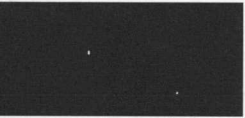


How English-Language Scholarship Views Koguryō

Edward J. Shultz, University of Hawaii

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When the Koryō statesman Sō Hūi confronted a Khitan challenge to Koryō's "ownership" of Koguryō, he presented a strong defense of his position arguing that Koryō was in fact Koguryō. Koreans today when confronting the current Chinese challenge to the ownership of Koguryō should replicate Sō Hūi's defense, drawing on modern terminology. To Sō Hūi, just as to Koreans in the twenty-first century, Koguryō is an integral part of their historical memory. Regardless of what Chinese scholars might suggest, Koreans will not and cannot budge from this position.

How English-Language Scholarship Views Koguryŏ

Edward J. Shultz, University of Hawaii

To offer a definitive statement on English-language scholarship and its view of Koguryŏ is a near impossible task as there is no one single interpretation that represents this point of view. However, an examination of English-language scholarship written on Koguryŏ during the last century does provide some insight into this question. Until the Chinese forcefully broached the subject of Koguryŏ's identity in 2003, few western scholars writing in English ever thought of Koguryŏ as being anything but part of Korea's long historical heritage. And despite current challenges to this view from some scholars, most western writers continue to adhere to the belief that Koguryŏ is Korean.

Through an examination of western sources in English that start with some of the earliest "missionary writings" on Korea from the late nineteenth century and progressing up to the present, this presentation will show how the general view that Koguryŏ is an integral part of Korea's history has clearly emerged. Nevertheless, until just several years ago, there was comparatively little written on Koguryŏ. Now that Koguryŏ has become such an important issue to modern Koreans, studies on Koguryŏ have exploded, and this is also the case for articles appearing in English. An assessment of these trends will also be offered. This presentation concludes with a personal assessment, based on these studies of Koguryŏ's place in Korea's history. As Koguryŏ has played an important role in Korea's historical memory, to argue that Koguryŏ was not Korean is equivalent to saying Korea is not Korea, and this is an untenable position.

Early Western Scholarship in English

Western scholarship on Korea dates back to the seventeenth century, but it is not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that rigorous studies on Korea appear in western sources.¹ When western missionaries first came to Korea, a number of men became quite interested in Korea's long historical tradition, and they were among the first to introduce the subject of Koguryō in English to western audiences. Among the earliest writers were such men as Homer B. Hulbert and James S. Gale. Many of these same people also joined the Royal Asiatic Society, Korean Branch and also studied Korea's earliest history including Koguryō. Hulbert's two-volume *History of Korea*, published in 1905, is a landmark in early western scholarship. Relying on traditional Korean and Chinese sources, he sketched Koguryō's development as an integral part of Korea's past. For example, Hulbert early in his history in referring to Koguryō states, Koguryō's "name stands prominently forth in Korean history and tradition."² To him traditions of Koguryō were just as important to Korea's development as those of Paekche and Silla. This interpretation was echoed in James S. Gale's *The History of the Korean People*, which was published in 1927. However, during the period Japan occupied Korea from 1910 to 1945, little western scholarship in any language focused on Korea's history, and it was not until after the end of the Korean War that work on Koguryō again began to appear. But even this research rarely treated Koguryō as a separate entity, but rather as one of the three kingdoms of Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla.

Prior to the start of the twenty-first century, when English-language, western scholarship investigated Koguryō it was rarely as a single entity and never was it suggested that Koguryō's identity was anything but Korean. There were scholars who translated Korean primary sources into English; one excellent example was Peter H. Lee's *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks*:

1 Lew Young Ick, "Origins of Modern Korean Studies," in Chung Doo Hee and Edward J. Shultz, eds., *The Periphery and Center in Korean History*, (Seoul: Sogang University Press, 2003), 115-138.

2 Clarence N. Weems, ed., *Hulbert's History of Korea*, (London: Routledge & Paul Kegan, 1962), vol. 1, 36.

3 *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks: The Haedong Kosŭng Chōn*, written by Kakhun, translated by

The Haedong Kosŭng Chŏn.³ In this translation Lee presents the study of Buddhism's transmission to Korea, that is, to Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla. The story of monks coming to Koguryō is recounted without any thought of them as being anything but Korean. Ha Tae-Hung's English translation of the *Samguk yusa* also clearly placed Koguryō within the Korean tradition.⁴ And the recently published *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization* repeats the point that Koguryō was part of Korea's civilization.⁵

Nevertheless, secondary sources, such as books and articles on early Korea, let alone Koguryō, remain scant. To be frank, there was little interest in Koguryō studies in the West. This is in part because there was little interest in Silla or Paekche history, either. However, Koguryō's past was even harder to penetrate. Not only were there very few primary sources on Koguryō, but the country's physical location was distant. Much of the territory was in northeastern China, which for several decades after the Chinese revolution was difficult to visit. And the fact that Koguryō's capital was in P'yōngyang, the capital of North Korea, made it equally difficult to visit. If western scholars were to take up ancient Korean history, Silla and Paekche offered a better environment, one more conducive to research. For all of these three kingdoms, there also is a serious paucity of primary source material extant, thus further hindering serious research. Furthermore, research on Korea still has not totally escaped the shackles of Japanese colonial era scholarship, which largely interpreted Korea's ancient past as an extension of Chinese civilization. From this perspective, the study of Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla offered little of value to scholarship.

One of the earliest western bibliographies on Korean studies was Han-Kyo Kim's *Studies on Korea: A Scholar's Guide*. In an essay in this guide, historians Hugh H.W. Kang and Michael E. Macmillan reviewed materials related to Korea's ancient and Three Kingdoms periods.

Peter H. Lee, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

4 *Samguk yusa*, written by Iryōn, translated by Tae-Hung Ha and Grafton Mintz, (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1972).

5 One can also point to the fact that the *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, published by Columbia University Press in 1965-1966, did not include any texts from Koguryō as part of China's historical heritage.

Approximately twenty articles or books appeared in western languages between 1910 and the time when this guide was published in 1980. Of these twenty articles, only three were specific to Koguryō while the remainder considered early myths on the origins of Korea in general and Korea's links with China.⁶ Not one of the three articles touching on Koguryō was written by a western scholar. Yi Kibaek (Lee Ki-baik) wrote on Puyō but also considered Koguryō's traditions. Li Ogg, writing in French, discussed the racial makeup of the people of Koguryō, and Shiratori Kurakichi, in a paper translated from Japanese, presented his ideas on early foundation legends of both Puyō and Koguryō.⁷

In Kenneth R. Robinson's *Korean History: A Bibliography*, compiled and maintained for the University of Hawaii Center for Korean Studies, there are only about twelve articles published in English after the appearance of *Studies on Korea* in 1980 that focused exclusively on Koguryō.⁸ By far the most prolific scholar was Kenneth H.J. Gardiner. Initially a China specialist, he became interested in Koguryō and even published a work on the early history of Korea in the late 1960s.⁹ Gardiner also translated the first three *kwōn of the Samguk sagi's* "Koguryō pon'gi," which presently is being edited for publication. Gardiner took a special interest in early Koguryō legends as well as the historiography of Kim Pusik.¹⁰

6 Hugh H.W. Kang and Michael E. Macmillan, "Ancient Chosōn, Three Kingdoms, and Koryō," in Han-Kyo Kim, ed., *Studies on Korea: A Scholar's Guide*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980), 48-52.

7 Lee Ki-baik (Yi Kibaek), "The Crime of Jealousy in Puyō," *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 18 (June 1963), 72-78; Li Ogg, "À propos des Ye et Māk," *Annuaire de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études- IVe section* 106 (1973-1974), 777-779; Shiratori Kurakichi, "The Legend of the King Tung-ming, the Founder of Fu-yu kuo," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 10 (1938), 1-41.

8 Kenneth R. Robinson, "Korean History: A Bibliography," http://www.hawaii.edu/korea/bibliography/three_kingdoms-koguryo.htm (Accessed July 16, 2006).

9 Kenneth H.J. Gardiner, *The Early History of Korea: The Historical Development of the Peninsula up to the Introduction of Buddhism in the Fourth Century AD*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1969). This work is noted in *Studies on Korea*.

10 See for example Kenneth H.J. Gardiner, "Aspects of the Legend of King Yuri Myong," in A.R. Davis and A.D. Stefanowska, eds., *Austrina: Essays in Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the Oriental Society of Australia*, (Sydney: Oriental Society of Australia, 1982); Kenneth H.J. Gardiner, "Tradition Betrayed?: Kim Pu-sik and the Founding of Koguryo," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 37 (March 1988), 149-193.

Koguryō's military history also elicited some interest with articles by both the Russian scholar Konstantin V. Asmolov and by Richard A. Gabriel and Donald W. Boose.¹¹ Other articles written primarily by Korean scholars based in Korea, such as Noh Taedon, have focused on Koguryō's ties with Parhae or the origins of Koguryō.¹²

During this same period, universities in the United States, as evidenced through PhD dissertations, showed little interest in Koguryō. Hyung Il Pai completed her dissertation at Harvard University in 1989. She focused primarily on Lelang (Nangnang) and its archaeological record, but also tangentially considered Koguryō remains.¹³ In 1999 Miwha Lee Stevenson wrote a dissertation at Columbia University that carried a much stronger focus on Koguryō as it studied the tombs of Koguryō.¹⁴ Park Ah-Rim completed her dissertation on Koguryō tombs at the University of Pennsylvania in 2002.¹⁵ More recently Mark Byington completed a dissertation at Harvard University in which he studied Puyō's history and through this work also considered Koguryō's past.¹⁶

Recent Trends

Scholarship on Koguryō blossomed after 2002 when Chinese scholars took

11 Konstantin V. Asmolov, "The System of Military Activity of Koguryo," *Korea Journal* 32:2 (Summer 1992), 103-116; Richard A. Gabriel and Donald W. Boose, "The Korean Way of War: Salsu River," in Richard A. Gabriel and Donald W. Boose, *The Great Battles of Antiquity: A Strategic and Tactical Guide to Great Battles that Shaped the Development of War*, (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1994).

12 Noh Tae-don, "Study of the Contact between the Peoples of Koguryo-Parhae and Inner Asian Countries," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 10 (1997), 81-94; Rhee Song-Nai, "Origins of Koguryo State (B.C. 37-668 A.D.)," *Hanguk sanggosa hakpo* 2 (1989:12), 175-200.

13 Hyung Il Pai, "Lelang and the interaction sphere in Korean prehistory," unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1989. She also published in 2000 a monograph based on the dissertation, *Constructing Korean Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State Formation Theories*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000).

14 Miwha Lee Stevenson, "Webs of Signification: Representation as Social Transformation in the Muraled Tombs of Koguryō," Columbia University, unpublished dissertation, 1999.

15 Ah-Rim Park, "Tomb of the Dancers: Koguryō Tombs in East Asian Funerary Art," University of Pennsylvania, unpublished dissertation, 2002.

16 Mark Edward Byington, "A History of the Puyō State, Its People, and Its Legacy," Harvard University, unpublished dissertation, 2003.

an interest in Koguryō's origins. In the last four years, in part because of symposia and conferences sponsored by Korean academic organizations, there have been a number of articles exploring Koguryō's past. Contemporary national issues thus have been a boon to the study of Koguryō and have generated much new research. A number of articles have directly addressed the Chinese challenge that Koguryō was a Chinese state and not a Korean kingdom.¹⁷ Others have looked at state and cultural development.¹⁸ Koguryō art, a less inflammatory subject, has also benefited through studies offered by Ho-tae Jeon, Ildiko Nagy, and Nancy Steinhardt.¹⁹ International links with other states have also received scrutiny.²⁰ John B. Duncan and Mark Byington have also written on Koguryō from an historical perspective.²¹ There have yet to be any major monographs written on Koguryō alone, although the papers presented at a spring 2005 symposium at Harvard University promise to provide additional understanding of

17 Choe Kwang Shik, "China's Distortion of the History of the Ancient Kingdom of Koguryo," *Korea and World Affairs* 28:4 (Winter 2004), 397-404; Ahn Yonson, "Competing Nationalisms: The Mobilisation of History and Archaeology in the Korea-China Wars over Koguryo/Gaogouli," *Japan Focus* (February 9, 2006), <http://japanfocus.org/article.asp?id=518> (Accessed February 15, 2006); Pankaj N. Mohan, "Rescuing a Stone from Nationalism: A Fresh Look at the Kwanggaeto Stele of Koguryō," *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2004), 89-115.

18 Kim Chang-seok, "Goguryeo Society and Its Economy," *The Review of Korean Studies* 7:4 (December 2004), 35-56; Pankaj Mohan, "Royal Authority and Legitimization in Late 4th-Early 5th Century Koguryo: Focusing on the Evidence of the King Kwanggaet'o Stele," *Koguryō yōngu* 21 (2005), 505-521.

19 Jeon Ho-tae, "Goguryeo Culture and Mural Paintings," *The Review of Korean Studies* 7:4 (December 2004), 11-33; Ildiko Nagy, "Copies of Murals from Anak Tomb No. 3 in the Korean Collection of the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts," *Ars Decorativa* 19 (2000), 79-108; Nancy S. Steinhardt, "Changchuan Tomb No. 1 and Its North Asian Context," *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 4:1-4 (June 2002), 225-292; Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt, "Twin Pillars Tomb," *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2004), 25-57.

20 E.I. Gelman and V.I. Boldin, "Koguryō's Influence on Parhae (Bohai) Culture," *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2004), 139-165; Pankaj N. Mohan, "Koguryo's Buddhist Relations with Silla in the Sixth Century: Focusing on Koguryo's Role in Transmitting the State Buddhism of Northern Wei to Silla," *Taesun sasang nonch'ong* 19 (2005:6), 47-80; Yeo Ho-Kyu, "International Situation in East Asia and Changes in Goguryeo's Foreign Policy," *The Review of Korean Studies* 7:4 (December 2004), 57-92.

21 John B. Duncan, "Historical Memories of Koguryō in Koryō and Chosōn Korea," *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2004), 117-136; Mark E. Byington, "Commentary on Current Conditions and Characteristics of Koguryō Mountain Fortresses in Jilin Province," *Koguryō yōn'gu* 8 (1999:12), 69-74; Mark E. Byington, "Problems Concerning the First Relocation of the Koguryo Capital," in Han'guk kodaesa hakhoe, ed., *Koguryō ūi yōksa wa munhwa yusan*, (Seoul: Sōgyōng, 2004).

Koguryō's unique role in northeast Asia.

In 1974, Kang and Macmillan, in describing early scholarship on ancient Korea, noted, "Many of these pioneering studies, however, were mere factual verification of the political and military history of the period undertaken not necessarily as groundwork for a broader historical inquiry but for the sake of factual verification."²² After World War II and the end of the Japanese occupation, many studies of early Korea tried to free Korea's history from the legacy of the past and the notion that Korean culture was borrowed. But even in these works, Kang and Macmillan point out that "little was done to investigate the positive accomplishments in Korean history, be they examples of exceptional political leadership or of creative artistic achievements or brilliant intellectual and spiritual growth."²³ And in some respects, at least in terms of western scholarship, these same battles still appear to continue.

Aside from a few studies of Koguryō art, there have been no major monographs or even dissertations in English focusing exclusively on Koguryō. Many of the articles that have appeared recently have been piecemeal works, admittedly some quite good, that have only portrayed one small aspect of Koguryō and its heritage. Furthermore, a number of articles were written to fight battles in historiography or battles of ownership, and have failed to provide a deeper understanding of Koguryō and its legacy to both Korea and the world. One can only return to the 1980 plea of Kang and Macmillan quoted above. This is not an easy task for many of the reasons noted above, but for research to mature, new initiatives must be taken that take results to a higher level.

My Point of View

Like most western students, I learned from the start that Koguryō was part of Korea's long historical tradition. In graduate school I encountered the *Samguk sagi* and the *Samguk yusa*, two historical accounts about Korea's

²² Kang and Macmillan, "Ancient Chosōn, Three Kingdoms, and Koryō," 49.

²³ Kang and Macmillan, "Ancient Chosōn, Three Kingdoms, and Koryō," 50.

past. The *Samguk sagi* and the *Samguk yusa* described Korea's formation out of the states of Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla and told of Ŭlchi Mundōk, not just a Koguryō general but a hero to Koreans of all ages. I read about early treasures of Koguryō such as the Tomb of the Generals or the King Kwangaet'ō stele, upon which early Koguryō and Korean history was written. I also learned that P'yōngyang was once the capital of Koguryō, and P'yōngyang is as Korean as any city in the world. So when I first learned of China's claims that Koguryō was in fact part of China's history and that Koguryō was one of ancient China's minority states, I was somewhat surprised and slightly amused at this assumption. But my amusement changed to concern as the rhetoric over "ownership" of Koguryō grew.

As my training has been primarily in Koryō history not Koguryō history, I had only paid a passing glance at Koguryō history. And in my study of Koryō's origins, I have spent more time analyzing the traditions of Silla than those of Koguryō. Silla was closer to my area of focus and also physically I was able to visit Kyōngju much more readily and view Silla historical sites. I first visited Kyōngju in January 1967 when I lived in Pusan as a Peace Corps volunteer. In visiting the tombs and temples I was immediately struck by the richness of Silla's past.

Once I became a professor teaching classes on Korea's history, I wanted my students to have access to books on early Korea, especially Silla, and so this led me to the *Samguk sagi*. Nearly fifteen years ago, I started working on a project to translate the *Samguk sagi* into English. There are several of us who are still struggling to render this important history into English, and we are making progress through the help of the Academy of Korean Studies (Hangukhak Chung'ang Yōn'guwōn). As the debate over Koguryō developed, our translation team was urged to speed up its focus on Koguryō.²⁴ When I began translating the Koguryō annals, I became more enchanted with the text. As I progressed through several of the *kwōn* in the Koguryō annals, a clearer sense of Koguryō identity emerged. Then in late September of 2005 I was privileged to be on a field trip that took me to several impor-

²⁴ The translation project is being completed by Kenneth Gardiner, Daniel Kane, and Edward J. Shultz.

tant Koguryō historical sites in northeastern China. This experience further enhanced my appreciation for and understanding of the country's rich heritage.

In introducing the topic of Koguryō to an American audience, and particularly the question of the ownership of Koguryō, it is important to realize this is an issue that has erupted out of twentieth and twenty-first century nationalism. Since the mid 1950s both China and Korea, north and south, have been trying to regain control of their history and rediscover their national roots. Twentieth-century imperialism and colonialism had made great efforts to deny the history of these nations. Now as China and the two Koreas attempted to regain control over their past and explore their heritages, it is natural to focus on history. Koguryō, which physically occupied land that is in modern North Korea and northeast China, inevitably became contested ground.

Although American scholars have not been actively caught up in this debate as to whether Koguryō should be Chinese or Korean, some scholars, such as Gari Ledyard or Mark Byington, have found the Chinese claims to be untenable and based on a retrospective look back into the past. To these scholars Koguryō is "embedded in Korean historiography."²⁵ Other scholars like John Jamieson or Andrei Lankov, although questioning Chinese claims, feel that Koguryō people are more closely related to the pastoral peoples who for centuries inhabited what is today northeastern China. In other words, to them Koguryō is neither Chinese nor Korean. In private conversations some have even suggested that the history of Korea may well be understood as the northward advance of the Han people from the southern part of the peninsula and the victory of a pastoral people over a nomadic based northern people.

Koguryō in the Historical Sources

The earliest records on Koguryō are found in Chinese historical sources. If the Koguryō people kept histories they have been long since destroyed. Thus

²⁵ See Duncan, "Historical Memories of Koguryō in Koryō and Chosōn Korea," 119.

it is the Chinese sources that introduce modern readers to Koguryō's past. The *Shi ji*, compiled in the Han dynasty, is one of China's oldest histories. Koguryō's earliest past is found in the Chosŏn section of this history.²⁶ The Chinese of the Han dynasty clearly distinguished themselves from the neighboring states, and the states of the Korean peninsula were not deemed part of China.

The Tang histories such as the *Jiu Tang shu* or the *Xin Tang shu* present a much more detailed history, but here too, the Koguryō record is placed in the "Tong'ijŏn," (Eastern Barbarian) section. It is here that the term "*samguk*" is used in describing Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla. These histories recognized each of the three kingdoms as separate states and also used a single term "*haedong samguk*" to describe the region.²⁷

Subsequent Chinese scholarship on Korea continued to place Koguryō firmly within the Korean tradition. For example, when the Chinese envoy Xu Jing visited in Koryō in 1123 and then wrote the *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* (Illustrated Record of the Xuanhe Embassy to Koryō), he described Koryō's origins going back through Koguryō.

The earliest extant Korean histories are the above mentioned *Samguk sagi* and *Samguk yusa*. The *Samguk sagi* was compiled in the middle of the twelfth century under the supervision of Kim Pusik, and the *Samguk yusa* was written in the thirteenth century by the monk Iryŏn. The titles of both of these texts demonstrate that for people of the middle Koryō period, Korea's origins date from the *samguk*, or the three kingdoms of Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla. Koguryō is an important part of Korea's historical memory.

To the people of Koryō, Koguryō was especially important. The name of their country was derived from Koguryō. In fact, it was a rewritten version of "Koguryō" as the middle character "gu" had been deleted. Some scholars suggest that the Koryō link may be even more direct as they point to records that indicate that Koguryō itself referred to its country as Koryō from the middle of the fifth century. Kungye, the local lord who competed for control

26 Kim Jung Bae, "The Name 'Haedong Samguk' (Three Kingdoms East of the Sea) as Recorded in Traditional Chinese Historical Documents," *Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies* 1 (2005), 10.

27 Kim Jung Bae, "The Name 'Haedong Samguk' (Three Kingdoms East of the Sea) as Recorded in Traditional Chinese Historical Documents," 11.

of the peninsula at the start of the tenth century called his state Later Koryō, indicating that he believed he was a successor to Koguryō. When Wang Kōn founded his new state in 918, he took the name Koryō, in part pointing to the northern heritage of his new kingdom. Wang Kōn placed great interest in reestablishing a Korean presence in the north in marked contrast to Silla, which had generally ignored the northern reaches of the peninsula. Wang Kōn established his western capital in P'yōngyang, rehabilitating that region and demonstrating its importance in his new state. He also welcomed immigrants from Parhae who had been forced to flee as the Khitan grew in strength in Manchuria. Parhae was a northern state that included descendants of Koguryō people.

P'yōngyang, the ancient capital of Koguryō, remained an important area in Koryō. In the fifth injunction of his Ten Injunctions, Wang Kōn discussed the importance of P'yōngyang and urged kings to visit the area regularly. "The Western Capital, P'yōngyang, has the elements of water in its favor and is the source of the terrestrial forces of our country. It is thus the veritable center of dynastic enterprises for ten thousand generations. Therefore, make a royal visit to the Western Capital four times a year."²⁸ The early king Chōngjong seriously thought of moving his capital there. And in the mid-twelfth century the charlatan monk Myoch'ōng led a rebellion that tried to relocate the capital to P'yōngyang.

Koryō showed great interest in trying to gain control of the northern part of the peninsula and as it expanded northward it ran into the Khitans who were expanding south. The Khitan were also vexing the Chinese as they ultimately established their own dynasty called the Liao and controlled northern China into the twelfth century. In 993 the Khitan invaded northern Korea, claiming control over the area south of the Yalu River, and stating that Koryō as a successor to Silla has no right to the territory so far north. Sō Hūi, one of early Koryō's great statesmen replied, "That is not so. Our country is in fact former Koguryō, and that is why it is named Koryō and has a

²⁸ Wang Kōn, "Ten Injunctions," in Peter H. Lee, ed., *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization*, volume 1: *From Early Times to the Sixteenth Century*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 264.

capital at P'yŏngyang."²⁹ He then went on to point out as the successor state to Koguryŏ, Koryŏ's land rested on both sides of the Yalu River.

The two major histories written in the Koryŏ period, the *Samguk sagi* and the *Samguk yusa*, through their titles state the primacy of the three kingdoms, Koguryŏ, Paekche, and Silla, in the evolution of Korea's history. The *Samguk sagi* in particular places great emphasis on Koguryŏ through the presentation of that country's history in more than ten chapters in the "Koguryŏ pon'gi." Although the compilers of the *Samguk sagi* relied heavily on the Chinese historical record in writing the early Koguryŏ history, the sense of a history clearly separate and at times antagonistic to China emerges. For example in discussing the unification wars of the 660s, Kim Pusik presents a record that is at odds with that found in the Chinese sources.³⁰ Furthermore, the biographies section of the *Samguk sagi* records the feats of several important Koguryŏ people and especially heralds the exploits of Ŭlchi Mundŏk. The lessons presented in the Koguryŏ annals section of the *Samguk sagi* are written to be relevant to all Koreans. Or as Kim Pusik proudly wrote, "The histories of Korea's Three Kingdoms are long, and their events should be set forth in an official record."³¹

Other texts from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries also point to the primacy of Koguryŏ in Koryŏ people's historical memory. Although the *P'yŏnnyŏn t'ongnok* does not discuss Koguryŏ specifically, it mentions the importance of Mt. Paektu in the north as a generating point for Wang Kŏn's genealogy. Through this text, the Koryŏ founder is seen to be a descendant of people from around the peninsula. Yi Sŭnghyu's *Chewang un'gi*, written at the end of the thirteenth century, in discussing Korea refers to the country as Tongguk and puts Koguryŏ, Paekche, and Silla as part of this history. Even more emphatically, one of Koryŏ's greatest writers, Yi Kyubo, places Koguryŏ at the center of his "Tongmyŏng-wang p'yŏn," which is about the

29 Sŏ Hŭi, "Arguments on War," in Peter H. Lee, ed., *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization*, volume 1: *From Early Times to the Sixteenth Century*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 300.

30 Duncan, "Historical Memories of Koguryŏ in Koryŏ and Chosŏn Korea," 124.

31 Kim Pusik, "On Presenting the *Historical Record of the Three Kingdoms* to the King," in Peter H. Lee, ed., *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization*, volume 1: *From Early Times to the Sixteenth Century*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 464.

founder of Koguryō, King Tongmyōng.³²

Chosŏn writers did little to change this perception. In compiling the history of Koryō through both the *Koryōsa* and the *Koryōsa chōryo*, Chosŏn historians never challenged the primacy of Koguryō's position as one of the three kingdoms and as part of Korea's historical past. To Chosŏn scholars, Koguryō was part of Korea's historical roots. See for example Kwŏn Kŭn's *Tongguk saryak*, Sŏ Kōjōng's *Tongguk t'onggam*, or Yi P'a's *Samguksa chōryo*.³³ The eighteenth century sirhak scholar An Chōngbok took special interest in Koguryō and even suggested that Koguryō's origins preceded that found in the *Samguk sagi* and can be traced back to before Han Wudi conquered Ancient Chosŏn.³⁴

Conclusions

When the Koryō statesman Sŏ Hŭi confronted a Khitan challenge to Koryō's "ownership" of Koguryō, he presented a strong defense of his position arguing that Koryō was in fact Koguryō. Koreans today when confronting the current Chinese challenged to the ownership of Koguryō should replicate Sŏ Hŭi's defense, drawing on modern terminology. To Sŏ Hŭi, just as to Koreans in the twenty-first century, Koguryō is an integral part of their historical memory. Regardless of what Chinese scholars might suggest, Koreans will not and cannot budge from this position.

There is an example from Hawaii's history. In the mid-1980s the state of Hawaii wanted to build a new highway through a neglected valley. After construction started, Hawaiian activists discovered what they thought was a sacred site. Archaeologists came in to study the site. When I asked one of the archaeologists if the site was indeed sacred, he replied, "It is now." What he meant was that even if to ancient Hawaiians it was not sacred, the people had made it sacred today. Similarly, even if Koguryō was not a Korean state, by the time of Koryō, it had become firmly a part of Korea's

32 Duncan, "Historical Memories of Koguryō in Koryō and Chosŏn Korea," 124-125.

33 Duncan, "Historical Memories of Koguryō in Koryō and Chosŏn Korea," 126.

34 Duncan, "Historical Memories of Koguryō in Koryō and Chosŏn Korea," 127.

historical memory.

If you were able to ask the people of Koguryŏ whether they were Chinese or Korean, they would clearly declare that they were not Chinese. A quick reading of the “Koguryŏ pon’gi” reveals an on-going series of battles with different Chinese kingdoms, as Koguryŏ people sought to assert their identity. They fought a similar battle with Silla, which ultimately they lost and become partially absorbed into the new Silla state. Some Koguryŏ people chose to escape Silla control and retreat into the hinterlands of Manchuria, many other chose to remain where they were and accede to Silla control. And it is most likely these people who remained under Silla tutelage, when asked the above question, they would reply that, yes, they are Korean and part of Korea’s historical tradition.

Let me offer yet another posture that draws on Korea’s history. On satellite maps we see no borders, and perhaps that is the best way to look at the world. The people of Koguryŏ formed an important state in the middle of East Asia. That state has disappeared, but its legacy helped form Silla, then Koryŏ, and then Chosŏn, and still lives in the hearts of the Korean people. The Koguryŏ legacy is broad enough so that other peoples and other nations can also draw from it. It is a heritage that Koreans can proudly view.