


**French Research into the Koguryō
Kingdom History and Scientific
Contributions**

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Apart from studies made by catholic missionaries, French research into Korea only started following the signature, on 4 June 1886, of the Treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation. Eminent Sinologists such as Maurice Courant became passionate about the history and culture of the whole Korean peninsula, and the Koguryō kingdom in particular. Then, in 1907, Edouard Chavannes travelled to Manchuria and reached the Yalu River where he identified the oldest vestiges of the kingdom of Koguryō. The Japanese colonization of the peninsula interrupted direct diplomatic and cultural relations between France and Korea. It wasn't until the erudite Japanologist, Charles Haguenauer, started to take an interest in the peninsula through his research into Japan, that French academic interest in Korean was revived. He invited Li Ogg, specialist in the Koguryō kingdom, to France. This paper examines who these researchers were and their approach the study of the Koguryō kingdom.

French Research into the Koguryŏ Kingdom¹ History and Scientific Contributions

Elisabeth Chabanol, École française d'Extrême-Orient

A part from studies made by Catholic missionaries, French research into Korea only started following the signature, on 4 June 1886, of the *Traité d'Amitié, de Commerce et de Navigation* (Treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation), which marked the start of formal diplomatic relations between France and Korea. Eminent Sinologists such as Maurice Courant, who combined stays in the country with the study of ancient writings, became passionate about the history and culture of the whole Korean peninsula, and the Koguryŏ kingdom in particular.

At the start of the twentieth century, archaeological expeditions organised by the *Ministère de l'Instruction publique*² and the *École française d'Extrême-Orient*³ concentrated on China. It was thus that, in 1907, Edouard Chavannes travelled to Manchuria and reached the Yalu River where he identified the oldest vestiges of the kingdom of Koguryŏ.

The Japanese colonization of the peninsula interrupted direct diplomatic and cultural relations between France and Korea. Moreover, Courant trained no successor to take over his work as a Koreanologist and so French academic research into Korea faded with his death. It was not until the erudite Japanologist Charles Haguenuer started to take an inter-

¹ The Romanization used throughout this article is the simplified McCune-Reischauer method for the Korean pronunciation and Pinyin for the Chinese pronunciation. The original Romanization has been maintained when citing ancient documents, followed with the modern Romanization in brackets.

² Ministry of Public Education.

³ French Institute of East Asian Studies.

est in the peninsula through his research into Japan, that French academic interest in Korean was revived. It was Haguenaer who invited Li Ogg (1928-2001), a specialist in the Koguryŏ kingdom, to France. This paper examines who these researchers were and their approach the study of the Koguryŏ kingdom.

Maurice Courant (1865-1935) and the Stele of King Kwanggaet'o

The importance of the work and original personality of the Koreanologist Maurice Courant need no introduction. His studies of Korea were the first in France to be based as much on field work as on a thorough knowledge of the culture and history of Korea and Northeast Asia. Indeed, be it in his most ambitious research projects,⁴ his most specialised projects⁵ or in the papers aimed at making the Korean peninsula accessible to wider audience of "inquiring minds and enthusiasts",⁶ Courant had a unique view, both of a country which impassioned him, and also of the way to present it in France,⁷ which was vastly different to that of other Orientalists. This remarkable and pioneering personality has to be seen in the context of the epoch.

On 6 September 1888, after obtaining degrees in Law,⁸ Chinese and Japanese,⁹ he was appointed as student-interpreter to the French legation in Peking for twenty-one months. On 23 May 1890 he was posted to Seoul to act as interpreter-chancellor, and thus discovered the country which was to

4 *Répertoire historique de l'administration coréenne*, 1891, unpublished; *Bibliographie coréenne*, 1894-1896, 1900.

5 103 papers between 1891 and 1927, of which twenty-one are on Korea.

6 The *Guide de voyage Claudius Madrolle* on North East Asia, published in French in 1904 by the Comité de l'Asie française (Published in English by Hachette as early as 1912) and also the brochure *Souvenir de Séoul, Corée* about the Korean Pavilion built on the Champs de Mars for the Universal Exhibition in 1900.

7 Prior to the publication of *Bibliographie coréenne*, it was the custom in France to transcribe Korean names and terms according to the Chinese way of reading the constituent characters. Maurice Courant wished to reproduce the Korean method of pronunciation. In order to do so he used the only coherent system which existed at that time, which was developed by French missionaries and which is now obsolete. This method of Romanisation has been replaced by the McCune-Reischauer in this paper.

8 1883-1886: Law faculty of Paris University; 1886: Law degree.

9 1885-1888: Ecole (Institut) des langues orientales vivantes (School of modern oriental languages [Chinese, Japanese]); 1888: Degree in Chinese and Japanese.

become central to his research and where, however he spent less than two years. Throughout his career he did his utmost to be posted there again, but in vain!

During his time as interpreter to the French legation in Japan he published the first papers in which he referred to the Koguryō Kingdom. In an article published in the *Revue française du Japon*¹⁰ (1895-1896) he studied the “Principal periods of Korean history”¹¹ based on the *Samguk sagi*¹² and Chinese and Japanese annals. Despite, or perhaps because of his classical education, from the introduction onwards he criticises the sources that he uses for his research, which, it must be emphasised, is remarkable for the period:¹³

These documents should be examined with a strictly critical eye bearing in mind...that ancient texts, even relatively recent ones, are a mixture of stories and inaccuracies; It is necessary to use a precise analytical approach, such as is prevalent in our schools of philosophy and modern history, when examining these texts [...] These principals, those of modern criticism, [...] would show themselves to be as productive when they are finally applied to historical works [...] about the Far East. For Korea in particular, we should quickly be able to discern the role it has played so far: and an understanding of this historical role is one of the elements necessary to determine, if at all possible, the role it should play in the future of Far-Eastern civilization.¹⁴

Later in his research into the Koguryō kingdom he tries to understand the relationship that Koguryō might have had with the Han commanderies:

When the [Chinese] empire, having achieved stability under the rule of the Han, started to push out its frontiers, the imperial armies [...] crossed the Liao

10 *French Journal of Japan*.

11 *Revue française du Japon* New series I, January 1895-XVII May 1896, Tokyo, 1895: pp. 1-9, 12-146 and 179-186; 1896: pp. 131-142 and 179-185.

12 *History of the Three Kingdoms*.

13 In a way he anticipated the prudence and critical analysis that Li Ogg showed toward historical sources and that Li Ogg demonstrated more than eighty years later, in the introduction to his thesis.

14 *Cahiers d'études coréennes* I: Etudes coréennes de Maurice Courant (1983), p. 37 and ss.

river in 108 BC and entered Korea for the first time. ...The Chosôn kingdom disappeared [...] ; Four sub-prefectures were established : Nangnang (P'yôngyang?), Imdun (Kangnûng?), Hyönt'o (Hamgyông-do?), Chinbôn (Kilin?); it would appear that these were not territorial divisions comparable to those in mainland China but rather military zones whose heads were required to collect tributes, stop barbarian incursions, protect Chinese traders [...]. Nangnang, where the Chinese influence was already longstanding, [...] had a civilising effect and the local state, the Koguryô, who grew in its shadow and later superseded it, greatly profited from the organizational structure the Chinese brought [...] The nature of the relationships between these Chinese colonies and the local states, the Puyô and the Koguryô, is difficult to determine; very fluid relations, as far as we can tell, which changed, depending on the situation, from that of interested respect to incursions and outright war. How did this Chinese domination end? Clearly, because the empire was weakened after the end of the Han dynasty, but also because of the development and expansion of the indigenous kingdoms, but to date I have found no reference in Korean records of the fall of these colonies: It would appear that this escaped notice, that the Chinese colonization was gradual and their power relinquished little by little... It is none the less possible that this hiatus is a result of the scarcity of the indigenous information...

Later in his paper he returns to the formation of the Koguryô kingdom:

In the middle of the 1st century AD, Chumong, a prince from the Puyô royal family,¹⁵ left his country with a group of companions and headed south, apparently as a result of family quarrels and rivalries. He settled in the Amnok kang valley, took over several local tribes and in this way founded a kingdom which became known as the Koguryô. This apparently happened in 37 BC, but the birth and exodus of Chumong, together with the start of the new Kingdom are reported in many differing ways and are clothed in legend, so history is based on a general impression [...] the Koguryô kings were from the Ko family; they kept close links with their birthplace and went there to make sacrifices to their ancestors.

15 The tribes of Puyô who settled between the Hourka and Soungari rivers. See Maurice Courant.

Always critical of his sources, and it must be born in mind that this is still at the end of the nineteenth century, Courant analyses the meaning of the Chinese character “*kuk*” used to describe Koguryō in historical annals, rejecting the idea that this could be an organized state:

We must not be taken in by the name for kingdom, “*kuk*”, which is applied to the Koguryō and early Paekche: The sense of the word “*kuk*” is very vague and, even though it is often used to designate a hierarchical state, it is also applied to a territory of a group of people with little or no hierarchy: the term is used by historians to describe clans such as the Mahan, the Chinhan, the Pyōnhan and other small tribes in the peninsula.

Analyzing the Koguryō society, he tempers the influence of China:

[...] in the northern kingdom, up until its fall, there were 5 clans or noble tribes known by different names depending on the epoch. It was probably a clan known first as Kyeru, then domestic or yellow clan which became the royal family. The members of this noble family were ranked according to a hierarchy similar to that of the Chinese mandarins. This ranking appears to be contemporary to the origins of the Koguryō kingdom. It may have been inspired by the system that existed in China, but the notion of hierarchy is so innate to the people of the Far East that it is undoubtedly superfluous to seek foreign origins for it.

Whilst studying the organization of Koguryō society he once again criticises written sources, arriving at the conclusion that:

It is, by the way, difficult for us to have anything other than a vague idea of the organization of these two States [including the Paekche] as there is little information on administration and it is rarely dated. Often they give no indication of the period to which they apply. However it is unthinkable that, during the 600 years that these kingdoms existed, there were no changes in the country. The information in our possession is scarcely credible. That which derives from Chinese sources has been drawn from reports by travellers or envoys, always

incomplete and often misinterpreted. On the other hand, the most ancient Korean historical text, the *Samguk sagi*, dates from the start of the XIth century. The Koguryŏ and the Paekche had disappeared some 400 years previously. What remained of their annals must have been barely intelligible to people with classical Chinese education and are imbued with contempt for the barbarians of yesteryear. These annals were not written until the end of the IVth century [...] and as for the Koguryŏ, even if historians attribute much older private reports to the kingdom, writing only seems to have become fully introduced [in the kingdom] at about the same period; and official annals only commenced in the year 600. It is easier to use Korean and Chinese sources to follow the territorial expansion the two kingdoms and their relations with their neighbours as war-like expeditions make a big impression on the people and are noted in detail, whereas changes in customs are the result of a slow continuous process and often pass unperceived.

He was also interested in relations between Koguryŏ and China:

[...] China maintained good relations with Koguryŏ which sent her tributes. This was, by the way, just a sign of deference, [...]; the bonds, so weak under the Han, were further weakened during the anarchy which followed their fall, a state of affairs which continued until the end of the VIth century [...].

After discussing the rise of the kingdom and the fall of the Chinese commanderies, he sums up the history of the Koguryŏ kingdom thus:

With the collapse of foreign settlements founded 100 years BC, the Korean peninsula thus remained in the hands of the three main indigenous states.

When discussing the culture of the Koguryŏ kingdom, Courant insists that the spread of the use of writing was as a direct result of the introduction of Buddhism:

The second half of the IVth century saw two extremely important events in the history of Korean civilization: the introduction of Buddhism and the spread of

Chinese writing by bonzes. 372: The Qin emperor sent images of Buddha, sacred scriptures and bonzes to the king of Koguryŏ. In order to read these scriptures, which constitute one of the foremost obligations of the faithful, it was necessary to be versed in Chinese ideograms. The study of ideograms became a moral obligation. Ideograms seem to have been introduced very early in the Koguryŏ period (*cf.* explicit assertion in the *Samguk sagi*). That being said, Buddhism contributed to the spread of the use of writing and it wasn't until the end of the IVth century that inscriptions started to appear next to the tombs of former kings [...].

According to Courant, it was the key discovery of the stele of King Kwanggaet'o¹⁶ which brought about the study of Koguryŏ. He later wrote an article on the subject:

A stone inscription was discovered in around 1888, on the right bank of the Amnok kang, original seat of the Koguryŏ. It dates from 414 and indicates the tomb of King Hot'ae, called Kwanggaet'o in the *Samguk sagi*. It relates many hitherto unknown events, but confirms many of the particulars of Korean history. It is possible that a more rigorous exploration of this part of Manchuria and the north of Korea would lead to other such discoveries.

He concludes his study of Koguryŏ by arguing that the introduction of Buddhism and Confucianism served as an intellectual driving force leading to the unification of the peninsula:

Be that as it may, the bona fide history of western Korea begins at the end of the IVth century [...] In 373 the first laws were passed in Koguryŏ. Until that time, Koguryŏ and Paekche, separated for a long time by the colony of Nangnang, lived in isolation from one another. The roots of the population belonged to two different races and they do not appear to have spoken the same language. The two royal families, although related, do not appear to have attached any particular importance to their kinship...the two countries had no

16 The nineteenth ruler of Koguryŏ (392-413).

ideas in common. The bonzes brought with them fundamental knowledge which spread through the Koguryō and Paekche Kingdoms and the on to the Silla: First it was religious beliefs, then, involuntarily, Confucian beliefs. With ideographic writing they brought at last ways and means to express and communicate these beliefs, a marvellous intellectual tool for unification. Despite the diversities of race and social status, despite the incessant wars, the four kingdoms, descendants of innumerable ancient tribes, confined to their narrow peninsular, started to draw gradually closer and as a result the unity of the peninsular was ensured.

In a conference¹⁷ held on 21 February 1897 at the Guimet museum in Paris and published in T'oung Pao¹⁸ in 1898, Courant discusses the relationship of Korea with Japan and its influence on the origins of Japanese civilization. It is a critical presentation of the sources available, be they Chinese, Japanese or Korean. He introduces the subject in the following manner:

Documents about ancient Korea are of three types. The oldest, which are of Chinese origin, Japanese documents and then Korean historical records, which are much more recent.¹⁹

He introduces the subject of the Koguryō kingdom with the following comment:

It would seem to be the case that, from the start of the AD era, there were numerous Japanese incursions into the peninsula... the Koguryō repulsed the islanders until the end of the IVth century.

Then, he gives the status of his research in the annals and notes various facts

17 "La Corée jusqu'au IXe siècle, ses rapports avec le Japon et son influence sur les origines de la civilisation japonaise" (Korea up to the Ninth Century, Its Relationship with Japan and Its Influence on the Origins of Japanese Civilization).

18 *T'oung Pao: Archives pour servir à l'étude de l'histoire des langues, de la géographie et de l'ethnographie de l'Asie orientale* (Archives for the Study of the History of the Languages, the Geography and Ethnic Origins of Eastern Asia), series II, vol. IX, 1898, p. 1-27.

19 *Cahiers d'études coréennes 1: Etudes coréennes de Maurice Courant* (Studies of Korea by Maurice Courant) (1983), p. 113 and ss.

about the Three Kingdoms. For the Koguryō kingdom he highlights the following events:

Dates of wars between Japan and Korean, and of some embassies:

Nihon'gi, 564: The Koguryō are defeated by the Japanese; First account of a conflict between the armies of the two countries in Japanese history; The annals of the Koguryō of the epoch do not mention Japan.

Nihon'gi, 570: Koguryō envoys arrive in the province of Koshi.

Data about Korean industry and civilization:

Nihon'gi, 324: The Koguryō send iron shields to Japan.

Nihon'gi, 605: The Koguryō send 300 ounces of gold to Japan.

Nihon'gi, 605: The Koguryō send chinese captives and a camel to Japan.

Sending of artists to Japan and development of Japanese industry:

Nihon'gi, 495: Two tanners from Koguryō start to work in the province of Yamato.

Nihon'gi, 683: Dances from Koguryō, Paekche and Silla are performed at the Palace.

Immigration into Japan:

Nihon'gi, 685: Arrival of immigrants from Koguryō.

Nihon'gi, 687: 56 Koguryō emigrants are given land in Hitachi.

Nihon'gi, 716: Emigrants from Koguryō arrive in Musashi.

Korean missionaries leaving to preach in Japan:

Nihon'gi, 595: Arrival of Hyeja from Koguryō.

Nihon'gi, 610: The king of Koguryō sends the bonze Hyegwan who is put in charge.

However, the work of Courant that attracted the most attention and that was the most astonishing was his translation of the text of the stele of King Kwanggaet'o shortly after its discovery.²⁰ It appeared in an article for *Journal asiatique* in 1898 under the title "Chinese Stele"²¹ from the Ko kou

²⁰His stays in Asia — in chronological order, China, Korea, and Japan — allowed him rapid access to primary sources in the field—which was capital at the epoch. He later shared this knowledge in France through his lectures and publications.

²¹"Chinese stele" means stele written in Chinese characters.

rye Kingdom.”²² He describes the discovery of the stele thus:

According to the locals, in olden days it was buried in the earth. Roughly three centuries ago the tip of the stele started to appear. A few years ago four men sent from Tientsin excavated and washed it. They then made a rubbing of it but because of the roughness of the surface of the stone it was impossible to use large sheets of paper and they had to use small sheets butted up to each other. In this way they took two rubbings of the inscription. An anonymous Japanese person, who came in 1884, managed to acquire one of the rubbings of the inscription, which is currently conserved in the offices of Ueno museum. The persons in charge of the office were very obliging and allowed me to have a look at this precious item...I was able to make a detailed study of the original.²³

Then he cites reproductions which existed at the epoch: A life-size copy displayed in Ueno museum and a photolithograph published in 1889 by the Japanese Asiatic society *Ajia Kyōkai*, showing a total of 1,759 characters with notes by Yokoi Tadanao. Courant explains that he worked from studies made by Japanese experts in the period 1892-93 but does not adhere to all their explanations nor to all their interpretations. After describing the location of the stele, followed by a rapid description of the “Kaoli tombs,” as the natives called them — Kaoli being the popular Chinese term for Korea — he gives a detailed description of the text of the stele which recounts the expeditions of King Kwanggaet’ogyōng:

The king erected steles with inscriptions on the tombs of his predecessors. Until that date tombs did not have inscriptions. It was thus in the last quarter of the IVth century that the use of (Chinese) writing became normal practice in western Korea. The use of writing was spread by the bonzes from 372 onwards but the Chinese language was never really taken up by the majority of the population. The inscription of King Kwanggaet’ogyōng is not much later than the oldest Koguryō inscriptions, that is, the steles erected on the royal tombs. Its exter-

²² *Journal asiatique*, 9 (XI), March-April 1898, p. 210-238.

²³ *Cahiers d'études coréennes* 1: *Etudes coréennes de Maurice Courant* (Studies of Korea by Maurice Courant) (1983), p. 145 and ss.

nal appearance and its composition deny the inexperience of its writers and engravers. The style of the characters is archaic. The characters, deeply engraved, are irregular and crooked. Some of them are audaciously truncated; others are so deformed as to be almost illegible, even though the strokes themselves are clear. In terms of the composition, next to simple, perfectly Chinese phrases there are expressions which today are characteristic of the Chinese style in Korea. Finally, some of them are incomprehensible.

He is convinced of the authenticity of the stele:

Its style, and the way it coincides with known historical documents; if the Chinese fake ancient documents it is only those that refer to their own ancient national history; Japanese patriotism has nothing to gain by noting the defeats inflicted on their ancestors.

Courant concludes his study with an annotated translation of the four faces of the stele.²⁴

Abandoning his diplomatic career to concentrate on research and teaching which were more suited to his personality, he followed an academic career at the faculty of Lyon and the Institut Franco-chinois (Sino-French Institute) in the same city. Unfortunately distant from the large establishments specialised in Far Eastern culture in the Parisian capital where he could have shared his knowledge about Korea with a wider audience, it was in Lyon that he taught the history of the Far East and Chinese. He never neglected to mention the history of Korea and more and more of his lectures from 1928 to 1934 dealt with the subject. He presented the history of the Three Kingdoms of the peninsula and made numerous references to Koguryō.²⁵

24 See the rubbing used by Maurice Courant for his research together with his translation of the text into French.

25 See "Preparatory Notes for Lectures by Maurice Courant," unpublished.

Edouard Chavannes (1865-1918) and the 1907 Archaeological Expedition to the Yalu

On entering the l'Ecole normale supérieure, Edouard Chavannes directed his research to the study of China. He obtained a teaching certificate in philosophy and a degree in Chinese²⁶ and started to specialise in the study of Chinese philosophy. However he changed direction following a voyage to China and study of the translation of the classics. He was appointed to a French Lycée²⁷ and subsequently posted to Peking in 1889 at the age of 23 as attaché to the French Legation.²⁸ Whilst broadening his knowledge of the history of China, he conceived a passion for Sima Qian,²⁹ the chief author of the *Shiji* (literally *Historical Records*), and undertook a translation of the text. From 1895 to 1905 he published five of the ten volumes planned. It was during this first stay in China that he became interested in the archaeology of the country and in particular the relics of the Han dynasty, exploring sites and monuments with the aid of historical documents. Returning to France in 1893 he drew on texts preserved in monuments, rubbings and his own photographic documentation to continue his research. He paved the way for the scientific study of Chinese archaeology in the West.³⁰ He worked in parallel on research into oriental epigraphy (Chinese, Mongol, etc). Of a rigorous mind, he always backed up his study of texts with field data. In this respect he was a pioneer. Keeping an open mind, unlike certain other specialists, he did not study the Chinese civilization in isolation. He always emphasised China's relations with its close or distant neighbors³¹ and was also interested in the history of peripheral nations who had contact with the Middle Kingdom.

In 1907, anxious to investigate his initial archaeological research more thoroughly, Chavannes obtained a commission which allowed him accom-

26 From the Institut des langues orientales (School or Institute of Oriental Languages).

27 High school (Brit.).

28 He arrived in Peking on 21 March 1889.

29 Around 145-87 before our epoch.

30 He published *La Sculpture sur pierre en Chine aux temps des deux dynasties Han*.

31 His complete bibliography comprises almost ninety titles (thirty-two articles in *T'oung Pao* from 1896 to 1916; twenty-four articles in *Journal asiatique* from 1890 to 1917).

publish an immense voyage in the north of China from 27 March 1907 to 5 February 1908.³² This expedition was sponsored by the ministère de l'Instruction publique, the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres³³ and the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient. Chavannes's route followed the history of the first Chinese dynasties, and the architecture of their monuments, temples and tombs which at the time had never been catalogued.³⁴ Although it was not possible to carry out excavations, he drew up a preliminary inventory of Chinese archaeology. By taking moulds and photographs and making rubbings he was able to assemble a new set of archives collected at source and which served as a data base for his future research.

The first three weeks of his expedition, from 23 April to 14 May, concentrated on Manchuria around Moukden.³⁵ For the following five months he travelled around the north of China.³⁶ Chavannes was assisted by a Chinese photographer, Zhou, for large images, but took small format snapshots himself. In this way he took some 1,800 photographs. These documents, which showed no tendency to seek out the exotic, constituted a "discovery"³⁷ for a Europe that only knew of the Far East through written accounts illustrated by more or less whimsical drawings.

Leaving Paris on 27 March 1907 aboard the Trans-Siberian express, he reached Moukden on 14 April.³⁸ He stayed in the province of Jilin (Manchuria) from 28 April to 12 May.³⁹ From 4 May to 8 May he visited the

32 For further details about the 1907 expedition see: Lartigue, Jean, "Mission Edouard Chavannes (Chine septentrionale 1907)," *Bulletin archéologique du Musée Guimet*, Fasc. 1, Paris and Bruxelles, G. Van Oest et Cie, 1921. After his return Chavannes published from 1909 onwards, *Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale*, two volumes which contain 488 plates. See also Chavannes, E. "Note préliminaire sur les résultats archéologiques de la mission accomplie en 1907 dans la Chine du Nord," Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Paris, March 1908.

33 French Academy of Humanities.

34 See the map of his route in Chavannes, E. (1908), "Voyage archéologique dans la Mandchourie...." *T'oung pao*, p. 505.

35 Now Shenyang.

36 In the north of China, he travelled through the heart of ancient China — Henan, Shanxi, Shaanxi —, accompanied by Vasilij Alexeieff (1880-1951) from the University of Saint-Petersburg.

37 In the same way photographs were brought back from all the major French archaeological expeditions to China at the beginning of the twentieth century: Segalen 1909, 1914, 1917; Maspero 1914.

38 [Manchuria, Liaoning] "Moukden, vu du haut de la muraille au sud de la ville (Moukden seen from the top of the wall to the south of the city)" 14/4/1907-22/4/1907, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 06 × 09, Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum (AP12606).

“Gaogouli” monuments, accompanied by the Japanese publicist Shibuya.

Province of Jilin (Manchuria) from 28 April to 12 May

* 4 May to 8 May 1907: Tonggou (Ji’an since 1902) on the right bank of the upper Yalu.

Relics of the ancient kingdom of Gaogouli (Koguryō) first to seventh century:

- In the hamlet of Donggang, eight li to the north-east of Tonggou, fifth century stele;⁴⁰

- 2 km to the north of the stele, tomb of the “Marshal”;

- to the west of the stele, in Donggang, tomb of the Majestic King, tombs;

- 3/4 hour’s walk from Tonggou, Shanchengzi ramparts (“the ramparts on the mountain”)

* 8 May to 12 May: Tonggou-Andong. Descent of the Yalu by boat.⁴¹

* 12 May to 13 May: Andong (Ngan-tong).

* 14 May, Return to Moukden by the small railway.

Chavannes only published two papers retracing his expedition in the terri-

39 Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 06×09: [Mandchouria, Liaoning] “Sépulture Tchao ling [Zhaoling], la cour principale (Tchao ling burial place, main yard)” 14/4/1907-22/4/1907 (AP12613); [Mandchouria, Jilin] “Sur le haut cours du Houen ho (Hunhe), au nord de T’ong-houa hien (Tonghuaxian) (Upper Houen ho river, north of T’ong-houa hien)” 29/4/1907-1/5/1907 (AP12617); [Mandchouria, Jilin] “Gué entre Sseu tao kiang (Sidaojiang) et Lieou tao keou (Liudaogou) (Ford between Sseu tao kiang and Lieou tao keou)” 1/5/1907-2/5/1907 (AP12620); [Mandchouria, Jilin] “Au sommet de la passe Lao ling (Laoling) (At the top of the Lao ling pass)” 3/5/1907 (AP12621); [Mandchourie ou Corée] “Traversée d’une rivière en Mandchourie (ou en Corée) (Crossing of a river in Manchuria (or Korea))” 25/4/1907-12/5/1907 (AP13631).

40 He photographed the monumental stele, about 6.20m tall, near the village of Tong-kang (Donggang).

41 Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate: [Korea] “La plaine de T’ong-keou [Tonggou] vue de la rive coréenne du Ya-lou (Yalu) (The T’ong-keou plain as seen from the Korean bank of the Ya-lou)” 8/5/1907-12/5/1907, 09×12, (AP12935); [Mandchouria [Jilin], Yalou (Yalu) (Manchuria [Jilin], Yalou)] 8/5/1907-12/5/1907, 06×09 (AP13636); [Korea] “Génie protecteur des routes en Corée (Guardian of the roads in Korea)” 8/5/1907 - 12/5/1907, 09×12 (AP12936).

tory of the former Kingdom of Koguryō. The first, “Voyage archéologique dans la Mandchourie et dans la Chine septentrionale” (Archaeological Expedition to Manchuria and Northern China), was published for a conference on 27 March 1908 held at the Comité de l’Asie française in the April 1908 edition of the *Bulletin du Comité de l’Asie française* then reprinted later the same year in *T’oung pao*.⁴² The paper recounts mainly the part of his expedition which took place in northern China and only briefly mentions Koguryō:

When we arrived at the summit of the Lao-ting pass, at an altitude of around 900m, there was a rapid descent along the valley of a torrent. The following morning we saw large curve that the Yala describes, tightly encircled by mountains on both the Chinese and Korean banks. At the bottom of the slope lies a small semicircular plain where the Kao-keou-Li kingdom flourished during the first five centuries of our era. Its name is the origin of the name Korea that we employ today.

The princes of the Kao-keou-li kingdom were very powerful; they carried out victorious campaigns in Korea and had more than one conflict with the Japanese; at the start of the Vth century they recounted their exploits on a quadrangular block of stone, serpentine or ophite, whose enormous mass is visible in the plain from several kilometres away. They wrote in Chinese, not having their own script; this text, which was translated by Maurice Courant, is a very important chapter in Far-Eastern history. A further testament to the power of the Kao-keou-li princes are their burial places, quadrangular pyramids in pink granite which look very different to Chinese tombs; only one of them, known as the tomb of the “Marshal”, has been well preserved; we can only imagine what the other pyramids, of which there remain only clusters of debris, must have been like.⁴³

It was during his famous reading of a paper to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres, at the session on 9 September 1907, that Chavannes gave a

42 *T’oung pao*, series II, vol. IX, 1908, p. 503-528.

43 *Ibid*, p. 507 and ss.

detailed presentation of the results of his expedition to the former kingdom. The paper, entitled “Les Monuments de l’ancien royaume coréen de Kao-keou-li” (The Monuments of the Former Korean Kingdom of Kao-keou-li) was published in *T’oung pao*.⁴⁴ Chavannes explained that, thanks to the benevolence of the Chinese authorities in Shenyang during his stay from the 14 April to 22 April 1907, he decided to undertake an archaeological expedition on the banks of the river Yalou (Yalu) which separates China from Korea. He had heard about the monuments, first noticed by Japanese travellers in the T’ong-keou area, through the article that Courant published in the March-April 1898 edition of *Journal Asiatique* (p. 210-238):

[...] an important group of monuments, relics of the former Kingdom of Kao-keou-li which gave its name to Korea. Amongst these monuments is a large inscription dating from the beginning of the Vth century AD, which was published and translated by M. Courant [...] which is a historical document of immense value.

He emphasised that no rubbing had yet been made that would enable a more precise study of the text of the stele.⁴⁵ Nor were there any photographs of the tombs situated in the same region and which “are also the vestiges of the ancient Korean civilization [...]. There was therefore a real incentive to go and visit such a little known site.”

Chavannes divided the “T’ong-keou” monuments into three categories: the stele,⁴⁶ the tombs,⁴⁷ the ancient ramparts:

The stele: Maurice Courant’s article makes us realise the importance of this text

44 *T’oung pao*, series II, vol. IX, 1908, pp. 236-263 + rubbings.

45 He undoubtedly means in the French museum collections.

46 [Manchuria, Jilin] “Inscription du Kao-keou-li (Gaogouli) (commencement du cinquième siècle ap. J.-C.) [Kao-keou-li inscription (early fifth century)]”, 4 /5/1907 - 8/5/1907: face nord (North face) (AP12934); face est (East face) (AP12932); face sud (South face) (AP12933). Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 × 12.

47 In the photographs, he placed a member of the expedition next to each monument in order to give an idea of scale.

which reveals that at T'ong-keou we are on the actual site of the capital of ancient Kogurō, and teaches us the exploits of one of the rulers of that powerful kingdom; it is an entire page, and an important one at that, of the history of eastern Asia. But many obscure points need clarifying in this text; the rubbing that I managed to obtain⁴⁸ at least ensures a solid base for the new research that must be undertaken.

He then described the burial places in detail, giving the location of the tombs, their dimensions and drawing plans;⁴⁹ the tomb of the "Marshal,"⁵⁰ an half-ruined tomb situated to the East of the Marshal's tomb,⁵¹ the tomb of the "Majestic King,"⁵² a tomb in ruins to the north-west of the tomb of the

48 This rubbing is preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (French National Library).

49 He showed the plan of the terraced tomb, the so-called "Marshal's tomb," 11m high, and also that of the so-called "Majestic King" whose exploits are recounted on the stele. See the previously cited document for full details of the tombs.

50 Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 x 12: [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), tombe du Maréchal, face méridionale (Kao-keou-li monuments, tomb of the Marshal, south face)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12919); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), tombe du Maréchal, extrémité occidentale de la face méridionale (Kao-keou-li monuments, tomb of the Marshal, western edge of the south face)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12920); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), tombe du Maréchal, face orientale (Kao-keou-li monuments, tomb of the Marshal, eastern face)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12921); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), tombe du Maréchal (Kao-keou-li monuments, tomb of the Marshal)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12922); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), tombe du Maréchal, angle nord-est (Kao-keou-li monuments, tomb of the Marshal, north-east corner)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12923); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), tombe du Maréchal, angle sud-ouest (Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli) monuments, tomb of the Marshal, south-west corner)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12924).

51 Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 x 12: [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), la tombe du maréchal et la pyramide à demi-ruinée qui se trouve à l'est de celle-ci (Kao-keou-li monuments, tomb of the marshal and the half-ruined pyramid that is to the east of it)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12927); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), chambre de la pyramide à demi-ruinée qui se trouve à l'est de la tombe du Maréchal (Kao-keou-li monuments, chamber of the half-ruined pyramid situated to the east of the tomb of the Marshal)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12925); [Manchuria, Jilin] "Monuments du Kao-keou-li (Gaougouli), chambre de la pyramide à demi-ruinée qui se trouve à l'est de la tombe du Maréchal, face septentrionale de cette même pyramide (Kao-keou-li monuments, chamber of the half-ruined pyramid situated to the east of the tomb of the Marshal, north face of the same pyramid)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907 (AP12926).

52 [Manchuria, Jilin] "Tombe de l'Auguste roi, angle sud-est (Tomb of the majestic King, south-east corner)" 4/5/1907-8/5/1907, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 x 12, Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum (AP12931).

“Majestic King,”⁵³ the valley of tombs to the East of Chan tch’eng tseu,⁵⁴ a small tomb between Tong-kang and T’ong-keou.⁵⁵ He concluded his talk with a description of the ancient ramparts.

Twenty or so shots taken by Chavannes on the sites of the Koguryō kingdom and preserved in the Guimet museum of Asian art in Paris, completed and illustrated the notes made on site. Most of these shots were reproduced in the article in the *Bulletin du Comité de l’Asie française*.

He also brought a roof-end tile with relief decoration of monster,⁵⁶ in red clay, 15.5 cm in diameter and 4 cm thick, dating from the fourth to the fifth century.⁵⁷ The monster resembles a Chinese *taotie*. This roof-end tile is most likely to come from the so-called tomb of the “majestic King,” which was “the most richly ornamented.” It would have decorated a small edifice probably built of wood on the summit of the tomb. This is what Chavannes thought of the mass of debris found around this pyramid with seven stone steps:

As for the tomb of the Marshal, I suppose that these bricks and tiles must have formed the roof of a wooden pavilion placed on the ridge of the truncated pyramid.” [From the same monument come] “thin bricks with the following inscription on the side: We hope that the burial place of the majestic king will remain steadfast as a mountain, solid as a rock.”

Two fragments of these bricks⁵⁸ are in the Guimet museum of Asian art,

53 [Manchuria, Jilin] “Tombe en ruine au nord-ouest de la tombe de l’Auguste roi (Tomb in ruins to the north-west of the tomb of the majestic King)”: face méridionale, partie occidentale (south face, western side) (AP12930); angle sud-est (south-east corner) (AP13791), 4/5/1907-8/5/1907, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 × 12, Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum.

54 [Manchuria, Jilin] “La vallée des tombeaux à l’est de Chan tch’eng tseu (Shanchengzi) (The valley of tombs to the east of Chan tch’eng tseu)” 4/5/1907-8/5/1907, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 × 12, Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum (AP12928).

55 [Manchuria, Jilin] “Tombe entre Tong-kang (Donggang) et T’ong-keou (Tonggou) (Tsi-ngan hien) (Ji’anxian) (Small tomb between Tong-kang and T’ong-keou (Tsi-ngan hien))” 4/5/1907-8/5/1907, gelatine silver bromide negative on glass plate, 09 × 12, Édouard Chavannes 1907 expedition, Paris, Guimet museum (AP12929).

56 *Kwimyōn ūi sumak sae kiwa*.

57 Preserved in the Guimet museum of Asian art, inventory number MG 14351.

together with some shards.⁵⁹

The immense contribution of Chavannes to the field was recognised by the scientific community. In 1903, at the age of 37, he was elected to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. In 1893, aged 28, he took the chair as Professor of Chinese and Tartar-Manchurian language and literature at the Collège de France. For around twenty years, his extremely popular lectures influenced a whole generation of Sinologists such as Victor Segalen (1878-1919), Paul Pelliot (1878-1945), Marcel Granet (1884-1940), Henri Maspero (1883-1945) and Paul Demiéville (1894-1979). However, he never pursued his research into Korea and Koguryō.

Li Ogg (1928-2001), a New Approach to the Study of Koguryō

Courant died in 1935, having trained no successor to take over his research. After a long interruption it was Haguenaer, born in 1896, who re-introduced research into Korea in France. In March 1924, having completed his studies at the Sorbonne, at the Ecole nationale des Langues orientales vivantes,⁶⁰ at the Ecole pratique des hautes Etudes and at the Collège de France, he was posted to Japan by the ministères des Affaires étrangères et de l'Education nationale.⁶¹ He subsequently made numerous voyages within the Japanese empire, including Korea. Returning to France, even though much of his research dealt with Korea,⁶² he referred only briefly to the kingdom of Koguryō in an article in the July-September 1936 edition of *Journal asiatique* entitled "A propos de nouvelles recherches concernant le Leao-tong, la Corée et le Japon (Shikoku) antiques (New Research into

58 Inventory number: MG 14320.

59 Inventory numbers: MG 14320 to MG 14361. These articles form part of the "Chavannes" collection which also contains a bronze mirror (*ch'ōngdong kōul*) from the Koryō epoch, eleventh and twelfth centuries, from the 1907 expedition (inventory number MG 14282). In 1921 the museum inaugurated a room dedicated to the entire Chavannes collection.

60 National School of Modern Oriental Languages.

61 Foreign Office and Ministry of Education.

62 Research which was collected together in 1980, in a volume of *Mémoires du Centre d'Etudes coréennes du Collège de France* (Transactions of the Centre for Korean Studies at the Collège de France), under the title *Etudes coréennes de Charles Haguenaer* [Korean studies by Charles Haguenaer].

Ancient Leao-tong, Korea and Japan [Shikoku]).”⁶³

However, it was at his request that Li Ogg, at that time assistant at Yonsei University, came to Paris in 1956. Under the auspices of Professor Li Ogg, Korean studies in France became a completely separate discipline at both the Sorbonne⁶⁴ from 1956 onwards and at the Ecole nationale des langues orientales vivantes in 1959.⁶⁵ He was later actively involved in expanding the Korean studies department at Paris VII University.

His research concentrated on the institutional, political and social history of the epoch of the Three Kingdoms, and Koguryō in particular. His papers were widely circulated in Korea and are well known amongst the Korean academic community. This paper only cites a few milestones. In 1968, his PhD thesis, entitled *Sources historiques pour l'histoire de Koguryō* (Historical Sources for the History of Koguryō), and defended at the Faculty of Literature at Paris University, was an annotated translation of the first seven chapters of the *Koguryō pon'gi* of the *Samguk sagi*, which was compared with evidence to be found in other Chinese, Korean and Japanese historical documents. This thesis was followed, in 1975, by a paper “Régime politique de Koguryō (The Political Regime of Koguryō)” in which he presents a philological analysis of the different nomenclatures used by Chinese sources for the government official titles and honorary titles in use in the country in the early centuries of our epoch.

His D Litt, published in 1980 by the Collège de France, *Recherche sur l'antiquité coréenne — ethnologie et société de Koguryō* (Research into Ancient Korea — Koguryō Ethnic Groups and Society), translated into Korean, made a great stir. Li Ogg distanced himself from preconceived ideas and produced a truly critical work. Comparing available sources be they written or archaeological, Chinese, Japanese or Korean, he went through them all with a fine toothcomb, comparing them and highlighting their contradictions. In this way he treated the subject of ethnic origins by means of a historiographical study followed by studies of archaeology, myths and beliefs

⁶³ Charles Haguenaer (1936), pp. 372-373.

⁶⁴ The certificate of Korean studies.

⁶⁵ First course in the Korean language.

and finally social life. He drew from his research a picture of the Koguryŏ kingdom and its population completely different to those accepted at the time. There is no doubt that this innovative work incited a number of historians to tackle the history of ancient Korea in a different manner. His last paper in French, published in 2000 by the Montreal University Press, was once again dedicated to the kingdom of Koguryŏ and to a question he tackled in the introduction to his D Litt, "Population de Koguryŏ au VII^e siècle (The Population of Koguryŏ in the Seventh Century)."⁶⁶ Using all available Chinese and Korean historical texts, he didn't hesitate to revise his previous research and estimate the population of Koguryŏ at 900,000 to 1,000,000 heads.

Conclusion

The development of academic research into the kingdom of Koguryŏ in France, just like Korean studies as a whole in France, reflect the evolution of relations between France and Korea, which are themselves related to the tragic history of the peninsula from the turn of the twentieth century to the 1950s. In 1886, the establishment of the diplomatic relations between these two countries, located at opposite end of the Euro-Asian continent, allowed a young Sinologist, Maurice Courant, to discover the history and the civilization of a country for which he became impassioned and whose role in the history of Northeast Asia he emphasised until the end of his career. However he never obtained a chair to teach the subject in Paris. It was thanks to this first French research on Korea that, at the turn of the twentieth century, another Sinologist, Edouard Chavannes, would touch the study of Koguryŏ when he tried to reconcile Chinese historical annals with the vestiges in the field. But following the Japanese colonization of the peninsula, all direct cooperation between France and Korea ceased. It was thus logical that it fell to a Japanologist, Charles Haguenaer, visiting the Japanese empire, to rediscover Korea and, once the Korean War had ended, re-instate French research into Korea in 1956, by inviting Li Ogg to Paris to become the first

66 In: *La Corée, le peuple et ses valeurs culturelles, d'hier à aujourd'hui* (Korea, Its People and Cultural Values Yesterday and Today), under the supervision of Yim Seong-sook, pp. 87-95.

researcher in France to work exclusively on Korean studies. To conclude, it is worth noting that, be it Courant, Chavannes or Li Ogg, these professors from French universities were all classicists and approached the subject of the Koguryō kingdom through ancient texts, afterwards confirming their results with field research.

TROISIEME FACE (NORD)

XIII	XII	XI	X	IX	VIII	VII	VI	V	IV	III	II	I	
城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六	城四家爲看烟台樓盧城二家爲看烟牟水城三家爲看烟幹三利城國烟二看烟六

QUATRIEME FACE (EST)

IX	VIII	VII	VI	V	IV	III	II	I		
之人自今以後不得更相轉賣唯有富足之者亦不得擅買其有違令賣者刑之買人制令守墓	至使守墓人烟戶免銷惟國岡上廣開土境好太王畫爲祖先王墓上立碑銘其烟戶不令免銷又制守墓	則復取舊民一百十家合新舊守墓戶國烟廿看烟三百都合三百廿家自上祖先王以來墓上不妄石碑	之後安守墓者但取吾躬率所略來韓僉令宿酒掃言教如此是以如教令取韓僉二百廿家慮其不知法	國岡上廣開土境好太王存時教言祖王先王但教取遠近舊民守墓酒掃吾慮舊民轉當窳劣若吾萬年	國烟那且城一家爲看烟勾牟城一家爲看烟於利城八家爲看烟比利城三家爲看烟細城三家爲看烟	看烟八瑞城國烟一看烟八味城六家爲看烟就杏城五家爲看烟多穰城廿四家爲看烟散那城一家爲	國烟一看烟五大山韓城六家爲看烟農實城國烟一看烟一閱叙城國烟二都烟廿二古牟莫城國烟二	利城三家爲看烟豆叙城國烟一看烟二奧利城國烟二看烟八須都城國烟二看烟五百穰南居韓	七〇利城三家爲看烟豆叙城國烟一看烟二奧利城國烟二看烟八須都城國烟二看烟五百穰南居韓	

六餘天卒之子曰河伯女即部年降王生子有聖
 手曰白焉曼曼天之母曰河伯女即部年降王生子有聖
 山城山上所建都焉木樂也他國遺業歸來下世王王於忽本東亞黃
 石大朱鎗聖船承星業聖全十七世孫國臣上廣用土境平安好大王
 善天威武極校回海掛除惡庶寧其業國富民殷五祭豐穀異天不
 口九日一酉靈靈山勝於聖立碑銘記動績以永後世焉其
 大城辛住討巨富山鎮山至監水上破其兵部為六七百當牛馬窟
 東城小城北豐五徐狗色親土境田獵而靈百發新羅舊夏摩
 白城羅城為臣民以六手丙申王躬率水軍討利交國軍
 羅城開城全靈城餘城
 羅城開城全靈城餘城
 羅城開城全靈城餘城

6

國城賦不厭氣散出百嶽王威赫怒渡阿利水遣刺迫城
 一千人細布千五歸王自誓後今以復刃為奴若大王恩赦
 七百將殺玉帛并大臣十人旋帥德都八年戊戌教遣偏師觀
 女三百餘人自中以來朝貢論事九年己亥百殘遣誓命使和
 其國境廣破城池以奴客為民歸王請命大王恩後補其忠
 勇住教勒羅夜男居城至新羅城倭滿其中官兵方至倭賊
 後拔城城歸羅城安羅人攻兵核新羅城倭滿其中官兵方至倭賊
 九嘉更府來正羅人攻兵核新羅城倭滿其中官兵方至倭賊

7

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