expressed in the presence of three basic annals) and practically as a guide for day-to-day affairs (most clearly demonstrated in the historical comments). At the same time, the *Samguk sagi* served to underscore the need for strong central authority to maintain Koryŏ's plurality. In the aftermath of the rebellion, Kim's historiographical statement was unlikely to miss its intended goals.

Politically, Kim Pushik tried to limit the damage done by Myoch'ŏng. In the direct aftermath of the rebellion, Kim's most trusted protégés, like Chŏng Sŭmyŏng (who had fought alongside Kim during the siege of the Western Capital), were appointed to the highest posts in the bureaucracy; the Western Capital was put under strict control; Kim's political enemies were impeached and exiled.<sup>113</sup> Relations with the Jin were normalized and given the attention and significance relations with the Liao had traditionally enjoyed.<sup>114</sup> The rebellion had hardened the boundaries of what was permissible in Koryŏ. In Im Wan's scathing denouncement of Myoch'ŏng, he had advised the ruler to follow the example set by Munjong, who was described as an ideal ruler in the Confucian mould.<sup>115</sup> Munjong, however, had been severely criticized by his own officials for his reliance on what they considered unreliable and deceptive theories of *ŭm-yang*.<sup>116</sup> The disgrace that had befallen geomantic and *ŭm-yang* theories because of Myoch'ŏng's movement hardened the boundaries of Koryŏ identity. The memory of Munjong that was held up to Injong had been sanitized and simplified so that no traces of Munjong's questionable faith in unreliable hocus-pocus remained. Not until after the death of Kim Pushik in 1150, did the new ruler, Ŭijong start to flirt with geomancy as a political guideline.<sup>117</sup>

Koryŏ had been successfully revitalized in the early eleventh century after the murder of Mokchong and the Liao invasions. Revitalization had been possible by the conscious adoption and maintenance of several contradictory principles. A strong Koryŏ-centric view of the world was simultaneously challenged and balanced by Koryŏ's realist policies vis-à-vis its neighbouring states. Acceptance of Sinitic cultural achievements was set off by welcoming the achievements of the Liao. Such contradictions were explicitly articulated but not solved. A century later, the quick fall and destruction of the Liao combined with Koryŏ's domestic circumstances to create a similar trauma. The response of Koryŏ's decision-making elite, however, was completely different. Instead of relying on the time-tested method of allowing contradiction and inconsistency to exist unsolved, the majority of Koryŏ literati, scholars, nobles and military opted to support Myoch'ŏng's Koryŏ-centric, monist view of the world. Eventually, the vast majority withdrew their support and espoused Kim Pushik's policies, first of conquest and punishment, then of reconciliation and tolerance.

Kim Pushik's measures succeeded in restoring law and order in Koryŏ and the reign of Injong after 1136 was relatively quiet and prosperous. Kim Pushik's effort to restore pluralism

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<sup>113</sup> *KS* 98: 22a-23b; *TMS* 35: 11a-16a; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ Injong-dae Sŏgyongmin-ŭi hangjaeng", pp. 571-590; Kang Ogyŏp, "Koryŏ shidae-ŭi Sŏgyŏng chedo", pp. 93-118.

<sup>114</sup> See chapter nine.

<sup>115</sup> *TMS* 52: 18a-21b.

<sup>116</sup> *POHJ* 1: 46; Yi Pyŏngdo, *Koryŏ shidae-ŭi yŏn'gu*, pp. 138-156.

<sup>117</sup> *KS* 18: 11b-12a.

as leading principle in Koryŏ was essentially a botched attempt, however. In Kim's defeat of Myoch'ŏng and his suppression of the idea that Myoch'ŏng's geomantic reading of Koryŏ's destiny was the ultimate value to be adhered to, Kim Pushik himself was forced to come down hard on his adversaries and forcibly establish his vision of Koryŏ's future. On the strength of his triumph over the Western Capital, Kim's position became unassailable.<sup>118</sup> This did not go down very well in the long run. The reception of the *Samguk sagi* shows this quite clearly. Intended as a reflection on and a chronicle of the peninsula's history and as a support for centralized authority, it was already criticized as the product of a too narrow mind little more than a century after its publication. In his introduction to *Tongmyŏngwang p'yŏn* (*The lay of King Tongmyŏng*) Yi Kyubo lamented the fact that Kim Pushik had excluded the more miraculous stories of the peninsula's ancient past.<sup>119</sup> Understandable as this kind of criticism is against the background of a society that had progressively lost its faith in the likes of Kim Pushik (whose son's prank setting fire to a general's beard had inadvertently started off the military coup d'état of 1170), such criticism was less than fair.<sup>120</sup> It did however demonstrate the beginnings of the downfall of Koryŏ's characteristic Weltanschauung. The perception of Koryŏ's history as a succession of contingent events, which pervades the *Samguk sagi* from beginning to end, was beginning to give way to a vision of Koryŏ history that was more suited to Myoch'ŏng; Koryŏ history as the inevitable unfolding of destiny.<sup>121</sup> Even before the Mongol invasions, such a vision of Koryŏ history was beginning to be perceptible in Yi Kyubo's writings. Most of the criticism on the *Samguk sagi*, both pre-modern and modern, can be construed as criticism on the history of the country as a series of contingent events instead of its history as the unfolding of destiny.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>118</sup> TMS 44: 11b-12b; TMS 23: 11a-12a; TMS 12: 12a; TMS 23: 2a.

<sup>119</sup> See chapter seven for details.

<sup>120</sup> The very limited nature of the sources on the military coup of 1015 precludes anything but speculation, but there probably is a connection between the fact that the 1015 coup failed and that of 1170 did not and the question whether the majority of officials, both civilian and military, supported a pluralist view of the world. Both coups were occasioned by the international and national trauma's Koryŏ had been faced with in the period directly preceding the coups as well as by the institutional discrimination military officials faced. Nonetheless, civilian government and a strong ruler were a realistic and apparently reliable alternative in the eleventh century, while in the twelfth century military government was considered to be significantly more reliable, even by civilian officials.

<sup>121</sup> History per se was not seen as contingent by Kim Pushik. The main purpose of the *Samguk sagi* was the presentation of principles, drawn from historical precedent, which would have been impossible if history was a series of contingent events and nothing more. Within the larger, universal structure of history, in which universal principles held sway, it was however conceivable that the history of a particular country like Koryŏ would be a contingent series of events, even if these events were governed by universal principles.

<sup>122</sup> Yi Kyubo's criticism, for instance, can be read as such. His insistence that Kim Pushik's lack of attention for Tongmyŏng is in fact criticism that the *Samguk sagi* has no inclusive narrative of descent. Such a narrative, such as common descent from Tongmyŏng, would be akin to an idea of destiny unfolding. Instead of descent originated in contingency, descent as destiny determined history. Shin Ch'aeho's criticism on Kim Pushik was identical. His rejection of the *Samguk sagi* was caused by the fact that he did not recognize the story of the Korean nation in it. The history of the nation was in Shin's estimation also an unfolding of destiny, not a series of contingent events. Kwŏn Kŭn, finally, also made a problem of the *Samguk sagi* containing three basic annals, which if anything is a clear statement that Koryŏ's coming into being had been a very contingent affair.

## CONCLUSION

The rebellion of Myoch'öng was in several significant respects not his rebellion; he and his ideas were used by a part of the capital elite, the rebellion was not led by him and it ran its course without Myoch'öng. The motives of the rebellion, moreover, had to do mostly with regional tensions in Koryö and little with the niceties of Myoch'öng's ideology. In another sense, though, the rebellion was Myoch'öng's. Supported by several factors out of his control (international tension after the fall of the Liao, domestic tension after the fall of Yi Chagyöm, regional tension between the capital and the Western Capital, Kim Pushik's attempts to restructure centralized authority and the resistance of the capital lineages), he quickly gained the ear of the court and amassed significant popular support. By joining the old debate on the move of the capital to a geomantically more auspicious place, Myoch'öng found himself in the middle of the political world. The position of Kaegyöng as Koryö's supreme capital had always been more precarious than is often realized, but in the aftermath of the failed coup of Yi Chagyöm, during which a substantial part of the royal palace went up in flames, this debate was more actual than ever before. Connecting the move of the capital to the north with Koryö's destiny to conquer the Jin dynasty, only recently recognized as Koryö's suzerain and the new dominant power in North-East Asia, Myoch'öng's ideas suddenly became feasible. Perhaps destined to fail, but possible to undertake. Along with the feasibility his ideas all of a sudden had obtained (an unfamiliar characteristic of most similar geomantically oriented proposals to move the capital or comparably unworkable petitions), Myoch'öng garnered the support of those elements of the capital elite that were in principle in favour of a relocation of the capital.

Myoch'öng turned into a political force which upset the equilibrium by claiming precedence for his ideas. His elimination by Kim Pushik was meant to restore the equilibrium, but had the effect of decisively tipping the balance in favour of Kim Pushik, whose vision would largely determine Koryö's immediate future. Kim Pushik's dominance effectively paved the way for the military coup d'état of 1170. The dominance of the civil branch in government was no longer opposed since Kim Pushik's domination of Koryö politics.

By challenging it, the events surrounding the rebellion of Myoch'öng showed Koryö's pluralist *Weltanschauung* in full force. Although for a long time it looked as if things could have gone either way, Koryö came together when its ways of life were threatened; the flexibility and inclusiveness of a way of looking at the world was more prized than dreams of domination. At the same time the rebellion also showed the contingency of such a way of looking at the world and the fact that pluralism is a 'precarious in-between'. Myoch'öng's serious attempt to complete Koryö's destiny carried in it its destruction; the impossible good denied the permanent presence of contradiction, antagonism and conflict, while the outside world (in particular the existence of the Jin) challenged this state of affairs and hence needed to be solved.

Myoch'öng's rebellion is both thematically, historically and chronologically a fitting

conclusion to a discussion of Koryŏ pluralism. It puts into stark relief Koryŏ's ways of looking at the world and showed with tragic consequences for Myoch'ŏng himself the ideological make-up of the majority of literati. Even more so than Kim Pushik's confirmation of a pluralist worldview in the aftermath of the rebellion, Myoch'ŏng's attempt to negate it brought it out in full force.

Koryŏ's recodification of its plural pasts was partly caused by the rebellion of Myoch'ŏng. Even before the compilation of the *Samguk sagi*, the sense that Koryŏ had plural pasts was widespread and had already been made into a historiographical convention. Nonetheless, the way Kim Pushik structured his history of the peninsula with three basic annals of equal status indicated a more explicit perception of the importance of the presence of several pasts. It paradoxically made this perception of Koryŏ's history more rigid than it had been before. Interestingly, Myoch'ŏng and his followers do not seem to have fundamentally disagreed with such a view of Koryŏ's history. In later historiography, Myoch'ŏng's cause has become inextricably tied to Koguryŏ-successionism and the idea that the lost territories in Manchuria should be recovered.<sup>123</sup> There is no indication, however, that Myoch'ŏng or the rebels in P'yŏngyang did indeed claim Koguryŏ ancestry. When Kungye founded his state in the first years of the tenth century, he had still rallied the inhabitants of the P'yŏngyang region with claims of revenge for Koguryŏ. But by the twelfth century it seems that the identity of the Three Han as a people with plural descent living in a historically delineated territory had become sufficiently strong for rebellion and civil war to occur without necessitating renewed processes of identity formation.

While shared ideas of descent had not become matters of debate on account of the rebellion, shared ideas of destiny were precisely what the Myoch'ŏng movement had been about. The path to be taken was at stake in the bloody struggle between Kim Pushik and Myoch'ŏng. In the end, the pluralism of Kim Pushik, Yun Ŏni and the majority of Koryŏ literati was victorious, but it was a Pyrrhic victory. In order to survive as a dominant way of life, the defence of contradiction and inconsistency came to exclude Myoch'ŏng's way of looking at the world. This had little to do with the particulars of Myoch'ŏng's *Weltanschauung*, but was completely determined by its sudden rise to influence. This mechanism shows both the advantages and the disadvantages of the bandwidth created by a pluralist outlook. Inside its parameters, it is inclusive even of concepts that subvert it, but outside these parameters, if the subversive concept grows too powerful, it hardens along with its boundaries and loses the flexibility it needs to be maintained.

As Koryŏ's earliest extant history was written in direct response to the monist challenge of Myoch'ŏng, the movement and the rebellion were of decisive importance for the development of Koryŏ historiography. It did not initiate a new perspective on the peninsula's history or on the history of the Three Han, but it did cement firmly into place the notion that the Three Han had plural pasts. After the codification of a pluralist *Weltanschauung* in the *Ten*

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<sup>123</sup> André Schmid, "Looking north toward Manchuria," in *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 99.1 (2000): pp. 219-240; Schmid, "Rediscovering Manchuria: Sin Ch'aeho and the politics of territorial history in Korea," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56.1 (1997): pp. 26-46.

*injunctions*, the *Samguk sagi* recodified this way of looking at the world. The Three Han were recodified as Koryŏ's chapter polity, the Three Kingdoms as Koryŏ's chapter states.

The rebellion revolved in large part around the person of the ruler, which given the lack of power Injong had during this period indicates the ideological and symbolical significance of the Koryŏ ruler, independent from his actual influence. The ruler symbolized the historical, present and future unity of the Three Han and as such his formal endorsement of Myoch'ŏng's plans was a *sine qua non*. The object of transregional identification and the 'one and only' who could hold the Three Han's plural pasts and presents together by frequent and large-scale rituals, the ruler enforced ties of common worship and obedience politically, ideologically, historiographically, ritually and religiously. Myoch'ŏng's long cultivation of his relations with Injong and his repeated insistence for Injong to join him in the Western Capital were the inevitable result of the ruler's significance for Koryŏ society and communal identity.

Koryŏ's diplomacy and its view of the international world were also put in perspective by the rebellion. Koryŏ had for a long time been successful in implementing highly flexible policies, designed to ward off attempts at monopolizing diplomatic relations by Chinese and Manchurian states and to acknowledge its own claims to unique status. In this way, Koryŏ had established and maintained relationships with different counterparts and had successfully given their influences (political, ideological, cultural, intellectual and religious) a place in the Koryŏ worldview. The build-up to the rebellion showed a completely different approach to these issues, however. For the first time, a completely Koryŏ-centric international policy, unmitigated by a pluralist view of affairs, looked like a real possibility. Eventually, the majority of Koryŏ literati flirted with such monist Koryŏ-centrism and then returned to a realist appraisal of Koryŏ in the world. Koryŏ had always considered itself to be in a race against the Song, against the Liao, against the Jin to prove that it was as adept in building and maintaining a civilization, but its sheer size had always meant that its international policies had to be more flexible and anticipatory than those of its much larger neighbours. Myoch'ŏng almost succeeded in changing this and in the attempt, showed his contemporaries how vital Koryŏ's characteristic foreign relations had been with regard to the consolidation of the Koryŏ state and identity formation of the Three Han.

In a similar vein, the rebellion also revealed to what extent Koryŏ was governed by a majority of literati who perceived Koryŏ as an independent realm. Nonetheless, it was accepted that there were more independent realms with their own Sons of Heaven. This view of the world made it possible for Koryŏ to accept radical changes in the international world without being forced to discard its own view of the world. Both in their dealings with foreign states and in their personal occupations Koryŏ literati had come to possess an ideological bandwidth that assured them the possibility of entertaining contradictory opinions and worldviews that were nonetheless historically and ideologically understandable to their contemporaries. During Myoch'ŏng's rise to power, these scholars were tempted by Myoch'ŏng's convincing and clear vision of the future. The same practical experiences and travels abroad that made them long for definitive solutions to Koryŏ's ever-present problems and which drew them to Myoch'ŏng's ideas in the end also made them renounce him. Both his lack of realistic assessment of the international situation and his insistence upon the

existence of only one truth ran counter to the way most Koryŏ literati saw the world. The attraction that Myoch'ŏng held for Koryŏ can be best explained as a vision of how their world should look like.

In the early eleventh century, Koryŏ's way of life had been codified in the *Ten injunctions*. The injunctions combined practical guidance with the codification of what was important, of what was 'real'. The rise to power of Myoch'ŏng demonstrated the contingency and precariousness of such a worldview. Myoch'ŏng challenged ambiguity with dichotomy, contradiction with negation, inconsistency with clarity and contingency with destiny. His emergence showed more than any other event from the reign of Hyŏnjong until the military coup of 1170 that living with ambiguity had its advantages as well as disadvantages. Most of all, it showed that the maintenance of a pluralist *Weltanschauung* paid off, but only if the 'precarious in-between' was sustained and an equilibrium was striven after but not reached. The maintenance of a strong Koryŏ-centric identity which differentiated clearly between the Three Han, its people, land, past, present and future, and its neighbours no matter the civilizational borrowing that went on, was only possible because the many different, contradictory or even incommensurable ways of thinking, believing and acting created a space in which the distinctiveness of belonging to the community of the Three Han could exist.

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## SAMENVATTING

Dit proefschrift is een onderzoek naar de vorming van meervoudige identiteiten in de vroege Koryŏ periode (918-1170). De vraag die ten grondslag ligt aan dit onderzoek is hoe transregionale identiteiten (d.w.z. vormen van identificatie met structuren en gemeenschappen die de directe en gekende omgeving ontstijgen) in de premoderne tijd zich vormen en welke factoren daar invloed op uitoefenen. De Koryŏ staat biedt wat dat betreft een bijzonder vruchtbaar onderzoeksgebied; niet alleen is deze staat een grote onbekende buiten de Koreaanse historiografie, ook was Koryŏ een bijzonder complexe maatschappij waarin verschillende levensbeschouwingen, filosofieën en religies coëxisteerden. Bovendien was Koryŏ een staat die zich staande moest zien te houden tussen twee grote en machtige beschavingen wier respectieve culturele verworvenheden grote veranderingen teweeg brachten in Koryŏ. Desalniettemin is het duidelijk voor de student van de geschiedenis van Koryŏ dat deze gemeenschap er gedurende lange tijd in is geslaagd om een eigen, niet-reduceerbare en originele identiteit te creëren en in stand te houden. Dit onderzoek probeert te bepalen hoe Koryŏ identiteiten werden verbeeld door Koryŏ literaten in de eerste plaats en door het volk (dat zelf geen directe bronnen heeft achtergelaten) in de tweede plaats. Direct voortvloeiend hieruit is de vraag in welke mate de percepties van de verschillende werkelijkheden die in Koryŏ bestonden, de maatschappij en het gedrag van de leden van deze maatschappij creëerden.

Een van de meest opvallende kenmerken van de vroege Koryŏ periode is het pluralistische karakter ervan. Het intellectuele klimaat van de Koryŏ dynastie onderscheidt zich door een energiek intellectueel leven waarin verschillende ideologieën, religies en wereldbeelden coëxisteerden en met elkaar botsten – en dat vaak in dezelfde geest. Dit intellectuele klimaat valt op door zijn ongebruikelijke tolerantie van inconsistenties, tegenstellingen en ongerijmdheden in rivaliserende wereldbeelden, slechts gedeeltelijk en tijdelijk samengebracht in individuele wereldbeelden. Gemeten naar moderne standaarden waren Koryŏ's percepties van de sociopolitieke werkelijkheid – werkelijkheden – een allegaartje, een samenraapsel van allerlei verschillende denkbeelden, sommige ideologisch, andere filosofisch, historisch, religieus, mythologisch, sociaal of literair. Zulk een karakterisering van Koryŏ gaat lijnrecht in tegen de moderne geschiedschrijving over Koryŏ, waarin Koryŏ of boeddhistisch, of confucianistisch of typisch Koreaans wordt genoemd. Ik poog met dit onderzoek dit soort makkelijke dichotomieën (tussen confucianisme en boeddhisme, Chinees en Koreaans/Koryŏaans, werkelijk en onwerkelijk) te ontmantelen en te vervangen door een meer genuanceerde kijk op Koryŏ en de aard van de Koryŏ maatschappij.

De uitzonderlijke aard van Koryŏ's wereldbeeld is niet zozeer te wijten aan het feit dat deze pluralistisch was. De meeste wereldbeelden zijn pluralistisch of bevatten dergelijke elementen. Het uitzonderlijke van Koryŏ ligt in het feit dat deze pluralistische kijk op de wereld verschillende malen in officiële documenten en geschriften gecodificeerd is. Er was niet alleen sprake van een de facto pluralisme in Koryŏ, maar als men het scherp wil stellen zelfs van

een de iure pluralistische kijk op de wereld. Dat zulk een kijk op de wereld wordt gesanctioneerd en gevoed door staat en samenleving is zeker geen alledaags fenomeen. Als zodanig bezette de pluralistische kijk op de wereld een belangrijke plaats in de constructie van transregionale identiteiten in Koryŏ.

Het onderzoek is gestructureerd aan de hand van verschillende themata verdeeld over vier delen. In het eerste deel heb ik gekeken naar de stichting van een pluralistische samenleving. Hieruit is gebleken dat de naam Koryŏ eigenlijk niet gebruikt werd, maar in plaats daarvan noemde men zichzelf en de eigen gemeenschap “de Drie Han” (Samhan). Deze Drie Han stonden model voor de meervoudige historische afstamming van Koryŏ. In tegenstelling tot de geünificeerde en monolithische beweringen van nationalistische geschiedschrijving, voerde Koryŏ zijn afstamming nooit alleen terug op een voorgaande staat (een zogenaamde ‘chapter state’), maar altijd op meerdere staten, meestal drie tegelijk. Dit leverde enerzijds wel eens verwarring op, maar deze flexibiliteit bleek anderzijds toch vaak van pas te komen. Tevens is gebleken dat er al vroeg in de Koryŏ periode een eigen historisch territorium werd afgebakend, niet noodzakelijk fysiek, maar wel zeker mentaal. Men verbeelde zich dat het volk van de Drie Han altijd binnen deze grenzen had geleefd en dat ook altijd zou blijven doen, zelfs na een eventuele teloorgang van de staat Koryŏ. Er werd met andere woorden een strikte scheiding gemaakt tussen staat en gemeenschap.

In het tweede deel is de historiografie van Koryŏ en de codificatie van Koryŏ historische herinneringen uitgebreid behandeld. Identiteitsvorming is bij uitstek afhankelijk van het aanwezig zijn van gedeelde ideeën over verleden, heden en toekomst en het actief gedenken hiervan. Er is gebleken dat geschiedschrijving een belangrijke vormende rol speelde in het zich uitkristalliseren van een afzonderlijk Koryŏ identiteit. Dit geldt met name voor Koryŏ’s vroegste en meest bekende werk, de *Samguk sagi* (Geschiedenis van de Drie Koninkrijken). Dit werk, dat onterecht te boek staat als een sinofiel, confucianistisch en rationeel geschiedwerk, was een staatsgeschiedenis waarin Koryŏ’s meervoudige historische afstamming werd gecodificeerd en dat een duidelijke pluralistische kijk op de wereld uitdroeg.

In het derde deel, dat over de vraag gaat hoe Koryŏ’s staatsmannen, diplomaten, geleerden en bureaucraten concreet handelden, werd de persoon van de Koryŏ heerser geanalyseerd. In tegenstelling tot de heersende mening, was de Koryŏ heerser niet slechts een koning, maar werd hij binnen Koryŏ (en soms ook daarbuiten) ook gezien als een Zoon des Hemels, iemand die net als de Chinese Zoon des Hemels, een speciale ontologische positie innam. De heerser was ook in andere opzichten een zeer tegenstrijdig figuur; hij was de meest vooraanstaande boeddhist van zijn land, uitvoerder van de belangrijkste confucianistische staatsrituelen, maar ook het hoofd van Koryŏ’s belangrijkste geslacht, hoofdcelebrant van daoïstische hof- en staatsrituelen, bemiddelaar tussen de hemel en het volk en tussen het landschap en het volk, alsmede iemand die werd geacht te regeren zoals de Chinese wijze heersers uit de Oudheid. Deze veelheid aan vaak tegenstrijdige elementen zorgden er uiteindelijk voor dat de heerser een onmisbaar element van de staat werd, die ook na de militaire coup van 1170 onontbeerlijk was om de samenleving bij elkaar te houden. De Koryŏ heerser was het brandpunt van de verschillende ideeën en beelden die in Koryŏ opgeld deden en die de samenleving bepaalden.

In het derde deel is ook Koryŏ's relatie met zijn buurlanden onder de loep genomen. De aanwezigheid van de Chinese en de Mantsjoerijse beschavingen zetten aan tot de constructie van beelden van de Ander – en van het Zelf – in Koryŏ. Koryŏ diplomatie werd gekenmerkt door een extreme flexibiliteit die van buitenaf gezien vaak als opportunisme werd afgeschilderd. Deze flexibiliteit kwam uiteindelijk echter voort uit Koryŏ's pluralistische wereldbeeld, waarbinnen er (meestal) plaats was voor contacten met zowel de Chinese als de Mantsjoerijse beschaving. Het uitgangspunt van Koryŏ diplomatie was altijd Koryŏ. Tevens is er gebleken dat het wijdverbreide beeld van Koryŏ diplomatie waarin Koryŏ altijd en natuurlijkerwijze neigde naar contacten met het 'beschaafde' China en zich verre probeerde te houden van het 'barbaarse' Mantsjoerije, niet klopt. Het tegendeel blijkt waar te zijn. Koryŏ heeft gedurende meerdere eeuwen voordelige contacten onderhouden met verschillende Mantsjoerijse staten en zonder merkbare tegenzin. Het idee dat Koryŏ van nature neigde naar de beschaving van China is een chimère; verworvenheden die vanuit een beschavingstechnisch oogpunt belangrijk waren werden evengoed uit Mantsjoerije overgenomen. Net zoals de ideologische oriëntatie van de Koryŏ ambtenaren en geleerden, was Koryŏ diplomatie pluralistisch; het ging niet om één, maar om meerdere principes.

Verder is het duidelijk geworden dat de Koryŏ literaten, dat segment van de bevolking dat de dienst uitmaakte en de koers van het staatsschip uitzette, zich merendeels zeer flexibel opstelden door hun pluralistische ideologie. In plaats van de veel gemaakte analyses die op grond van de onvolkomenheden, inconsistenties, tegenstellingen en ongerijmdheden in het gedachtegoed van Koryŏ literaten concluderen dat hun internalisering van het boeddhisme, confucianisme, daoïsme of andere denk- en geloofsystemen incompleet was, is gebleken dat deze literaten op een andere wijze benaderd dienen te worden. In plaats van een dichotomiserende indeling in confucianisten, boeddhisten en zo voort, is het zinniger om te spreken van pluralistische literaten, die in verschillende mate en in verschillende vormen elementen van deze leren in zich verenigden. Deze ambiguïteit is de sleutel tot de flexibiliteit die de meeste Koryŏ literaten kenmerkte. In plaats van onvolkomen internalisering was er sprake van opzettelijk gekoesterde tegenstellingen en ongerijmdheden. Het bekendste voorbeeld is Kim Pushik (1075-1151), die traditioneel als een rigide confucianist wordt afgeschilderd, maar die op basis van zijn geschriften en handelingen als een pluralistisch staatsman dient te worden gekarakteriseerd.

Als laatste worden in dit deel de historische wortels van Koryŏ's pluralistische kijk op de wereld benoemd, te weten meervoudige historische afstamming, het dualistische familiesysteem, de aanwezigheid van historische voorbeelden en wellicht als belangrijkste oorzaak, Koryŏ's geografische positie tussen twee grote beschavingen.

Het vierde en laatste deel van dit onderzoek bevat concrete voorbeelden hoe Koryŏ's pluralistische ideologie functioneerde in de praktijk. Ten eerste wordt de introductie van Song Chinese confucianistische rituele muziek in Koryŏ behandeld. Het blijkt dat de introductie van deze muziek niet alleen een gedeeltelijke acceptatie van Chinese culturele verworvenheden omhelst, maar evenzeer een herbevestiging van de Koryŏ identiteit, door de subversieve wijze waarop het Koryŏ hof omgaat met deze nieuwe muziek. Daarna is er een analyse gemaakt van de *Tien Injuncties*. Deze worden normaliter toegeschreven aan de stichter van de Koryŏ

dynastie, T'aejo Wang Kōn, maar blijken een 11<sup>e</sup> eeuwse vervalsing te zijn. In deze injuncties wordt een allegaartje van boeddhistische, confucianistische, nativistische, geomantische, pragmatische en andere elementen gecodificeerd als Koryō's spirituele constitutie. Het is van het grootste belang, zo is de conclusie, om de injuncties niet te reduceren tot slechts een van de constituerende elementen. Elk van deze elementen heeft een duidelijk functie die aan de hand van historische voorbeelden kan worden getoond. De injuncties dienen tezamen te worden genomen, zoals ze ook zijn geschreven, als de eerste officiële expressie van een pluralistische Weltanschauung. Het belang van de injuncties voor latere generaties in Koryō onderstreept Koryō's fundamenteel pluralistische oriëntatie.

Als laatste concrete voorbeeld komt de opstand van Myoch'ōng in 1135 aan bod. Deze opstand is altijd in dichotomiserende termen gezien als de strijd tussen de onafhankelijke en nativistische Myoch'ōng en de sinofiele en rigide confucianist Kim Pushik. Deze analyse heeft echter uitgewezen dat er niets van dien aard aan de hand was. Zoals de reactie van het merendeel van de Koryō literaten, ambtenaren en militairen laat zien, was hier aan de ene kant sprake van een opstand van een economisch achtergesteld gebied (te weten het huidige P'yōngyang) en aan de andere kant van een ideologische confrontatie tussen Myoch'ōng die een Koryōcentrisch en monistisch wereldbeeld uitdroeg, en Kim Pushik die de meerderheid van de pluralistische georiënteerde literaten vertegenwoordigde.

Samenvattend is het duidelijk geworden dat er in Koryō rondom de Drie Han verschillende identiteiten werden geconstrueerd die veel overlapping vertoonden, maar ook daadwerkelijke en fundamentele verschillen bezaten. De manieren waarop deze regio-overstijgende identiteiten bij elkaar werden gehouden waren divers, maar het belangrijkste hierin waren de pluralistische kijk op de wereld die tegenstelling en inconsistentie tolereerde, Koryō's meervoudige historische afstamming die altijd in ere werd gehouden, de persoon van de heerser die al deze incommensurabele elementen in zich combineerde en de aanwezigheid van twee sterke beschavingen aan Koryō's grenzen die Koryō noopten tot het ontwikkelen en verdedigen van een eigen identiteit. De *Tien Injuncties* hadden Koryō's manier(en) van leven in de elfde eeuw gecodificeerd. Deze injuncties combineerde praktisch advies met de teboekstelling van wat belangrijk was, wat 'werkelijk' was. Myoch'ōng's opkomst liet zien hoe contingent en onbestendig zulk een kijk op de wereld kon zijn door ambiguïteit door tweedeling, tegenstelling door ontkenning, inconsistentie door consistentie en contingentie door lotsbestemming te willen vervangen. Zijn opkomst toonde meer dan wat dan ook de potentiële nadelen van een pluralistische kijk op de wereld, terwijl de periode ervoor duidelijk de voordelen ervan in kaart had gebracht. De opstand van Myoch'ōng maakte duidelijk dat het instandhouden van een pluralistisch wereldbeeld afhankelijk was van het instandhouden van een hachelijke tussentoestand die nooit helemaal in balans zou zijn. De instandhouding van een sterke Koryōcentrische identiteit die duidelijk verschil maakte tussen de Drie Han, het land, het volk, het verleden, heden en de toekomst en de buurstaten over de grens ongeacht het culturele buurtjeleen dat Koryō altijd speelde, was slechts mogelijk dankzij de vele verschillende, tegenstrijdige en zelfs oncommensurabele denkwijzen, handelswijzen en geloven waardoor er een ruimte werd gecreëerd waarin er een kenmerkende vorm van behoren tot de historische gemeenschap van de Drie Han mogelijk was.



## CURRICULUM VITAE

Remco Breuker is op 23 juni 1972 te Zaandam geboren. Na eindexamen gymnasium te hebben gedaan in 1990, ging hij in Leiden Talen en Culturen van Japan studeren. Vanaf 1993 combineerde hij deze studie met de studie Talen en Culturen van Korea. 1995-1996 bracht hij door in Zuid-Korea ten behoeve van taaltraining en scriptieonderzoek. In 1997 studeerde hij in beide studies af met een scriptie over Japanse en Koreaanse geschiedschrijving ten tijde van het Japanse koloniale bewind over Korea. Na zijn afstuderen ontving hij een beurs van het Zuid-Koreaanse Ministerie van Onderwijs om aan de Graduate School van Seoul National University Koreaanse geschiedenis te studeren. Eind 2001 keerde hij terug naar Leiden om AIO te worden en een proefschrift over middeleeuwse Koreaanse geschiedenis te schrijven.