

900 ~ 1135

918

Wang Geon, a leader of regional power near Gaeseong, established the Goryeo Kingdom and claimed himself as the successor of Goguryeo.

936

The period of division finally ended, as Goryeo united Shilla and New Baekje. Goryeo welcomed the Balhae refugees and extended its territory to the north.

958

Goryeo adopted the state [civil] examination system of China, and the era of acknowledging not only one's heritage but also one's individual abilities began.

962

Otto the Great was crowned as an emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

992

Gukjagam, which was the equivalent to a national university today, was established. And aside from Confucian scriptures, literature, technology and foreign language were taught and learned here as well.

993

Georan [Khitan] attacked Goryeo three times beginning this year, but Goryeo successfully defeated them.

1037

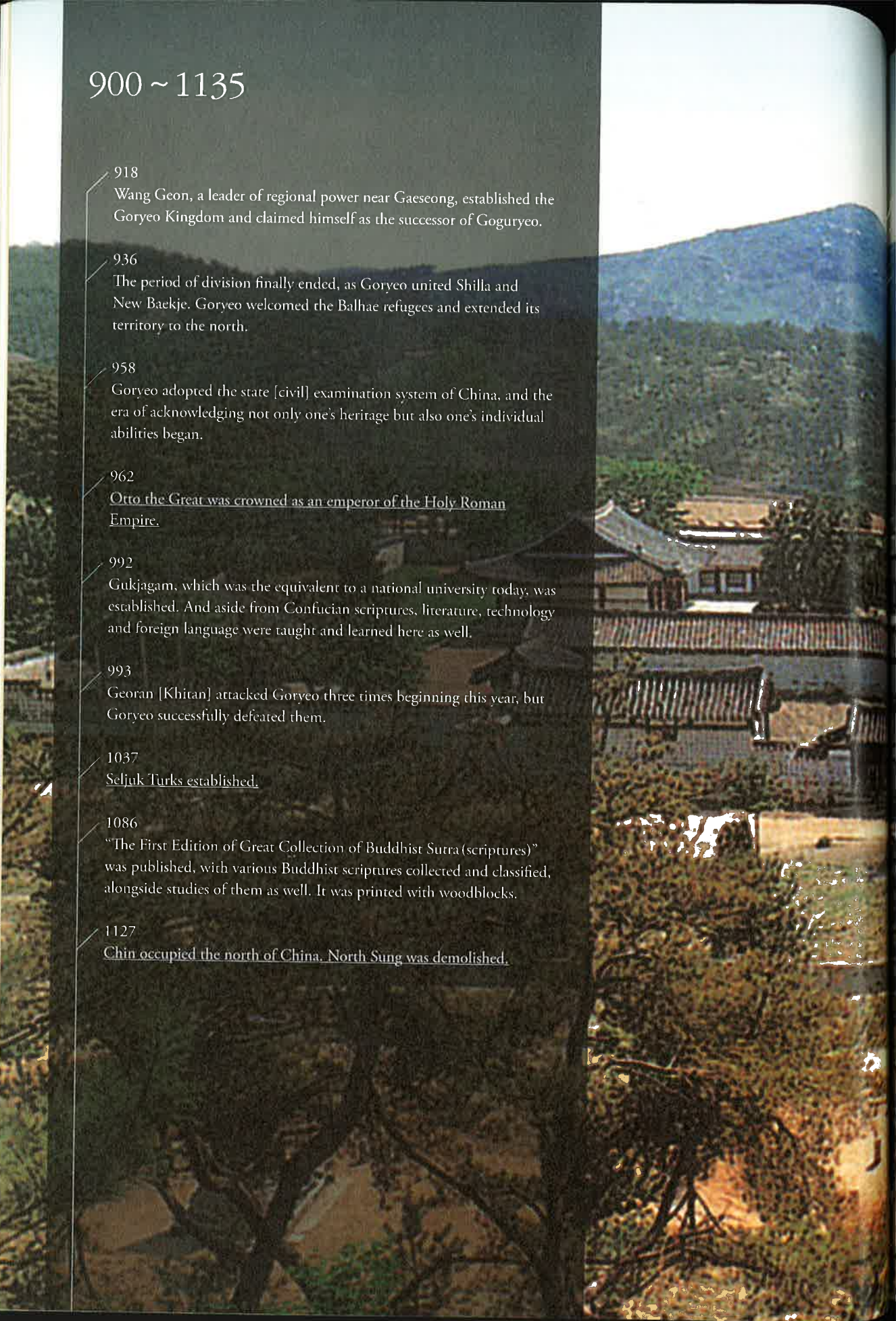
Seljuk Turks established.

1086

"The First Edition of Great Collection of Buddhist Sutra (scriptures)" was published, with various Buddhist scriptures collected and classified, alongside studies of them as well. It was printed with woodblocks.

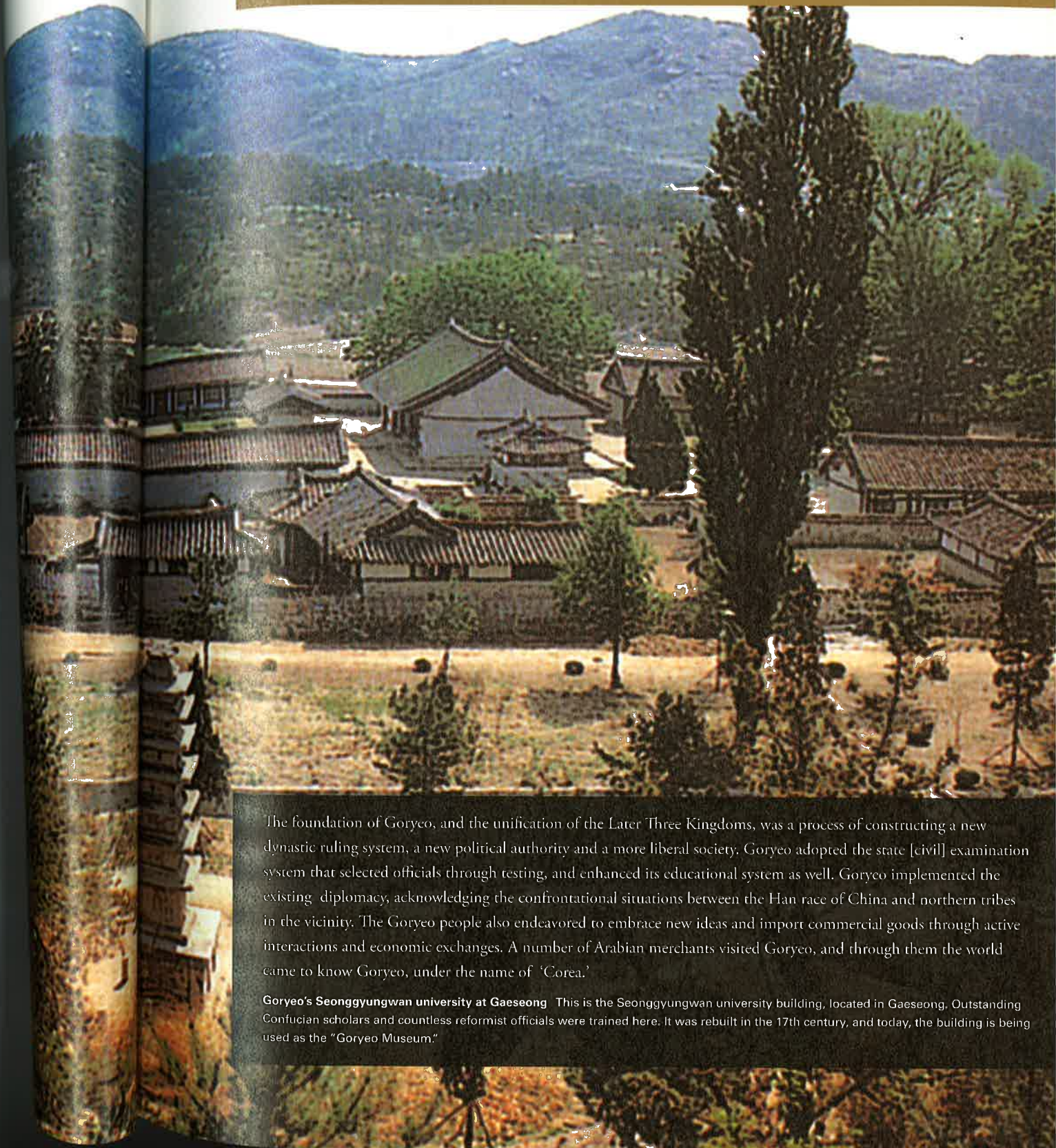
1127

Chin occupied the north of China. North Sung was demolished.



IV

Emergence of a United Power Named Goryeo



The foundation of Goryeo, and the unification of the Later Three Kingdoms, was a process of constructing a new dynastic ruling system, a new political authority and a more liberal society. Goryeo adopted the state [civil] examination system that selected officials through testing, and enhanced its educational system as well. Goryeo implemented the existing diplomacy, acknowledging the confrontational situations between the Han race of China and northern tribes in the vicinity. The Goryeo people also endeavored to embrace new ideas and import commercial goods through active interactions and economic exchanges. A number of Arabian merchants visited Goryeo, and through them the world came to know Goryeo, under the name of 'Corea.'

Goryeo's Seonggyungwan university at Gaeseong This is the Seonggyungwan university building, located in Gaeseong. Outstanding Confucian scholars and countless reformist officials were trained here. It was rebuilt in the 17th century, and today, the building is being used as the "Goryeo Museum."

The Byeokrannaru Ferry Dock and Gaegyeong, the Imperial Capital of Goryeo

There is an interesting story inside a book which contains songs that were sung during the Goryeo Dynasty Period. There was a foreign merchant from the Sung Dynasty of China who often visited Goryeo and docked at the Yeseonggang (R.) port. One day he happened to meet a beautiful woman. The man could not leave Goryeo without her, so he went to her husband and offered him a bet, of which the winner would take all the merchant's money and not to mention the female. The merchant won the bet, leaving the husband behind to sing a sad song upon parting with his wife.

Gaegyeong, the center of the Goryeo Dynasty, was regarded as the imperial capital where the Goryeo emperor resided. It was a well designed city and had over half a million population. The wealthy population of nobility made this region the most frequented market place in the entire country.

The Byeokrannaru ferry dock, located at the entrance to Gaegyeong, became the most thriving international harbor in the country. Many Goryeo people who were to visit China embarked upon their journeys here, and many foreign merchants came to Goryeo through the port. There were many shops in every corner of the streets on the way to Gaegyeong, and many foreigners resided there as well.



Major products of Goryeo

From left to right: lacquer ware products inlaid with mother-of-pearl material featuring chrysanthemum patterns, a three-drawer chest with Dangcho (a creeper plant) patterns, a vase with bird patterns, and a blue celadon incense burner with carved patterns of seven treasures.

Trade Routes of Goryeo and Popular Products Imported and Exported

Since the foundation of the Chinese Sung Dynasty in 960, Goryeo and Sung exchanged official delegations 87 times for 160 years, until Sung was forced to move its capital to the south after it was defeated by the Jurchen tribes. The delegations usually included not only official emissaries but also a number of merchants, students, and monks. And a lot of individual trade activities took place as well, apart from the official exchanges.



Envoys and merchants leaving for Goryeo usually departed at Mingzhou. It is said that they were able to reach Goryeo in a few days, using wind from the southwest in the late spring. Goryeo merchants most frequently visited this place for business.

This port was mostly used by Chinese merchants who were conducting foreign trades with other countries through the East China sea route. Arabian settlements were formed by Arabian merchants visiting China for trading. It is said that the Caliphs sent official envoys to Sung 49 times between 988 and 1168.

1

Goryeo Unites the Later Three Kingdoms

Opening of the Later Three Kingdoms Period

As the local gentry (Hojok) became powerful and also independent from the central government, the fundamental structure of Shilla continued to be dismantled. Most of the local gentry were integrated and assimilated into the powerful leadership of a few selected local influentials. Among these political forces, Gyeonhwon (867~935) and Gungye (?~918) grew strong and established a new state.

Gyeonhwon and Gungye all claimed that Shilla treated the people of old Baekje and Goguryeo unfairly and that central governmental officials had been exploiting the entire population ever since the unification. So, as a natural conclusion, they began to call for the restoration of Baekje and Goguryeo. They named their nations as “New Baekje” (Hu-Baekje) and “New Goguryeo” (Hu-Goguryeo, later called as “Taebong”) respectively, and promised their followers that they would eliminate practices of discrimination that had continued against local regions. Especially Gungye, who claimed himself as the Maitreya Buddha, gained huge popularity, and promised to open a new world for the people in suffering. Yet, Wang Geon, who later became the founder of the Goryeo Dynasty (918~1392), drove him out. Wang Geon proclaimed himself and the Goryeo Dynasty as the successor of Goguryeo, and promised to reform the tax system. United Shilla, no longer able to hold its country and people together, had

Wanggeonreung

Wang Geon (877~943), the dynasty founder of Goryeo, was a gentry that dominated the area of Songak (today's Gaeseong). Alongside Gungye, he formed the foundation of the “New Goguryeo (later to be called ‘Taebong’).” This photo shows Wang Geon's tomb, the royal mausoleum that still remains at Gaeseong. Only a few Goryeo tombs including this one have been preserved.



to witness the Era of the Later Three Kingdoms unfold and proceed.

Gyeonhwon and Wang Geon's struggles for unification

Shilla was too weak to maintain its power, while New Baekje led by Gyeonhwon and Goryeo led by Wang Geon gradually grew and expanded their influence. Frequent military clashes were inevitable.

They fought furiously with each other, both intending to reunite the Korean Peninsula under their own regime. Gyeonhwon, for more than one occasion, swore that he would recover all territories of Goguryeo by advancing to the Daedonggang. Wang Geon also occasionally pledged to his followers that he would be the king of the unified kingdom, who would rule the Korean Peninsula.

Such passions to unite all of its opponents were distinguishably different from the mentality of Baekje, Goguryeo and Shilla, as none of them was ambitious enough to consider the others as its subject to be subdued and united. It had been 200 years since Shilla's unification of Baekje and Goguryeo, and the people were already accustomed to a life under a unified regime, a life in a unified country, and most importantly, a culture among a unified people.

Indeed, Goryeo considered absorbing Balhae in the north as its next step toward a complete unification. Unlike Shilla which considered Balhae as its rival, the Goryeo people considered Balhae as another successor of Goguryeo, and viewed it as a kin country. After Balhae collapsed, Goryeo welcomed its refugees and angrily confronted Georan which demolished Balhae, revealing Goryeo's own intentions to recover the lands of Goguryeo.

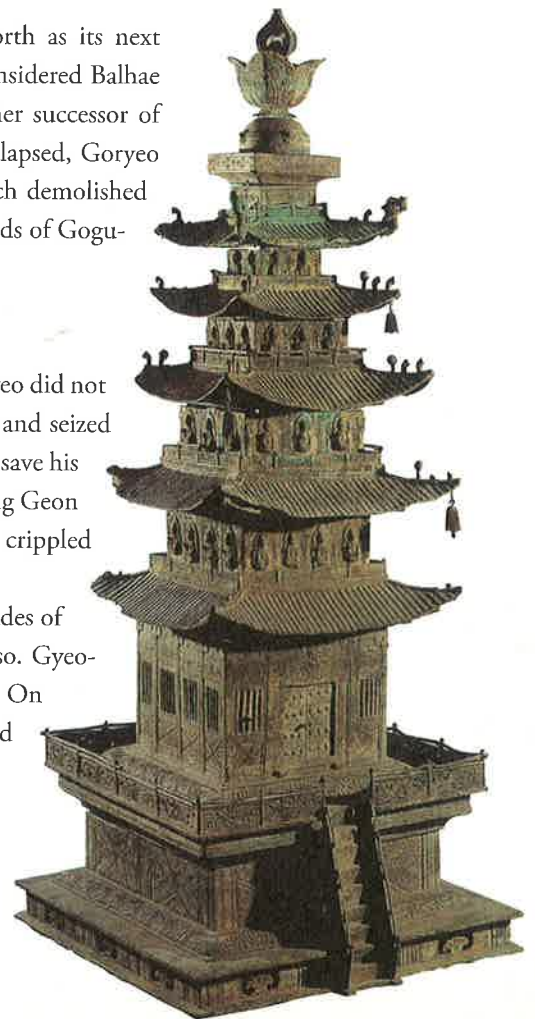
Goryeo's unification of the Later Three Kingdoms

The struggle for reunification between New Baekje and Goryeo did not take long. Gyeonhwon's oldest son betrayed his own father and seized the throne, pushing New Baekje into an internal conflict. To save his life, Gyeonhwon escaped, headed for Goryeo and asked Wang Geon for help. Not before long, Goryeo invaded New Baekje and crippled it beyond repairs.

The victory of Goryeo was the result of Wang Geon's decades of efforts to unite the country. Perhaps it was destined to be so. Gyeonhwon and Gungye both advocated a powerful monarchy. On the other hand, Wang Geon treated the local gentry well and

Goryeo's Gold-plated Bronze Grand Pagoda

This gold-plated bronze pagoda seems to have been originally built with seven tiers, and it is well-known for its grandiose size: the currently remaining part, total of five tiers, is 155cm in height. We believe it was built at Gaetaesa (temple), which was built to celebrate Goryeo's reunification of the country.





Mireukjeon at Geumsansa (temple)

The reunification war was in a sense triggered by the people's resistance against the wrong doings of the central authority. At the time, in Shilla the idea of a Mireuk Buddha bringing about a new era for the people was widely circulating. The picture shows the Mireukjeon hall at Geumsansa, which served as the center for such Mireuk belief. This place is not too far from Wansan, the capital of New Baekje. Gyeonhwon was detained in this temple by his own son. He escaped there and fled to Goryeo.

therefore acquired their support. He also avoided unnecessary frictions by not only acknowledging the privileges of the local gentry, but also offering them official positions inside the central government. Yet at the same time, Wang Geon firmly established a royal authority, by reinforcing the alliance with the gentry families by bestowing his last name "Wang" to them. And by encouraging marriages between the gentry families and the royal family, he made local influentials essentially an extension of the royal family.

The fact that Wang Geon himself had been leading one of the gentry factions helped him garner support from the local gentry community. The gentries expected Wang Geon to understand their demands and to provide opportunities to them, instead of only giving it to a few aristocratic families inside the capital. In response to the tyrannical ruling of the previous governments, the people chose Wang Geon as their leader, in hopes that their lives would be improved.

Wang Geon freed those who had been wrongfully forced into slavery. He also lowered taxes to one-tenth of the harvest and prohibited plundering committed by the local authorities. As a result, he managed to receive great support from the peasantry population.

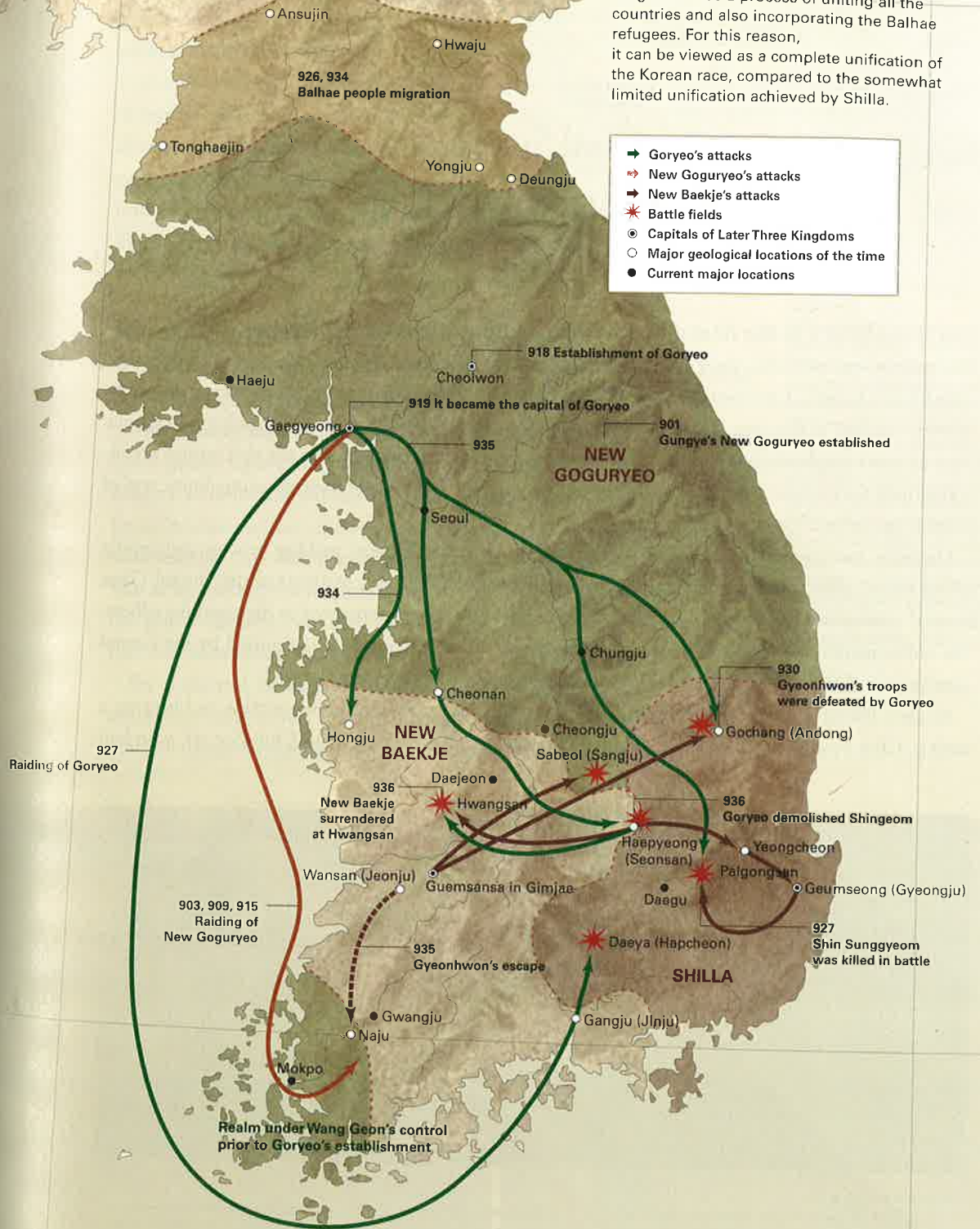
In 935, Goryeo finally accepted the voluntary surrender of Shilla, a kingdom that lasted for nearly a thousand years. When Wang Geon attacked New Baekje in 936, the reunification war ended.

This war was more than about being Goryeo's mere expansion of its territory. The peasants resisted unjust exploitation, and the gentries stood up to oppose discriminations. The unification was a realization of the people's own wishes, hoping for a safer, more equal and secured society.

Although discrimination and unfair exploitations were not totally wiped out, Goryeo's reunification of the Korean Peninsula ultimately contributed to constructing a society more open and equal than ever before.

Unification of Goryeo

Goryeo's unification of the Later Three Kingdoms was a process of uniting all the countries and also incorporating the Balhae refugees. For this reason, it can be viewed as a complete unification of the Korean race, compared to the somewhat limited unification achieved by Shilla.



2

Goryeo Adopts the Civil Service Examination, and Develops a Bureaucratic Ruling System

The three Choi's in the final days of Shilla and the beginning of Goryeo

Towards the end of Shilla, there were three famous men who carried the family name "Choi." They were Choi Chi-won, Choi Seung-wu, and Choi Eon-wi. All three were respected by the people as renowned scholars of the time. They already earned their reputation when they were studying in China. They all rose to high positions inside the government as well after having passed the civil service examination held for foreigners residing in China. Quite naturally, the news of their returning home was of people's special interest at that time.

However, none of them were able to successfully join the decision making process concerning governmental affairs during their stay home. It was because Shilla still maintained the "Jingol (True bones)" class system, in which only those of certain blood lines were appointed to high ranking offices. The above-mentioned people's knowledge and experiences were never duly recognized by the central government of Shilla, and thus, the things that they could do were severely limited.

So after failing in political reforms, Choi Chi-won disappeared into the mountains and became a hermit. Choi Seung-wu left Shilla and joined Gyeonhwon's New Baekje. And Choi Eon-wi, who had



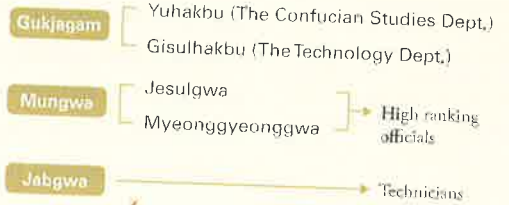
Hongpae in the Goryeo period

This is a certificate that shows someone has passed the civil officer examination. On a piece of red paper, the name and rank of the person who passed the test are recorded. During the Goryeo period, this Hongpae certificate was issued to represent the honor of the family that had a son who passed the examination.

remained as a low ranking official, was only able to do things that he wished, after Shilla collapsed and Goryeo emerged.

Choi Eon-wi later contributed to the task of constructing a ruling system for the new dynasty. Goryeo's reformation of the ruling system provided an opportunity to many intellectuals from Shilla, whose paths had literally been blocked due to the rigid social class system.

The educational institution, and the civil officer examination system of Goryeo



Gukjagam, and the civil officer examination system

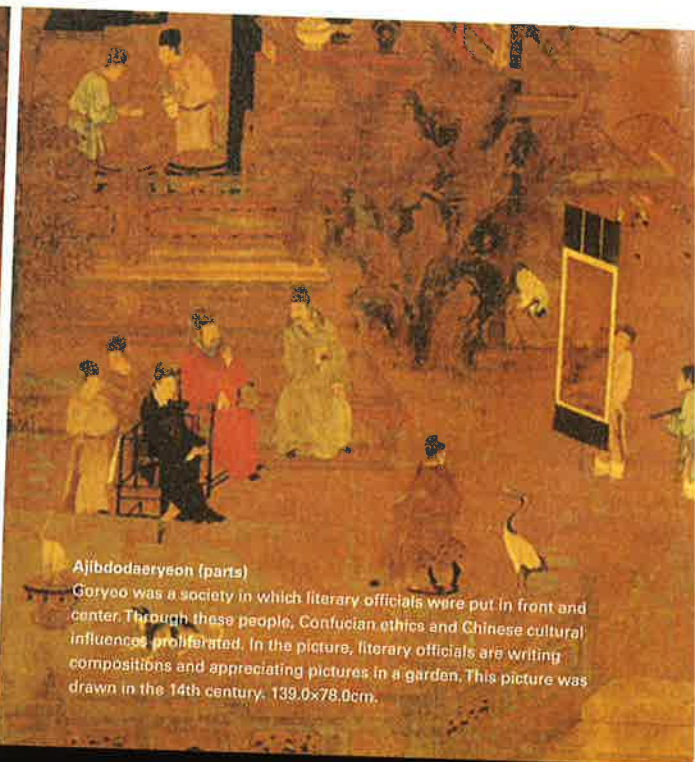
In the Gukjagam university, Confucian scriptures, historical texts, and literature were taught at the department of Confucian Studies, and teaching of laws, mathematics, medicine and foreign language was provided at the department of Technology. Examinations for both departments were held separately; those who wanted to be a civil officer applied to the Literary Exam (Mungwa), and people who were willing to be a technician applied to Miscellaneous Exam (Jabgwa). The former department tested the students' fluency in Chinese and knowledge in Confucian scriptures,

Adoption of new official employment system

Shilla's division and Goryeo's reunification can be interpreted as a process of new leaders' struggling to form a more advanced country.

The country was not to be ruled by merely a king and a few nobles. Local gentry figures who contributed to the war efforts of reuniting the country actively involved themselves in political affairs of the government. Quite a large number of these gentry figures were recognized with their achievements and were named meritorious vassals, and some others were able to receive important governmental seats for merely being members of the gentry families. And they all maintained their privileges in the areas they had been ruling.

Yet at the end of the 10th century, a new bureaucratic system of hiring officers via civil service examinations was adopted from China, and the political dynamics throughout the country started to shift accordingly. This



Aljibodaeryeon (parts)

Goryeo was a society in which literary officials were put in front and center. Through these people, Confucian ethics and Chinese cultural influences proliferated. In the picture, literary officials are writing compositions and appreciating pictures in a garden. This picture was drawn in the 14th century. 139.0x78.0cm.

new examination system, which provided opportunities to eligible officials who had passed the civil service examination, changed the overall atmosphere of the society that was accustomed to the idea of bequeathing social positions as a matter of course.

As the civil service examinations were implemented inside the Goryeo society, one's abilities were more and more acknowledged in selecting officer candidates. The opportunities were still limited, yet Goryeo's ruling system was different from its predecessors. Even the aristocrats had to serve in a governmental seat in order to maintain their privileges, and the civil service examination was the most important step in becoming an officer of the government.

Goryeo forms the foundation for a ruling system that will last for 1,000 years

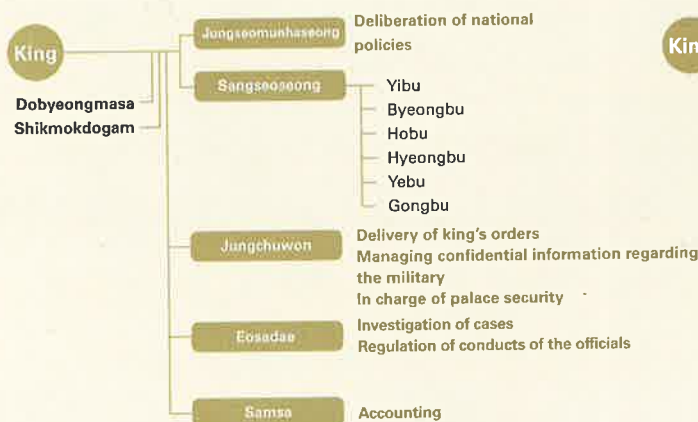
Shilla's ruling system was controlled by a small number of royal family members, until it was replaced by a new governing system of Goryeo. The reformers who led such transformation were scholars who had once studied in Tang China, or who had received systematic education. Based on profound understanding of Chinese history and Confucianism, which provided philosophical background for the new ruling system, Goryeo established the foundations of a new ruling system that would last for the next 1,000 years.

The organization of Goryeo's central government which began reforms

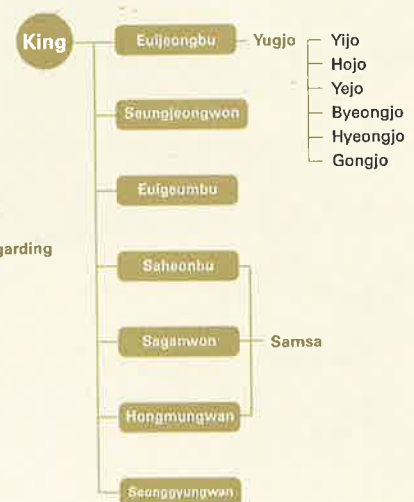
Goryeo's ruling system

The central governing system was greatly influenced by the system of three chancelleries and six boards of the Chinese Tang Dynasty. High-ranking officials reached agreements through debates and discussions and carried them out by assigning tasks to the six boards according to their specialties. This system was maintained during the Joseon dynasty period as well. The origin of the Six Boards can be found in a Confucian scripture, the "Analects of Confucian Practice (Jurye)."

Central government's organization in Goryeo



Central government's organization in Joseon

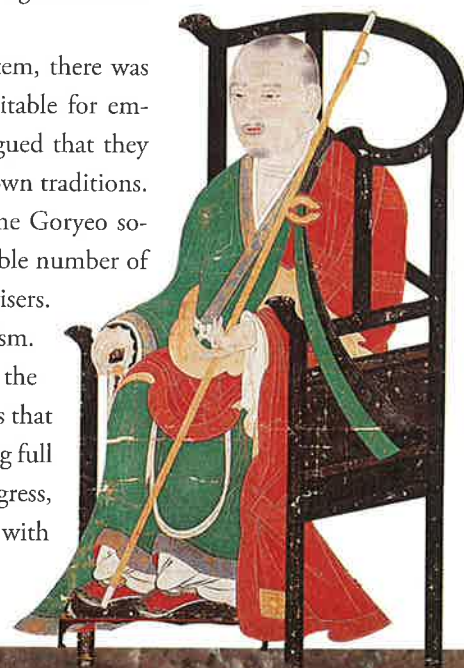


at the end of the 10th century was operated by various bodies: Chancellery for State Affairs which evaluated performance and made policies; many special departments and administrative offices which oversaw and undertook the execution of such decisions and policies, and monitors which supervised government officials and inspected their wrong doings as well as work results. Although the Goryeo governing system granted kings of absolute power and considered them as sacred persons serving the will of heaven, it also emphasized the moral duty of kings and the obligation of the officers to guide kings to righteous paths.

As Goryeo adopted the Chinese governing and legal system, there was a constant urge to change its customs into forms more suitable for embracing Confucianism. However, there were others who argued that they should preserve their unique heritages and emphasize their own traditions. Nevertheless, Buddhism became even more influential to the Goryeo society, due to the support of the royal family and a considerable number of monks who participated in government affairs as king's advisers. It was also common to find officers who believed in Taoism. Fungshui which believed that geomantic factors affected the fates of people, Totems, and Shamanism were prevailing ideas that affected the people's daily lives. So, while discussions regarding full employment of Chinese cultural aspects were actively in progress, diverse cultures and religions also coexisted harmoniously with the others inside the Goryeo society.

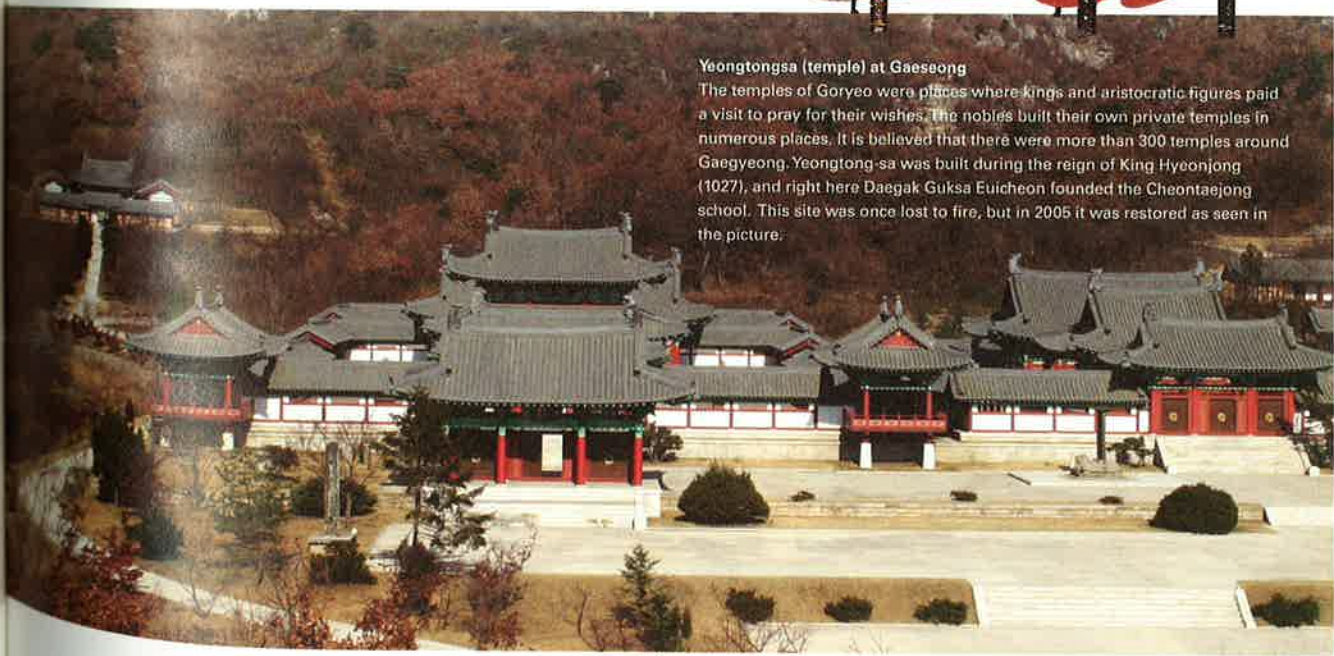
Euicheon (1055-1101)

Euicheon was the fourth son of King Munjong. He became a monk at the age of 11. He studied various Buddhist scriptures in Sung China, and embraced the world of Buddhism. All his life he tried to merge the Zen school and non-Zen school together, and he is well known for establishing the "Haedong cheontaejong" school, as part of such efforts.



Yeongtongsa (temple) at Gaeseong

The temples of Goryeo were places where kings and aristocratic figures paid a visit to pray for their wishes. The nobles built their own private temples in numerous places. It is believed that there were more than 300 temples around Gaegyeong. Yeongtong-sa was built during the reign of King Hyeonjong (1027), and right here Daegak Guksa Euicheon founded the Cheontaejong school. This site was once lost to fire, but in 2005 it was restored as seen in the picture.



Blue Celadon and Porcelain Expositions

Inlaid Blue Celadon vase with patterns of cranes flying the sky through white clouds
12th century, 42.1cm in height.

The mysterious blue tone of the Goryeo celadon, resembling the color of a clear blue sky when all clouds are gone after rain, signifies the Koreans' pride in their aesthetics of purity and loftiness. Celadon was first made in China, during the days of the Han Dynasty, and they quickly became popular items eagerly sought for and immensely enjoyed throughout not only East Asia but also around the globe. From the term in English that refers to celadon, "China," we can guess it was China where Blue Celadon was first made.

Koreans manufactured their own Blue Celadon around the 9th and 10th centuries when Shilla was replaced by Goryeo. By the 11th and 12th centuries, the Korean Blue Celadon received huge recognition with its gracious lines, magnificent color, and unique designs.

During the 12th and 13th centuries, the Goryeo celadon artists created a unique type of celadon, namely the "Sanggam Blue Celadon." It used

Porcelain Expositions

The Korean people, whose ceramic culture came to gain a worldwide reputation already in the past, annually hold "Porcelain Expositions" so that people not only from Korea but also from many other countries can experience and appreciate a variety of fine porcelain products.





Melon-shaped celadon vase
12th century, 22.7cm in height.



**Grayish blue-powdered celadon
(Buncheongsagi porcelain) with patterns of
peony vines**
15th century, 45.0cm in height.



White Celadon vase
15-16th century, 36.2cm in height.

the method of engraving patterns upon the surface. With all patterns in place, those engraved gaps were filled with another type of clay, and the porcelain was baked one more time. There were various designs including a flock of cranes soaring high in the blue sky through white clouds.

With the decline of the Goryeo Dynasty, the age of Blue Celadon ended as well. Yet, porcelain-related skills of the Korean people prevailed and led to a new era which witnessed the invention of Buncheong Celadon, White Celadon, and Cheonghwa White Celadon. Until the 16th century, Korea and China were the only countries that could produce celadon.

Celadon Cultures of Korea, China, and Japan in the 17th Century

From the 9th century and through the 17th, Korea was a leading porcelain maker alongside China. Yet at the end of the 16th century, when Japan invaded Korea, they captured many porcelain artists in order to advance their own clayware culture. Since then, the porcelain industry in Japan began to prosper, and from the 18th century, with its colorful fine porcelain products, Japan aggressively exported porcelain products to Europe and surpassed China.



**White pot with blue-lined patterns of
clouds and a dragon**
Korea, 17th century, 36cm in height.



**Dish with patterns of
Pomegranate**
Japan, 17th century, 30cm in
diameter.



**Bottle with patterns of plants,
grass, insects, flowers, and birds**
China, between the 16th and 17th
century, 55.3cm in height.

3

Northeast Asia in Turmoil: Goryeo Employs Practical Diplomacy

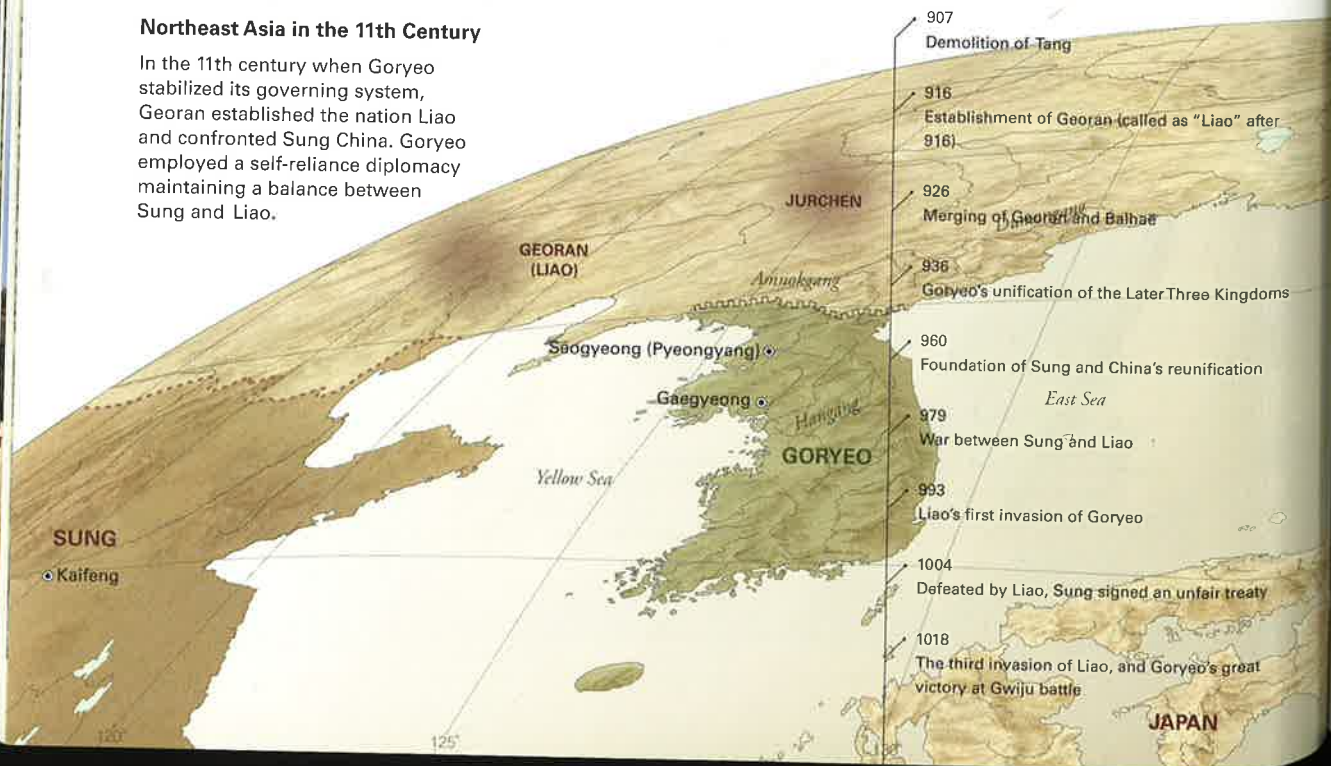
Policy enhancements in centralizing power

While Goryeo reunited the Korean Peninsula, its northwestern region was undergoing a turbulent time. After the collapse of the powerful Tang Dynasty (618~907), nomad tribes established independent kingdoms in the northern prairie and continued to compete with each other to extend their territory toward the fertile farming lands in the south.

The Liao Dynasty in the east side of the Mongol plateau and the Tungusic people who inhabited areas adjacent to the Silk Road were representative cases of such nomad tribes. Especially Liao, which had earlier demolished Balhae, advanced toward east and did not hesitate to confront Sung China. It also attacked the northeast side of Goryeo. Liao's annexation of Balhae and its battles with Sung certainly alarmed Goryeo, as we can see from the military system employed in Goryeo's early days. Goryeo's reconstruction of its own ruling system at this juncture was not a coincidental turn of events. Goryeo established a military base at the city of Pyeongyang and constructed numerous military facilities along the northern border to prepare itself from the nomads' invasion. A powerful army was trained under the king's leadership, and at the same time the policies of the central government incorporated the political power and influences of the gentries as well.

Northeast Asia in the 11th Century

In the 11th century when Goryeo stabilized its governing system, Georan established the nation Liao and confronted Sung China. Goryeo employed a self-reliance diplomacy maintaining a balance between Sung and Liao.



Goryeo battles with Liao for 30 years

It was 993, when 800,000 the Liao troops invaded Goryeo for the first time. Such attack was staged as Liao was worried that the allied forces of Goryeo and Sung might later turn into a larger threat.

While Goryeo struggled to fight against a massive army, it also attempted to end the war through diplomatic channels. Liao requested the return of the old territories of Goguryeo that Goryeo was occupying. However, Seo Hi refuted that since Goryeo was the successor of Goguryeo, a considerable amount of Liao's own land should be turned over to Goryeo.

Negotiation was accomplished without much difficulties. A peaceful relation with Liao was established, and Goryeo managed to extend its territory to the north. Seo Hi succeeded in turning this national crisis into a great opportunity to restore the old territory of Goguryeo.

After the first conflict with Liao, Goryeo maintained a peaceful attitude for the moment. Goryeo also continued political and economical exchanges with Sung China. Sung too wanted to get military support from Goryeo and maintain more frequent exchanges with Goryeo.

In the meantime, Liao, far from being content with Goryeo's friendly relationship with Sung, invaded Goryeo with 400,000 troops in 1010 and 100,000 troops in 1018 respectively. The Goryeo military firmly defended the country from Liao's attacks. Especially in the third battle of 1018, Goryeo annihilated the invaders, and thus achieving a great victory.

Goryeo, a dynasty ruled by an Emperor

Goryeo spent most of the 11th century defending itself from Liao, and in the 12th century it confronted the Jurchen. For quite some time, the Jurchen had been developing its power over Manchuria, as well as an ambition to conquer the agricultural regions. Goryeo and Sung China were determined to confront it.

The Jin dynasty of Jurchen attempted to dominate Goryeo before it confronted Sung. Though Goryeo had to make a promise that it would not ally itself with Sung against Jin, Goryeo did not succumb to Jin's coercion to terminate its diplomatic relationship with Sung entirely. Sung was eager to maintain an alliance with Goryeo, and in turn Goryeo was willing to have cultural and economical exchanges with Sung. And of course, exchanges between Goryeo and

Dragon-engraved bronze Buddhist bell
This bell was made between the 12th and 13th centuries. A figure of a dragon, a symbol of the king, is elaborately engraved upon the hanging section at the top, 40cm in height, and 26.4cm in diameter (bottom).



Jin continued as well.

Maintaining a balance in the triangular relation with Jin and Sung, Goryeo established an independent, yet highly practical diplomatic policy. The Goryeo people believed that they were living in a uniquely civilized society that was quite different from China. Goryeo's kings identified themselves as emperors, and called their princes "wang (king)." They also named the capital as "the City of Emperors," and adopted titles and customs of the Chinese emperors in their ruling system.

Goryeo is introduced as "Corea" to the world

As international relations stabilized, the cultural and economical exchanges among Goryeo, Sung, and Liao became even more frequent and active. The capital of Goryeo, Gaegyeong, was always crowded with delegates from Sung and Liao while Goryeo's diplomats were sent to those two dynasties as well. Since Goryeo admired Sung's culture so much, they pursued that particular relationship more vigorously. A large number of merchants, students, and monks were sent to Sung over sea. And many traders from Southeast Asia and the Arabic world visited Gaegyeong.

Goryeo mostly exported gold, silver, ginseng, and lacquerware while importing silk, books, and herbs from Sung. From the Arabian merchants, the Goryeo people purchased mercury and spices.

Some of the foreign merchants even took permanent residence inside

Miniature restoration of the Goryeo palace

This miniature model is a representation of the Goryeo palace that was built in 919 and burned to the ground in 1361. In 1945, the location of this palace was discovered at the southern foot of Songaksan (Mt.) in Gaeseong, and based upon the vestige, the palace's old features were restored in a miniaturized scale.



Gaegyeong. They opened stores and engaged themselves in more vigorous business activities. Byeokkrannaru which was always frequented by a large contingent of foreign merchants developed into an international port, and the Gaegyeong capital shaped up as a cosmopolitan city. Through such progress, Goryeo's name began to spread throughout the world, and the Europeans began to call it "Corea (Goryeo)," which is the previous term to the current name "Korea."

Two different spellings, Coreia and Korea, have been used to spell the name Korea. Coreia seems to have come from the word "Kao-li," which appears in West Asian books of the 14th century. Later, in the middle of the 16th century, more frequent usages of 'Core' or 'Coreia' are found in European travel journals and navigation maps. 'Korea' was mostly used in English-speaking countries around the end of the 19th century.

Boats and Vessels in the Goryeo Period

Both transportation of collected taxes and International trades were made through the sea route. Records from the 10th century confirm that 300-ton class warships were already made back then. In the 13th century, when the allied forces of Goryeo and Mongol invaded Japan, the vessels are described to have been large enough for even horses to run on the ship. According to records, total of 900 ships of that size were all constructed in merely four months. Goryeo technicians also installed canons on their ships, for the first time in Korea.



Bronze mirror with the figure of a ship inscribed

In the upper side of the mirror, four letters, "Hwangbichangcheon," which means a 'Bright and opened sky,' were inscribed, alongside a figure of a ship that was about to hoist its sails and travel through the gushing waves. These types of Chinese mirrors were widely produced during the time of Sung and Jin, and such mirrors were also made by Goryeo. So it seems highly possible that there had been active oversea trades between Goryeo and China.

Goryeo ink stick

Goryeo ink sticks and paper were hugely popular items in Sung China. This picture is an ink stick that was discovered at the Myeongam-dong, Cheongju area. There are four letters, "丹山烏玉 (Dansanohok)" which indicates that this particular ink stick was a high-quality one produced in the Danyang area.



Restored ship of Goryeo

Goryeo Believed in Buddha and Respected Confucius

The summer is gone, and we are already in the middle of autumn, yet we still thirst for rain. Is it because I have not led the people properly, or is this due to my lack of ability as a king? Did I judge properly, and ordered punishments and awards suitably? When I first began to govern, I opened the prison doors and freed prisoners, avoided staying in a luxurious palace, reduced the number of dishes on my dining table, and prayed to mother nature with all my heart. But still it isn't raining, and the drought is getting worse. Due to my lack of virtue to govern my people, they came to suffer this severe drought. So I would like to express my concern for farming, by opening a public event for the elderly people. —*Goryeosa* (The History of Goryeo)



Stellar observatory near the palace

This is the Goryeo stellar observatory, which was located in the west side of the emperor's palace at Gaeseong. A three-square-meter stone board is placed on the top of the three-meter stone pillars. It is presumed that there was originally a stone handrail placed upon it. Interpreting the Heaven's order correctly and informing the people of it was considered to be an important duty of the king.

This story is from a section inside *Goryeosa*, which recorded an event of 991. Whenever a king moaned over a difficult time, he repented all his mistakes or wrong doings, and then swore reformation in his future administration. Such stories are from the Chinese classic *Seogyeong*.

This book suggests the principle of Confucian governing, and describes the king as "the subject who received the power to connect Heaven and people by carrying out the principles of Heaven." It also depicts the king to be having responsibility and obligation to use his power for the sake of his own people's happiness. It is also said, "If a king cannot accomplish this duty, Heaven will warn him through various natural disasters." From this story, we can tell that the Goryeo people considered every natural phenomenon as 'incidents' that were caused for a specific reason. Also, this forced the kings to reevaluate their own actions and find out what they were doing wrong or against the principle of Heaven.

Based on *Goryeosa*, we can tell that diverse rituals were performed at the time in order to pray for rain. Buddhist monks led such praying events at temples, while Taoist practitioners prayed for rain through their religious ceremonies called "Jaecho". They also prayed for rain at renowned mountains and rivers.

In Goryeo there was a saying, "At home is Buddha and outside is Confucius." This indicates that though the theoretical foundation of the political administration was based upon Confucianism, the people were in no way reluctant to worship Buddhism. There was also another saying which dictated that in order to rule the dynasty in balance, the three ideologies, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, should be in place like a pot with three legs. The Goryeo people believed practicing Confucianism would be beneficial for the country with all its Chinese cultural aspects, yet they also respected their own traditions. They indeed had an open attitude toward alternative ideas.

◀ Village shrine

Goryeo was a society of multiple religions. Not only did Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism co-exist, but also folk beliefs had its prevalence. In every village and community there was a guarding god, and accordingly there was a worshipping shrine ("Seonghwang") as well. In the Goryeo society, people also relied upon the superstitious power of the female shamans, and they also believed that famous mountains and rivers had a spiritual power. The picture shows a village shrine, an indicator of prevailing superstitious beliefs.



Mireukhasaenggyeong Byeonsangdo (above)

A king and officials worshipping a stone statue of Maitreya can be seen in the picture. 14th century, 176.0x91.0cm.

The Picture of Constellation on the ceiling of the Gongminwangreung mausoleum (below)

In the time of Goryeo, ritual ceremonies that worshipped Heaven and constellations were common practices. Such ceremonies were called "Jaecho." The Dipper was especially the most representative object to be worshipped.

1135 ~ 1380

1145

Kim Bu-shik completed writing *Sanguksagi* which is the oldest book of Korean history remaining today. This book is essential in studying the ancient history of Korea.

1170

Military generals eliminated many civilian officers and took power. Since then, military despotism continued for over a hundred years.

1206

Genghis Khan united the Mongols.

1231

Mongol invaded Goryeo. Goryeo suffered total of six Mongol invasions ever since.

1270

Goryeo made a treaty agreement with Mongol and began to suffer foreign intervention for over 80 years.

1279

The Chinese South Sung Dynasty was demolished.

1285

Il-yeon authored *Samgukyusa*. He introduced various religions and cultures of Three Kingdoms, and especially the history of Gojoseon in this book.

1308

The national university changed its name to Seonggyungwan, and Confucian education was enhanced. Around this time Neo-Confucianism ("Seongrihak") has been widely introduced.

1337

In Europe, the Hundred Years War began (~1453).

1351

King Gongminwang ascended the throne. He successfully carried out a movement to regain Goryeo's independence confronting the Yuan Dynasty.

1377

Jikji was printed with movable metal printing types of Goryeo.



V A New Historical Perspective Formed Through Struggles Against Foreign Powers

In the early 13th century, Goryeo was invaded by the Mongols who were sweeping ruthlessly through the world. During forty years of resistance and another eighty years of intervention, Goryeo had to suffer much. And in the face of such crises and hardship, all the Goryeo people started to endeavor to look for a common ancestry of themselves, instead of claiming that they were the successors of Goguryeo or Baekje or Shilla. Compared to the Mongol invasions the difference between themselves was trivial. Their will to overcome the difference and be united was greater than the importance they placed on their past identities. The people of Goryeo rediscovered the significance of the Gojoseon's foundation, and considered themselves as a country which began to develop its own culture as early as China and its culture.

The Gyeongpango storage facility where the "Tripitaka Koreana" is preserved While struggling against the Mongol, the Goryeo people created woodblocks to print the Buddhist scriptures so that they could overcome their own difficulties with the help and power of Buddha. The picture is the Gyeongpango storage facility at Gyeongsangnam-do province's Hapcheon Haeinsa (temple), which was designed to preserve the woodblocks from being deformed for over 800 years.

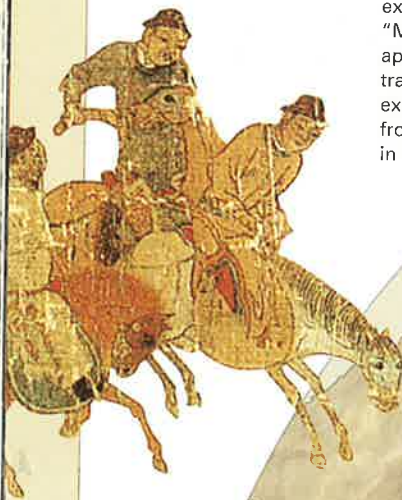
Cultural Exchanges Between Goryeo and the Mongol Empire

Genghis Khan established the Mongol Empire after unifying various nomadic tribes in 1206. His troops, the Mongol invasion force, literally swept through Eurasia. Goryeo as well had to suffer such invasions for about 40 years, and continued to resist it desperately. The Eurasian continent became one under the Mongolian order, and Goryeo became part of such order while retaining a level of independence.

The residents of the Eurasian continent shared such order through exchanges. The capital of the Yuan Empire became the main hub of international activities which connected many cities throughout the world. In this capital, a variety of cultures came in contact and blended with each other, while diverse people of different faces and backgrounds closely associated with each other. The Goryeo people corroborated this trend as well while maintaining its own culture, and accordingly, Yuan's tradition also spread over to Goryeo.

"Mongolpung (Mongol Style)" and "Goryeoyang (Goryeo Fashions)"

Various foreign cultures were introduced to Goryeo through the country's active exchanges with Yuan. Mongolian clothes and Mongolian hair-style featuring the so-called "Mongolpung" were in fashion, and new words that came from the Mongolian language appeared in Korean vocabulary too. A new genre of art appeared as well when religious traditions of Mongol were introduced to the Goryeo society. And in the meantime, exchanges between the two countries showed not one but two directions. As we can see from the word "Goryeoyang," cultural aspects that displayed 'styles' of Goryeo prevailed in Beijing as well.



Jokduri and Yeonji

Jokduri, a crown-like headpiece that Korean brides used to wear in wedding ceremonies, actually originated from the outdoor hats used by Mongolian women. The custom of Yeonji, a red dot make-up put upon the bride's cheeks, also originated from Mongolian customs.



Black Sea

Caspian Sea

Arab Sea

Arabian Sea



Cotton

Mun Ik-jeom, who was dispatched to Yuan as an official emissary, brought back some seeds of cotton to Goryeo upon his return. After succeeding in cultivating cotton, he happened to meet a monk from Mongolia and was able to learn from him how to make threads and how to weave cloth. Cotton textiles which came to be widely produced in Joseon were one of the most favorite merchandises that the Japanese were eager to purchase.

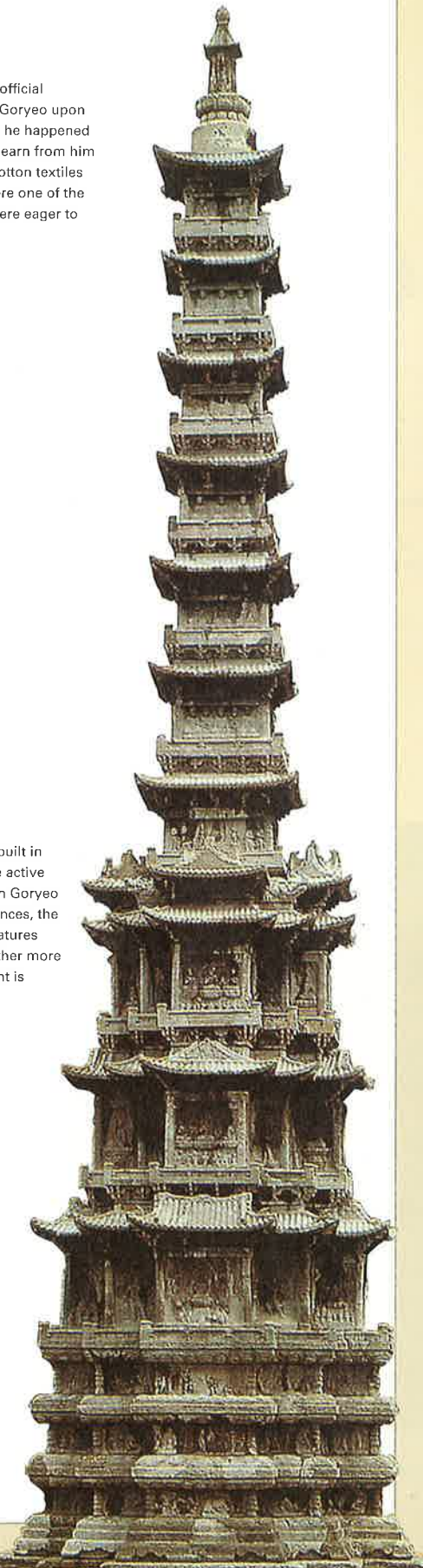
Sojugori (Soju Distiller)

Soju, the Koreans' most favorite liquor, came from Yuan. Soju was produced by a method of distilling that the Mongol people learned during their invasion of West Asia. Then it was introduced to Koreans while the Mongol troops were stationed inside Goryeo.



The Gyeongcheonsa (temple) Pagoda

It is a ten-tier stone pagoda built in 1348. At the time, there were active Buddhist exchanges between Goryeo and Yuan. Due to such influences, the pagoda shows distinctive features which set itself apart from other more traditional pagodas. Its height is 13.5m.



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Arabian Sea

1

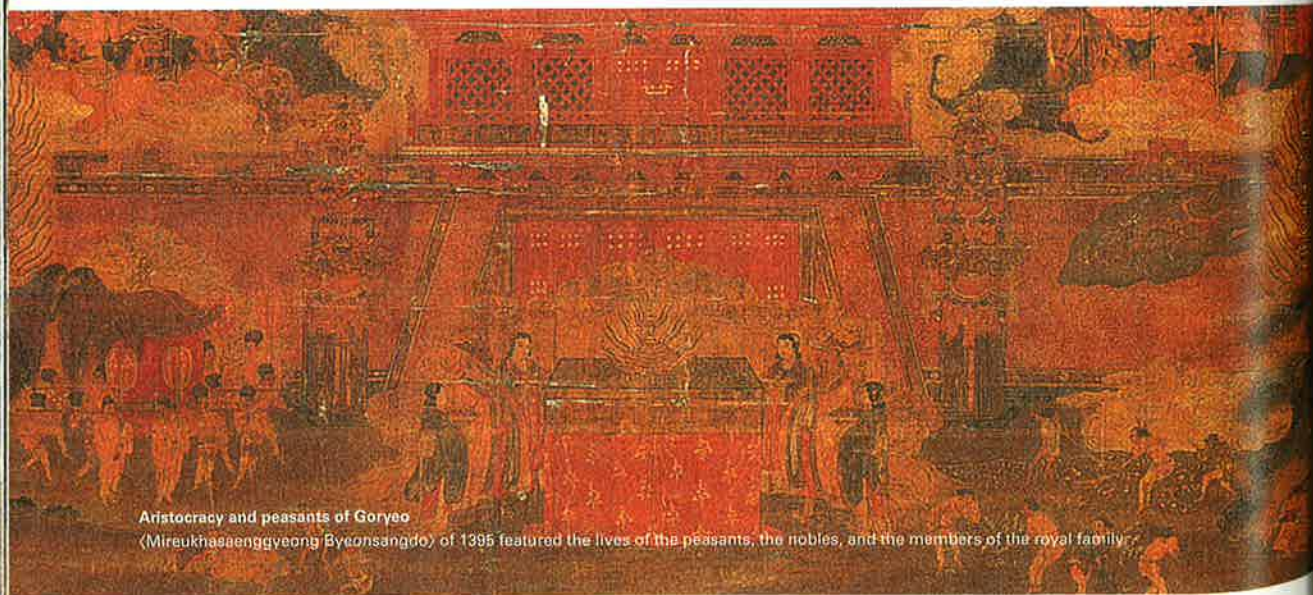
“Liberate the Slaves of Samhan!”

The sad story of Jungmijeong

Jungmijeong was a gorgeous pavilion of the Goryeo Dynasty. ...When it was under construction, people who were constructing it had to bring their own lunch to work. However, there was a man who was too poor to bring his own lunch, so others shared their lunch with him. One day his wife came to see him and said, “Please share this food with the other workers.” Perplexed, the husband asked, “How did you get this? Did you have an affair with another man? Or did you steal it?” When her angry husband demanded an answer, the poor wife answered, “Who would want such an ugly woman like me? And do I have a nerve to steal something from others? I sold my long hair to buy this.” She unveiled her hair to show her husband. He couldn’t eat the meal, for his throat was choking with sorrow. His colleagues were also moved to tears, at the couple’s tragic poverty. — *Goryeosajeoljo*

Peasants were obligated to pay one tenth of their harvest as a tax, and their special local products as well. They were also required to provide free labor for construction projects of the government. Agricultural productivity was so low at the time that the peasants had to suffer a meager living. When a lean year came, their entire lives were threatened.

However, the life of slaves, who were at the bottom of the food chain and social hierarchy, was even



Aristocracy and peasants of Goryeo
(Mireukhasaenggyeong Byeonsangdo) of 1395 featured the lives of the peasants, the nobles, and the members of the royal family.

more terrible than that of the peasants. While some of them inherited their slave status, others voluntarily became slaves to feed themselves and escape starvation. They were all poorly treated as a human being. The poor were always required to pay sacrifice for the comfortable lives of the kings and vassals.

Trembling aristocracy

In the 11th century, the society of Goryeo was stabilized, and peaceful time continued. And in that process, a few powerful families gradually monopolized power and wealth.

While the nobles residing in the capital enjoyed luxurious lives, the window of opportunities for the local officials to be promoted to an official position in the central government became narrower. While the positions and status of the literary officers became more and more stabilized, the importance of the role and functions of the military officers were neglected and disdained. Accordingly, the monopoly of power by a small number of civil officers resulted in an increase in corruption and exploitations of the people.

In 1135, influential characters of Seogyeong, the second largest city of the country (Today's Pyongyang) staged an insurrection demanding a political reform and the moving of the capital to Seogyeong. Under the slogan of overthrowing the central power, a number of people participated in the revolt, and this resistance prevailed in the northwest area of Goryeo for over an entire year.



The Goryeo Dynasty class system

In Goryeo, switching one's social class was a little more lenient, even though the nobles maintained their privileges by holding official positions in the government. The class system of Goryeo was more 'open' than that of Shilla. However, there were many people who were regarded as personal properties of other individuals or the government.

Statues of literary and military officers at the Gongminwangreung mausoleum

There were two types of high-ranking officers in Goryeo and Joseon dynasties. Literary officers who studied Confucian scriptures, history, literature were responsible for legislating and implementing laws. On the other hand, military officers were in charge of commanding the army. In Goryeo and Joseon societies, where Confucian ethics were emphasized in politics, literary officers were always at the center of power, and it was almost impossible for the military officers to rise to the highest echelon of the government.



In 1170 a military uprising by those who suffered from discrimination challenged the existing social order. Military officers killed many literary officers, seized power, and dethroned the king. Many low-ranking officers and soldiers also participated in revolting against those in power, as they as well had been exploited by the state.

100 years of the military regime

After the revolt of the military, the Goryeo society was in chaos, and the leaders of the military fought among themselves for power. Revolts against the military broke out in many areas as well.

Although a military ruling system was established, neither “decentralization” nor ‘feudalism’ that appeared in the Middle Ages of Europe was formed in Goryeo. Goryeo maintained a central government with the king at its center. And ongoing wars with foreign countries hindered such development of feudalism.

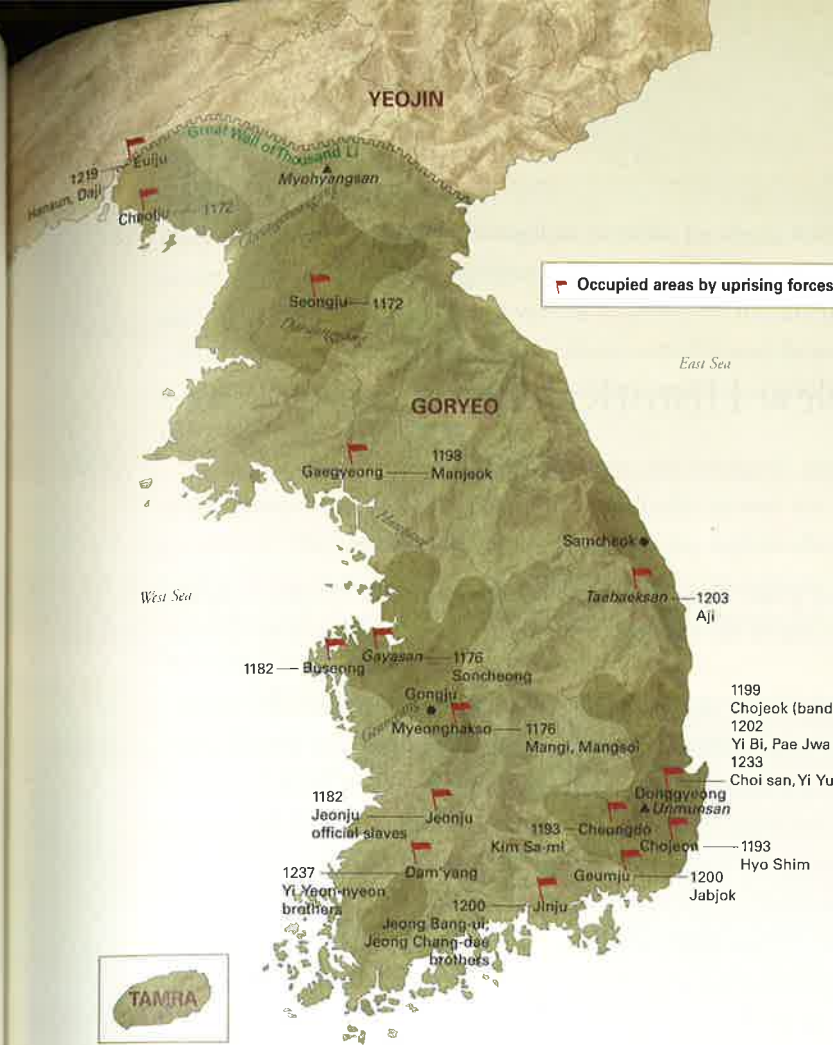
The military officers maintained power by training their private army and holding exclusive authority over official appointments. However, the royal Wang lineage prevailed, and the overall institutions of governance (including the class system) remained unchanged.

As power became important virtues, the road to opportunities of elevating one’s social position was widely open, especially for those who were not born into noble families. Transfers between classes were more active than any other time periods. Even a soldier who had risen to an official position from a slave class could succeed in becoming the most powerful man in the government.

Popular uprisings for reform

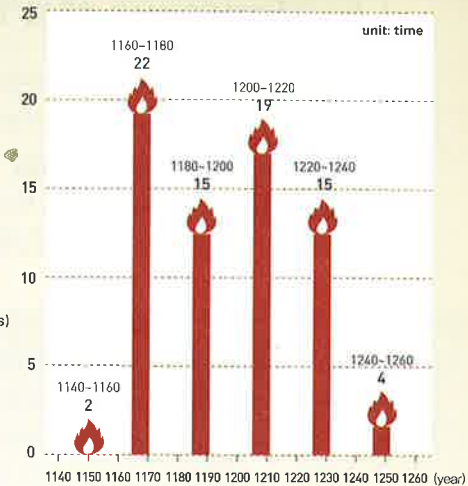
In the 12th century, repetitive power struggles resulted in the weakening of the central political authority. The people who had long suffered unfairness and discrimination finally protested to change the world and reform the society, being encouraged with the social atmosphere that encouraged active shifts in class.

After the 1170s, numerous revolts occurred all over the Goryeo society. Some rebels executed the local officers in protest of exploitations and heavy taxation. Others raided into the central government in an accusation of resorting to discriminating practices. Especially the slaves who suffered most at the bottom of the social hierarchical order were determined to die with



People's Uprising

People's uprisings took the form of resistance against the aristocracy in Gaegyeong, and spread throughout the country, in all social classes.



People's uprisings between the 12th and 13th centuries

People's uprising got more fierce ever since the 1170s, and continued through the Mongol invasion in the 1230s.

honor rather than surrender in disgrace; "Are these emperors and aristocrats as well as generals and ministers born into power because their blood is different from that of the common people? ... Let us get rid of this unfair social hierarchy in the Korean Peninsula!" Manjeok screamed, as he ruthlessly attacked the capital Gaegyeong.

At the center of the old territories of Shilla and Baekje, "Restoration" movements emerged. Those who were involved in this movement refused to acknowledge the legitimacy in Goryeo's foundation. The exclusive political system that was only favoring the aristocracy residing in the capital, resulted in this defiance.

The people's rebellion ended in failure. But their attacks against those in power contributed to a certain level to narrowing the social gap between classes and reducing the exploitations and taxation.

2

Development of a New Historical Perspective

Samguksagi and Samgukyusa

Current studies of ancient Korean history greatly depend on two important historical records. *Samguksagi* compiled by Kim Bu-shik in the middle of the 12th century, and *Samgukyusa* authored by Il-yeon in the end of the 13th century.

These two history books dealt with stories of the three kingdoms, Goguryeo, Baekje, and Shilla. However, the focuses of these books are quite different from each other; the former was written with the belief that historical studies should contribute to accomplishing Confucian virtues, while the latter more emphasized Buddhism and 'miscellaneous' traditions. Also, while the former placed more value on depicting the history of the three kingdoms, the latter described the history of Balhae with details, and also the legend of Gojoseon's foundation.

What would have been the reason for all these different focuses? The Goryeo people must have become desperate to find their own origin and identities, and expanded their quest to not only the area of historical facts but also to the realms of myths.



Samguksagi (left) and Samgukyusa (right)

Samguksagi was written by a renowned Confucian scholar. It is the most representative history book in Korea ever written by one, and it was an authentic history book that adopted the format of the Chinese ones. On the other hand, *Samgukyusa* was written in a more liberal form and style, and it intended to 'supplement' and 'complement' the contents of the previous 'orthodox' history books. The former rests more on factual accounts, while the latter shows a tendency of highlighting certain mystical portions of the history.

The Mongolian invasions

Goryeo suffered the terrible Mongolian invasion for about half a century before Il-yeon authored *Samgukyusa*. Although the people of Goryeo resisted the Mongolian advances at various fortresses located along Goryeo's northern border, the Mongol troops circumvented it and demanded surrender by besieging the capital. The military regime surrendered to the powerful Mongolian cavalry.

The war seemed to have ended. However, the Mongols' unreasonable terms agitated the Goryeo people, so they finally moved the capital to Ganghwapdo (Is.), determined to continue fighting against the Mongols. So the Mongols invaded Goryeo again. Many Goryeo people were brutally killed, plundered, and were also relocated to the Mongol territory and forced to become slaves.

People had to fight for their own lives. They never hesitated to fight in such desperate situations when death was certain. Although in many cases civilians and soldiers were entirely massacred, there were other battles as well where people accomplished legendary triumphs.

The Mongol invasion of East Asia

In the early 13th century, after the Mongols united their tribes, they established a grand empire that extended from the prairies of their home territory to the farming lands of many regions. Jin (Jurchen) Dynasty and Chinese Sung Dynasty were invaded, and so were Goryeo and Japan.

- 1206 Unification of the Mongols
- 1219-1225 Mongol expeditions to West Asia and Central Asia
- 1231 Mongol's first invasion of Goryeo
- 1236 The Mongols demolished the united European army at Poland
- 1259 Goryeo and the Mongols signed a peace treaty
- 1274 The first Mongol invasion of Japan
- 1281 The second Mongol invasion of Japan



Especially in the battles of Cheoinseong and Chungjuseong, the lowborn people who had been discriminated against for a long time, crushed the Mongol troops and forced them to withdraw.

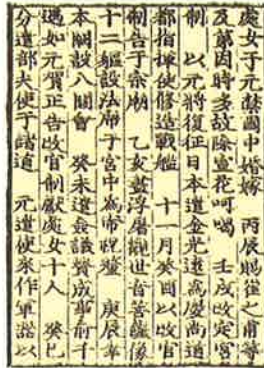
Continuing torment

In 1259, Goryeo and the Mongols agreed to a ceasefire. The new “Yuan” Emperor Qubilai Khan promised Goryeo that he would respect its independence. With the assistance of the Mongols, the Goryeo royal family returned to Gaegyeong.

However, not all the Goryeo people agreed on the treaty. Especially the military which had been in power for the last hundred years strongly protested. So, the newly organized Goryeo army, allied with the Yuan military troops, had to suppress them.

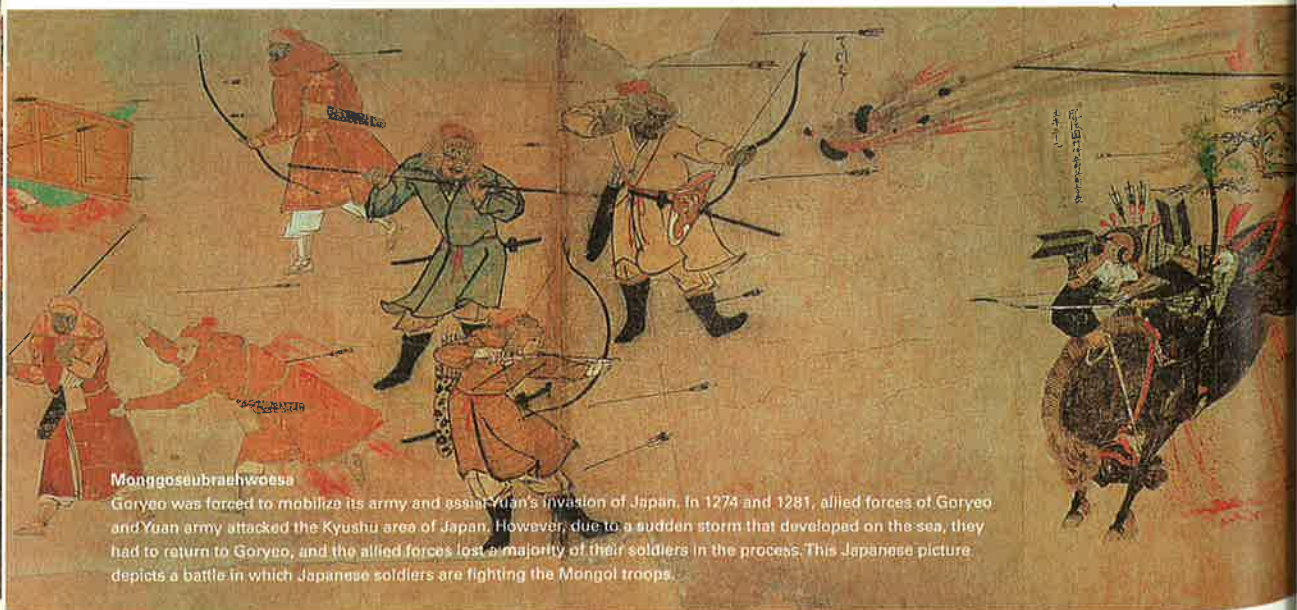
And then, the Goryeo society entered a new and more difficult period. Yuan requested Goryeo’s assistance in their preparation of the Japanese campaign, and many Goryeo people were mobilized into unendurable working conditions. Yuan also took control of a large region inside Goryeo and ordered a variety of tributes to be annually submitted. They even demanded young girls to be delivered as gifts known as ‘Gongnyeo.’

Yuan’s promise of guaranteeing the independence of Goryeo was often breached and violated. Many attempts were made to assimilate Goryeo into Yuan’s territory, and many of the kings were put in the throne, then forced to descend from it, in a repetitive fashion, at the will and mercy of the Yuan government.



Gongnyeo

Mongol's requests for Gongnyeo females that continued for decades ultimately changed the marriage custom of Goryeo. To avoid being drafted as a Gongnyeo figure, formed in the ending days of the Goryeo Dynasty was a custom of 'early marriage,' in which young girls aged only 13 or 14 would be married to boys aged merely 9 or 10. This picture shows references to Gongnyeo figures from inside Goryeosa (The History of Goryeo).



Mongol invasion of Goryeo

Goryeo was forced to mobilize its army and assist Yuan's invasion of Japan. In 1274 and 1281, allied forces of Goryeo and Yuan attacked the Kyushu area of Japan. However, due to a sudden storm that developed on the sea, they had to return to Goryeo, and the allied forces lost a majority of their soldiers in the process. This Japanese picture depicts a battle in which Japanese soldiers are fighting the Mongol troops.

Such hardship and suffering certainly had its toll upon the Goryeo people. They came to form a different perspective on their identity and history.

The aftermath of the Mongol war

Gojoseon and its founder “Dangun” were never fully recognized in Kim Bu-shik’s *Samguksagi*. At the time, most of the people still identified themselves as the descendants of the three kingdoms, Shilla, Baekje, and Goguryeo respectively. The “Restoration” movement to reconstruct Shilla and Baekje persisted, while the royal family of Goryeo claimed themselves as the successors of Goguryeo. However, in the process of confronting Yuan invasions, the people of Goryeo came to drop their ideas of bearing distinctive historical lineages, realizing that such difference was a trivial one in the presence of the Mongols’ invasion. They also realized that only by overcoming those differences they would be able to withstand the Mongols’ attacks.

Samgukyusa from the 1280s acknowledged Dangun’s foundation of Gojoseon as the beginning of their own history, and presented a new perspective which considered all the descendants of the three kingdoms as the offspring of Gojoseon.

Finally, 600 years after Shilla’s unification of the Korean Peninsula, all the people residing in it came to identify themselves as members of a homogeneous race. Apparently, the name “Joseon,” the dynasty which succeeded Goryeo was not chosen by accident.

Yi Je-hyeon and Mun Ik-jeom

In Daedo, the capital of Yuan (today’s Beijing), a variety of languages were used. At the time, the Korean Peninsula’s relationship with China was more than amicable. A number of Goryeo people resided in the capital, and many Mongol people established permanent settlements inside Goryeo as well.

Yi Je-hyeon visited a number of places in Yuan while spending many years at the Daedo capital. Although he experienced the mainstream of Yuan’s culture, he also tried to maintain the identity of Goryeo, which had a language and culture distinctly different from those of Yuan. Through active interactions he introduced Neo-Confucianism developed by Southern Sung scholars to Goryeo. Many Goryeo officials who served the government in its ending days learned from Yi’s lectures.

Mun Ik-jeom was a secretary who accompanied the Goryeo envoy dispatched to Yuan. Having been wrongly accused, he was exiled to the border of Yuan. When he was released from exile, he secretly brought several cotton seeds on his way back home. He succeeded in cultivating cotton despite of many difficulties, and he contributed to the devising of a cotton thread and the building of a spinning wheel with the help of a Mongol monk. His efforts enabled a huge leap of improvement in the Korean people’s clothes.



Yi Je-hyeon (1287-1367)



Mun Ik-jeom (1329-1398)



Jikji, and the Museum of Archaic Printing

Before printing techniques were ever invented, people had to copy books with their own hands. However, the innovation of printing skills removed such inconveniences.

In the early days, woodblock printing skills were used. First they inscribed one or two pages of contents, or even contents from an entire scroll, and then used those woodblocks to produce multiple copies. Although they were very helpful, it was not easy to carve all the letters on the block. In cases of producing only 20 to 30 copies, handwriting was more effective and efficient.

Printing skills were dramatically advanced, thanks to the invention of the movable metal type printing. People used them in publishing books by assembling them and then arranging them, according to the content of the books. It was always convenient to print book with movable metal types, regardless of the number of copies printed.

Koreans used woodblocks in the middle of the 8th century, and the first book printed with a movable metal type in Korea came out in the 13th century. The Korean Buddhist scripture *Jikji* is the oldest work remaining today printed with movable metal types in 1377. As a collection of Buddhist scriptures and teachings, it was printed at Heungdeoksa (temple) in Cheongju, where now the Museum of Archaic Printing is offering exhibitions of the ancient times' printing process.



Goryeo's metal types of Chinese letters, "顛 (Jeon)" (left) and "獲 (Bok)" (right)



Jikji Printing blocks (woodblocks), and a photographed edition
Jikji was published by a monk named Baegun (1298–1374) in 1372, and it is currently in custody of the National Library of France.



The Tripitaka woodblock [Tripitaka Koreana at the Haeinsa (Temple)]

Tripitaka Koreana is a collection of Buddhist books that organized and categorized Buddhist scriptures in order. This collection of Buddhist books included not only the Buddhist scriptures in Goryeo but also those in China and Japan. This accomplishment was made possible due to the advancement of research methods and also a spectacular printing technology. Two pages of contents were carved upon a single piece of woodblock. Total of 81,258 pieces of woodblock were created for this Tripitaka, and they contain approximately 52,000,000 individual letters. Goryeo people's religious passion to repel the Mongol troops with the power of Buddha contributed to the production of this Tripitaka. It has already been designated as a World Heritage, along with the storage facility where it has been preserved.

The Process of Printing with Movable Metal Types

Woodblock printing was of course an extremely convenient way to print books. However, when only a limited number of copies were needed, printing by metal movable types proved to be more efficient. They were used by temples or the government engaged in printing projects. Unfortunately, the employment of this technique was not able to spark wide distribution of knowledge throughout the general population.



① Selecting the letter [character] model ② Pasting the model on a wooden block ③ Carving letters ④ Making a brass frame



⑤ Pouring boiled iron ⑥ Completed metal types ⑦ Typesetting [composition, arrangement] ⑧ Printing

How-
 of con-
 copies.
 ducing



Chinese letters,
 "Book" (right)

3

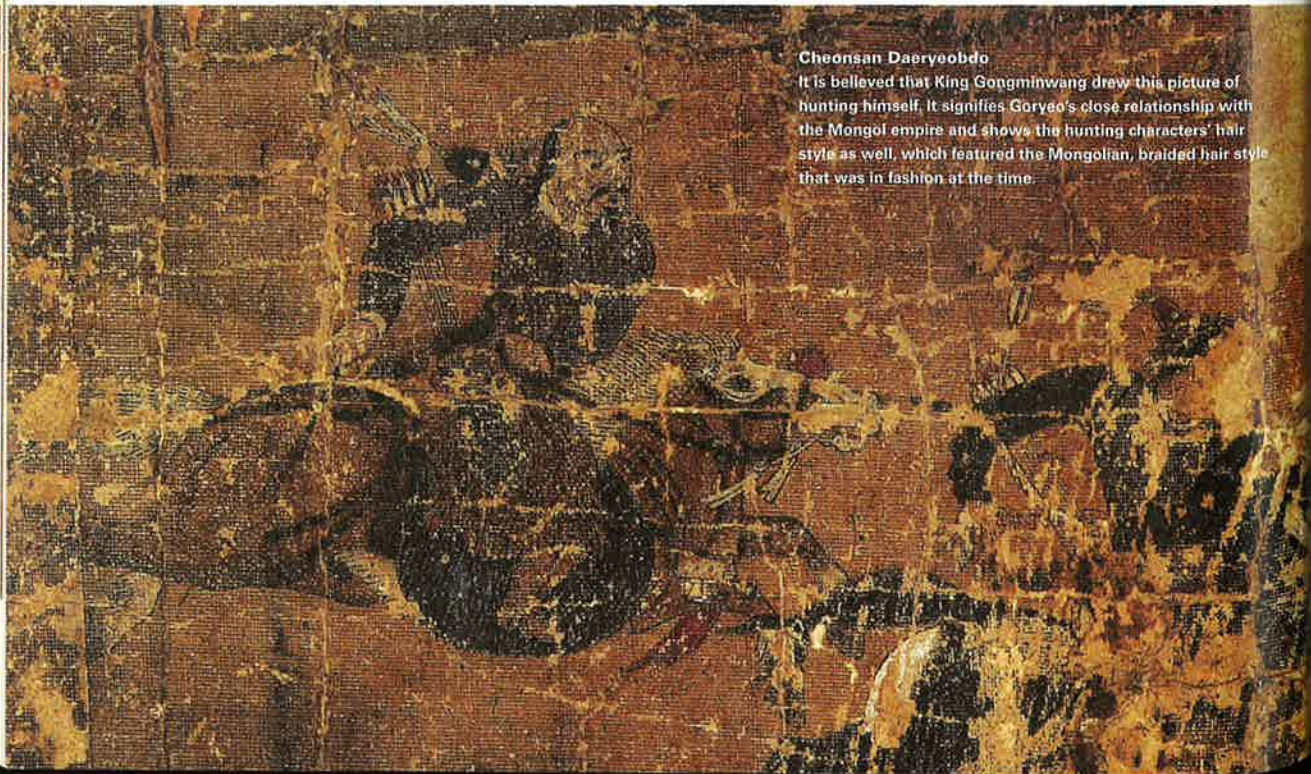
Rise of the Reformers Dreaming of a New World

King Gongminwang raises the flag against Yuan

In 1351, the emperor of Yuan decided to bestow the throne of Goryeo to King Gongminwang. Having resided in Yuan for 10 years, King Gongminwang returned to Goryeo with his wife, a princess of Yuan.

Four years later, a delegate came from his father-in-law's country. Yuan requested him to send Goryeo's army to repress numerous revolts in Yuan, placing King Gongminwang in a dilemma. He did not want to send his army, but he was concerned about Yuan's probable response as well. And during his 10 years of residence in Yuan, he clearly witnessed that civil frustration and resistance against the Yuan government was getting stronger.

Nevertheless, he was not able to turn down Yuan's demands. Such demands only made it clear for King Gongminwang that the Yuan government's power was indeed waning. In the following year, he began to lead a resistance movement against Yuan. He abolished Yuan's liaison offices which were built to intervene in domestic political affairs of Goryeo. He also attacked the Yuan army bases located at the north to recover the northeastern area where Yuan used to rule directly for 100 years. Then he also banned the customs of Mongol from being used in Goryeo.



Cheonsan Daeryeobdo
It is believed that King Gongminwang drew this picture of hunting himself. It signifies Goryeo's close relationship with the Mongol empire and shows the hunting characters' hair style as well, which featured the Mongolian, braided hair style that was in fashion at the time.



*** Borderline at the time of King Gongminwang's enthronement
 Cheollijangseong (A Wall of Thousand Li units)
 Territories expanded in the 1350s
 Territories expanded in the 1370s

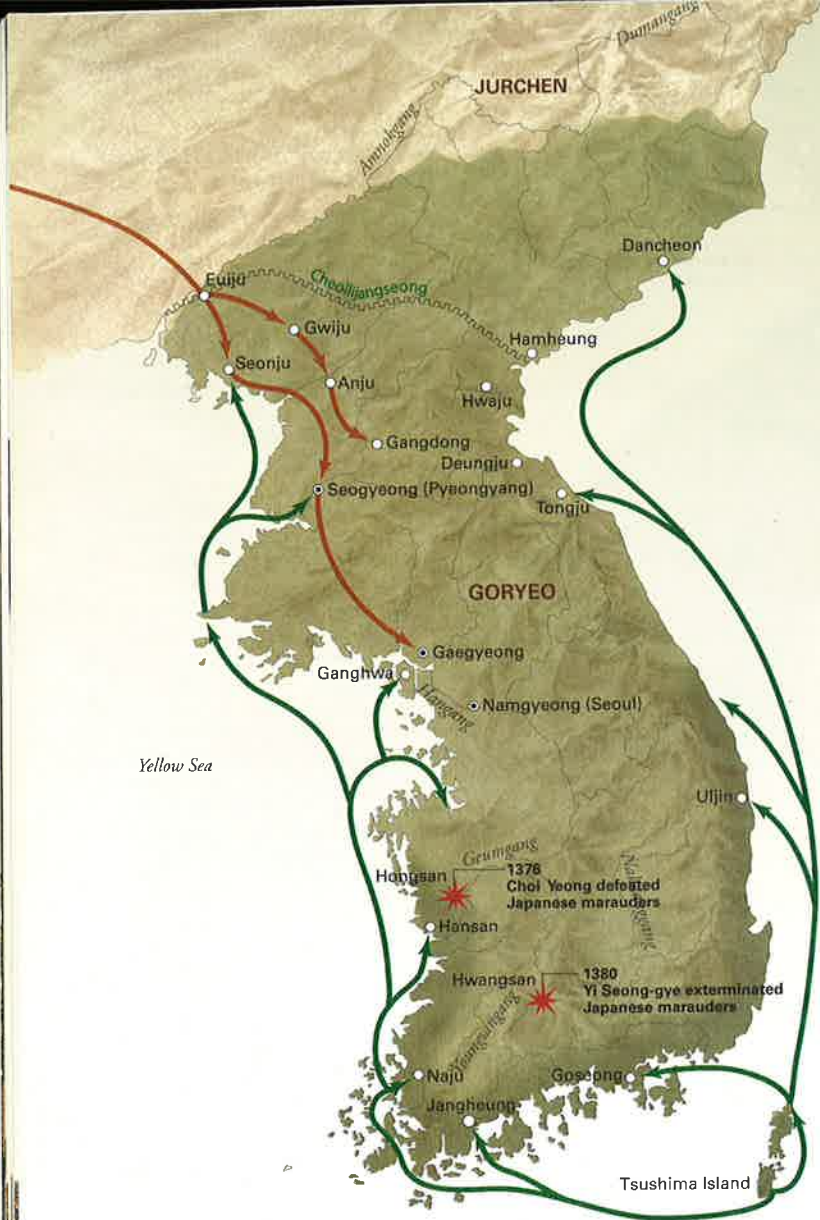
King Gongminwang's recovery of Goryeo's old territories

Although the Mongols approved Goryeo's maintaining of its independence, they still intervened in internal affairs of Goryeo by establishing the Jeongdong Haengseong provincial government, and they also took direct control of some areas inside Goryeo territory. Dongnyeongbu in Seogyeong, Ssangseong Chonggwanbu headquarters at Yeongheung, and the Tamra Chonggwanbu headquarters at Jeju-do (Is.), were all associated with such intentions and ruling. Dongnyeongbu and Tamra Chonggwanbu were dismantled not before long, and the regions were returned to Goryeo, but it took one hundred years until Ssangseong Chonggwanbu was returned to Goryeo, as a result of King Gongminwang's preemptive strike. It was also this time when the family of Yi Seong-gye, who later became the founding king of Joseon, began to earn a countrywide reputation, for his cooperation with the efforts of the Goryeo government.

Yuan angrily opposed these actions and dispatched an army to replace the king. However, King Gongminwang eliminated powerful nobles who were in alliance with Yuan and triumphed against the invaders. Finally, he terminated Yuan's interventions in the internal affairs of Goryeo, which had lasted for over 80 years.

Trembling reforms; continuous invasions from the Red Turban rebels and Japanese marauders

Having succeeded in pushing Yuan back to the north, King Gongmin-wang was determined to reform the economic and social systems of Goryeo. For the last 80 years, under the pressure of Yuan, the society of Goryeo had become severely corrupted. Only those who were favored by Yuan were able to hold power and privileges. Many nobles and officials showed little concern about the lives of their own people, and instead concentrated their energies on keeping Yuan content. Gradually, more and more land was seized by the powerful, and the peasants who lost their source of income



Invasion of the Japanese marauders

The plundering of the Wae marauders began in the 1350s, and between the 1370s and 80s it pushed Goryeo into a serious crisis. Their bases were located either at the Tsushima Island or in the west coast of Japan. Invasions took various forms, with either a fleet of 500 ships or more than 1,500 cavalries.

➔ Invasion routes of the Red Turban rebels
➔ Invasion routes of the Japanese marauders



Daejanggunpo (a cannon)
This cannon used gun powder, and was necessary to stop the Japanese marauders on sea. This particular cannon was developed by Choi Mu-seon (1325-1395).

fell into slavery. As a result, the number of tax payers, as well as the available number of soldiers, was drastically reduced. People's lives became as barren as the land they toiled, while the national treasury was draining empty.

King Gongminwang targetted the nobles who owned vast lands and an army of slaves, forcing them to return their land to its original owners and to liberate those who were unjustifiably enslaved. At the front line of these reforms was a monk named Shin Don. As the land and slave survey was activated by the officers of Jeonminbyeonjeongdogam, a number of people praised him saying "A sage was born," and dreamt of the emergence of a new

world. Yet, the resistance of the conservative base was still greater than the power of the reformers.

Continuous foreign invasions were also a hindrance to the reforms. Hundreds of thousands of Red Turban bandits from China raided the territory of Goryeo twice and plundered everything in sight, while the Wae (Japanese) pirates waged their attacks along the south coast of Goryeo to a serious degree. Numerous acts of pillaging deteriorated the coastal regions to rubble. As the sea route transportation of items collected as tax became difficult, the government's finance had to suffer serious shortage.

Those dreaming of reforms

Unfortunately, in the end King Gongminwang was assassinated. After his death, reforms of the Goryeo society were discouraged to the point that dismantling of farm lands and renovation of the slave class no longer showed any progress. Meanwhile, the Chinese Han race established the Ming Dynasty and unified China driving out Yuan to the Mongolian Plateau. However, there were still some conservatives who argued that Goryeo needed to enforce its political relationship with Yuan as before. Moreover, Wae's raids increased to the extent of being a threat to the entire country.

The new bureaucratic class, the literati class who had implemented active reforms during the reign of King Gongminwang, once again tried to reform the Goryeo society.

Most of the literati figures were small and medium size land owners, and they suggested reconstruction of the society based on Neo-Confucianism, while criticizing the corruption of the temples and the principles of Buddhism. The literati stood at the forefront of reforming the government, asserting that politics should serve the people instead of being used to satisfy the greed of powerful families.

However, the power of nobles was so strong that several attempts failed to accomplish meaningful reforms. Each and every time, the leaders of these reforms had to undergo severe hardships.



Suweol Gwaneumdo

This paint depicting the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, is a symbol of splendid and delicate style of the noble society of Goryeo. It was drawn in 1310. 419.5x254.2cm.

The Meaning of Buddhism to Koreans

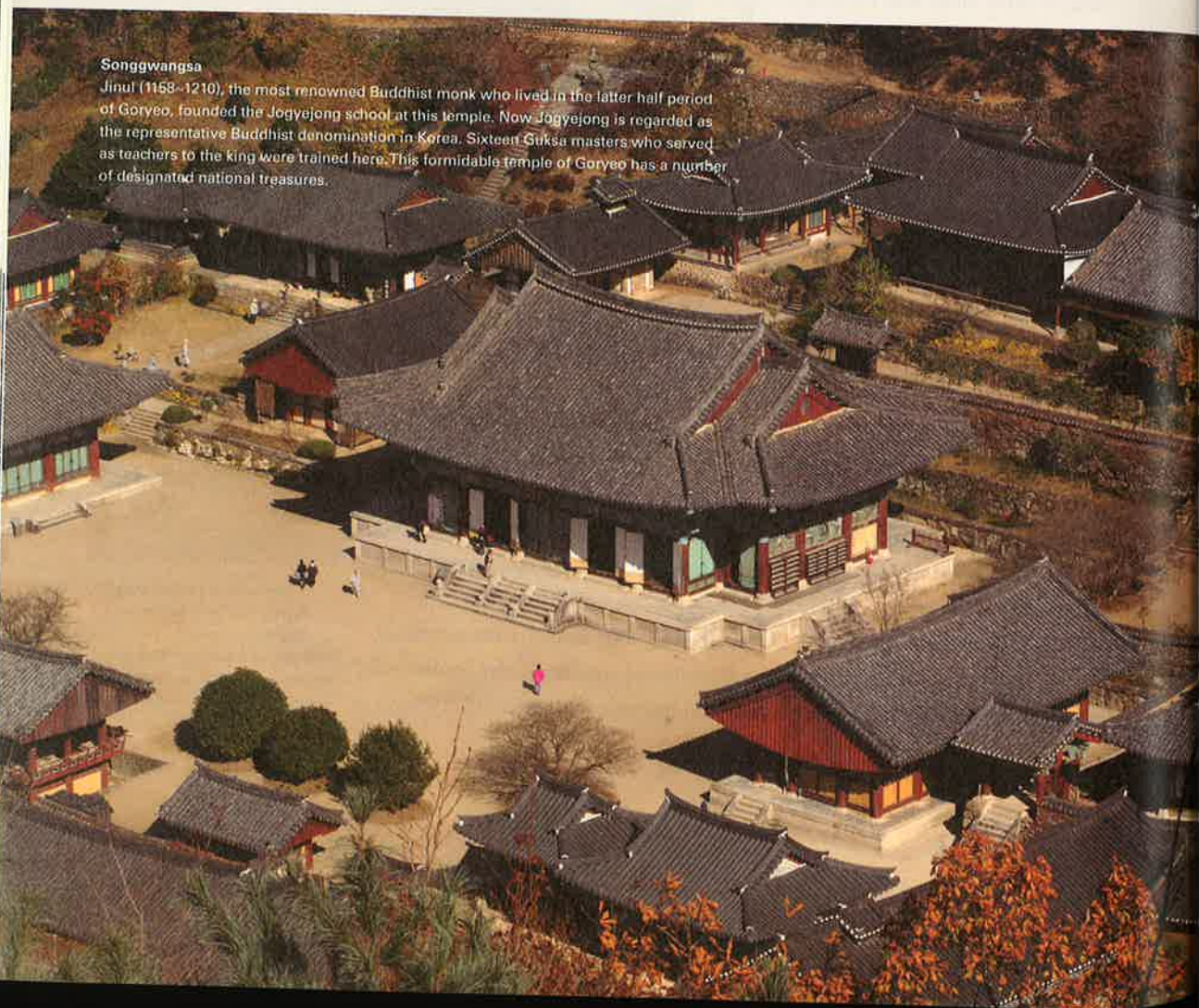
On April 8th of the lunar calendar, Buddhist temples in Korea are crowded with many worshippers celebrating the birthday of Sakyamuni. They wish for a brighter world by lighting a number of Lotus lamps, commemorating the day on which Buddha was enlightened.

Buddha awakened the people, as the Lotus lamps brighten the darkness. Believers wish to obtain wisdom which would direct their minds toward a righteous path. Just like beautiful lotus flowers which bloom from a pond filled with filthy water, the people long to come out vibrant in this world.

In the capital Gaegyeong, there were more than three hundred Buddhist temples. Every year, people in Gaegyeong crafted a number of Lotus lamps and walked around the pagoda, praying for hope and wisdom that would bring enlightenment to their lives. The ceremonious "Yeondeunghoe" occasion, the festival of lotus-shaped lanterns, began in the 6th century, and continues even today. It was considered one of the most important holiday celebrations by the people of Goryeo. The custom of lighting lanterns

Songgwangsa

Jinul (1158-1210), the most renowned Buddhist monk who lived in the latter half period of Goryeo, founded the Jogyejong school at this temple. Now Jogyejong is regarded as the representative Buddhist denomination in Korea. Sixteen Guksa masters who served as teachers to the king were trained here. This formidable temple of Goryeo has a number of designated national treasures.



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- ❶ Roof-tile carved with wishes A new temple is usually constructed with tiles, on which letters wishing for good health and accomplishments are written or inscribed.
- ❷ Buddha's Birthday It is the most meaningful and joyful day for Buddhists. This day is designated as a national holiday, on which public offices and civilian facilities are closed.
- ❸ Yeondeung Procession Before and after the Buddha's birthday, a variety of ceremonies are held: every temple hangs Yeondeung lamps (Lotus-shaped paper lamps), and a group of citizens and Buddhists participate in parades with those lamps.
- ❹ Tabdori Pagoda is considered as a home where Buddha stayed after his death. People make wishes and memorize his teachings, while circling around a pagoda.



originally came from the Indians who used them as lights for their gods.
 Today about 53% of Koreans are religious and 26% of them are Buddhists. Roman Catholics and Protestants combined, the percentage of Christians are about the same as Buddhists.
 However, Buddhism has been more meaningful and influential to the Koreans than accredited. About 60% of the nationally acknowledged cultural heritages are Buddhist artifacts. The influence of Buddhism on the mind and culture of Koreans is magnificent.