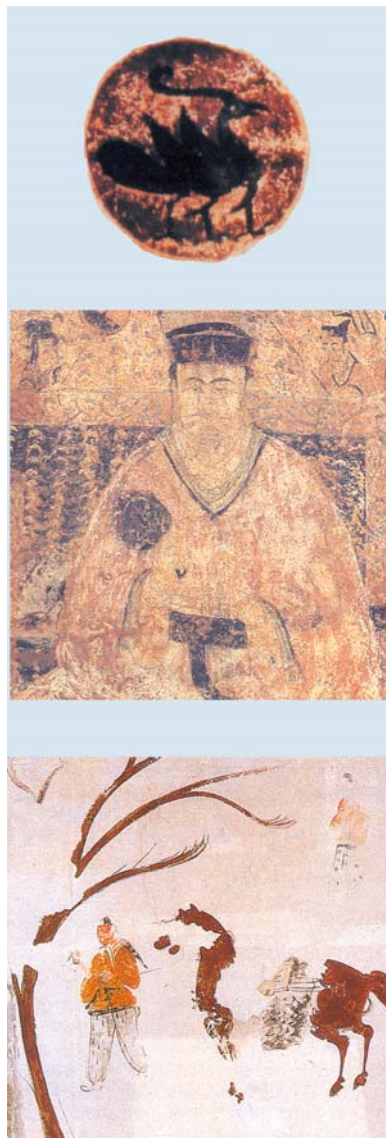


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1. Koguryeo Tomb Paintings  
 (top) Tomb of Wrestling, (middle)  
 Duck-heung-ri, and (bottom)  
 Ko-san-dong, Pyung-yang

## *The Puyeo-Koguryeo Ye-maek the Sushen-Yilou Tungus, and the Xianbei Yan*

INTIMATE HISTORIES

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Puyeo, together with Xiong-nu and Koguryeo, was regarded as a potential menace to Wang Mang's short-lived (8-23 AD) Xin dynasty. The first recorded instance of the Puyeo king sending envoys to the Later Han court was 49 AD.<sup>1</sup> The Dongyi-zhuan (of San-guo-zhi) gives a 930-letter description of Puyeo as of the late third century. It is the first systematic history on Puyeo appearing in the Chinese dynastic chronicles. The following is a summary.

Puyeo borders Xianbei in the west, Yilou in the east, Koguryeo in the south, and Nen-jiang (Nonni River) in the north. Among the Eastern Barbarians, only the Puyeo occupies the great plain, raising grains and livestock. The elders say that their ancestors (from Gori, according to the foundation myth) took refuge in this Ye-maek land a long time ago. Precious jade artifacts are handed down from generation to generation in the royal house. [It reminds us of the Hong-shan jade tradition.] Government officials are designated after livestock such as horse-ka[n], cow-ka[n], pig-ka[n] and dog-ka[n], the lower official being in charge of several hundred households and the higher one several thousand. When holding rites to the Heavens in January, they drink, sing and dance every day. They

<sup>1</sup> See Lee (1984: 21-22)

offer drinking cups to each other and ceremonially wash every cup. Since every one keeps singing on the road, the sounds of singing can be heard all day long. [They surely have enjoyed the modern-day Kara-oke!] They adore white clothes, wearing caps decorated with gold and silver, jackets with large sleeves, trousers and leather shoes. Like the Xiong-nu, when an elder brother dies, the younger one takes his wife. Keeping armor and weapons in each house, all those *ka* people [the aristocratic clans] engage in fighting, while the lower classes supply food for them. They bury the living, sometimes amounting to a hundred people, with the dead. As the Xianbei and Koguryeo became stronger during the last years of the Later Han dynasty, the Gong-sun ruler married a daughter of his family member to the king of Puyeo.<sup>2</sup>

The Dongyi-zhuan also gives a brief description of the Yilou. The Yilou are the descendants of Sushen people [and the ancestors of the Mohe and Ruzhen people]. Yilou is located in the mountainous forest region northeast of Puyeo that reaches the ocean. They look similar to the Puyeo people, but their language is different from that of Puyeo and Koguryeo. They produce grains, cows, horses, and hemp. They are very strong and courageous. Each village has a chieftain but they do not have a king. They always live in the forest, enduring a much colder climate than Puyeo. They raise pigs for food, and use pig skin for clothes and pig fats to grease their body in winter for protection against wind and cold. They use long bows which are as powerful as crossbows, apply poison on the (blue) stone arrowheads, and shoot arrows with deadly accurate marksmanship. They were the subjects of Puyeo since the time of the Han dynasty. As the Puyeo exacted heavy taxes and corvée, they rebelled in 220-226. The Puyeo made quite a few punitive expeditions against the Yilou, but could not subjugate them because, though the Yilou were small in number, they dwelt in extremely rugged forest difficult to penetrate.<sup>3</sup>

The above records give a brief but rather clear idea of the ancient relationship between the Yemaek Tungus and the Mohe-Ruzhen Tungus. According to the Dongyi-zhuan, the language of Koguryeo was identical to that of the Puyeo, but these two languages were different from the language of Yilou people who were the descendants of Sushen. If the Chinese

<sup>2</sup> 夫餘傳 ... 於東夷地域最平敞... 連日飲食歌舞... 衣尚白... 兄死妻嫂 與匈奴同俗... 家家自有鎧仗... 行道晝夜無老幼皆歌... 諸加自戰 下戶俱擔糧飲食之... 今夫餘庫有玉 璧珪瓚數代物... 蓋本濊貊之地

Puyeo sounds similar to Buir, male otter, in Buriat dialect. Gori sounds similar to the Buriat dialect word implying reindeer (caribou) and also to the name of a place between the lakes of Baikal, Hulun and Buir.

<sup>3</sup> 三國志 魏書 烏丸鮮卑東夷傳 挹婁傳 在夫餘東北千餘里濱大海 南與北沃沮接 未知其北所極 ... 其人形似夫餘 言語不與夫餘句麗同 人多勇力 無大君長 邑落各有大人 處山林之間 其俗好養豬 ... 其弓長四尺 力如弩 ... 古之肅慎氏之國也 ... 善射 射人皆入目... 自漢以來 臣屬夫餘 夫餘責其租賦重 以黃初中叛之[220-26] 夫餘數伐之 其人衆雖少 所在山險 鄰國人畏其弓矢 卒不能服也

<sup>4</sup> 高句麗在遼東之東千里 南與朝鮮濊貊 東與沃沮 北與夫餘接... 其人性凶急喜寇鈔... 言語諸事 多與夫餘同... 本有五族... 本涓奴部爲王... 今桂婁部代之... 絕奴部世與王婚... 坐食者萬餘口... 其民喜歌舞... 金銀財幣 盡於送死 積石爲封 ... 其馬皆小 便登山 國人有氣力 習戰鬥 沃沮東濊皆屬焉 ... 出好弓 所謂貊弓是也 王莽初發

高句麗兵以伐胡[匈奴] ... 爲寇盜 ... 王莽... 布告天下 更名高句麗爲下句麗... 順桓之間 復犯遼東... 又攻西安平 于道上殺帶方令 略得 樂浪太守妻子 ... 景初二年... 司馬宣... 討公孫淵 宮遣... 將數千人助軍 正始三年 宮寇西安平

遼史 地理志一 上京 臨潢府 本漢遼東郡西安平之地 ... 又有 ... 黑河 ... 天險足 以爲固 地沃宜耕植 水草便畜牧

In Koguryeo, the hereditary warrior aristocracy did not work in the fields but devoted itself to training for combat, pursuing periodic raiding of neighbors and extracting regular tributes in order to supplement the deficient resources that could be acquired from its own mountainous terrain. Koguryeo allowed the conquered tribal chieftains to retain their authority and levied tribute through them. The conquered Ok-cheo people carried cloth, fish, salt, and other local products on their backs to Koguryeo, over a distance of more than 200 miles. See Lee (1984: 24).

<sup>5</sup> “Attacks launched on Chinese installations and officials by the king of Koguryeo in AD 106 forced a withdrawal of Han authority to the west, near the commandery of Liao-dong. ... About 175 a separatist regime was established ... by Gong-sun du ... His strength and degree of independence were such that he could require acknowledgement

records were correct, the language of the Ye-maek Tungus in central Manchuria must have been substantially different from that of the Mohe-Ruzhen Tungus of eastern Manchuria.

In 285, Murong Hui invaded Puyeo, prompting the king to commit suicide. In 346, Murong Huang took the Puyeo king and over 50,000 of his people prisoner. Upon the extinction of the Xianbei state of Former Yan in 370, Puyeo passed under the protection of Koguryeo. Subsequently, with the rise of the Mohe people, the Puyeo royal house was driven from its ancient territory and surrendered itself to Koguryeo in 494, completely extinguishing its existence.

The area where the Song-hua River and the Nen-jiang come together is the best agricultural land, and it is a continuation of the Liao region, as the drainages are separated by only low hills. The entire area constitutes the vast Dongbei Plain. According to Di Cosmo (2002: 72), a rich inventory of iron knives, daggers, and armor dated to the ninth century BC were found along the Amur River, and “there are indications that relations existed between Transbaikalia and the Chinese northeast, possibly following the ancient routes of communication through the forests of Manchuria and on the large waterways that run north to south: the Song-hua, Nonni, and Liao Rivers.”

The Dongyi-zhuan also gives a brief description of Koguryeo. Being located in a mountainous valley, Koguryeo is always short of foodstuffs. The Koguryeo people are quick tempered and ferocious, and fond of pillaging. Their language and customs are similar to those of Puyeo, but their clothing and temperament are somewhat different. Their king comes from one of the five aristocratic clans, and always takes his queen from a specific clan. The ruling clans never work in the fields, and the lower classes supply them with foodstuffs. They enjoy singing and dancing every night, and hold rites to Heaven in October. They construct tombs by piling up stones, spending enormous resources. They are strong and adept in warfare, producing excellent bows and conquering all the Ye-maek people. Their horses are small and adept at climbing mountains. Wang Mang attempted to use the Koguryeo troops to attack the Xiong-nu, but the Koguryeo soldiers merely plundered local provinces. During the second century (125-67

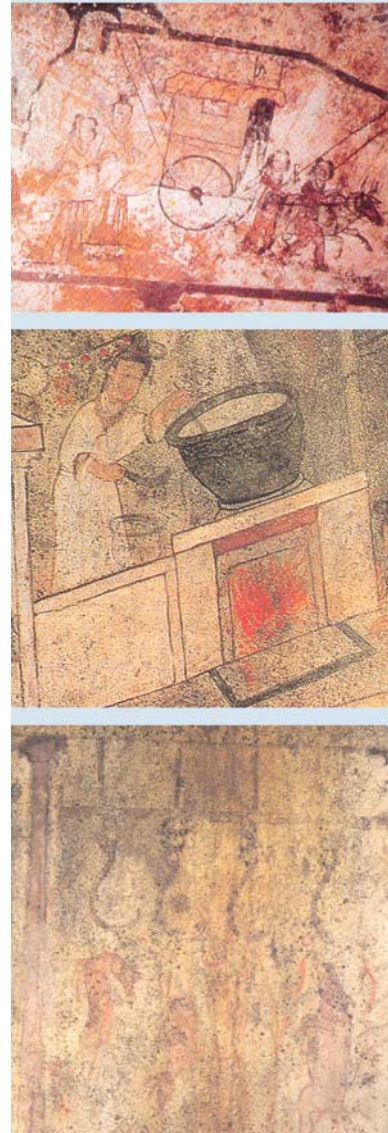
AD), Koguryeo frequently invaded Liao-dong. On its way to attack Xian-ping –an attack recorded, but without a specific date, in the Dongyi-zhuan records-- the Koguryeo army killed the Governor of Dai-fang and captured the wife and children of the Governor of Le-lang. In 242, King Dong-cheon (227-48) of Koguryeo pillaged Xian-ping.<sup>4</sup> Xian-ping was the place where the Liao dynasty established its Supreme Capital.

In 204, Le-lang passed into the hands of a warlord family named Gong-sun, which had consolidated power in the Liao-dong, and established the Dai-fang commandery some time between 204 and 220 out of the southern portion of Le-lang.<sup>5</sup> Koguryeo started fighting against the independent Gong-sun rulers. In 237, the Gong-sun ruler proclaimed himself the king of Yan. According to the Dongyi-zhuan, when the (Cao Cao's) Wei army attacked the Gong-sun in 238, the Koguryeo king dispatched several thousand soldiers and helped the Wei army. The Le-lang and Dai-fang commanderies were taken over by the Cao Cao's Wei (220-265), and then by the Western Jin (265-316).

In Puyeo and Koguryeo, kings were at first chosen by some sort of elective process, a la the Xianbei tradition, alternating the kingship among important clan leaders. (The same practice appeared also in Silla.) Furthermore, even when the right to the throne became permanently secured by a single royal clan, the system of succession was often lateral. Upon the death of King Koguk-chon in 197, his younger brother married the widowed queen and became King San-sang. The marriage to sister-in-law originated from the custom of Puyeo and Xiong-nu.

In Puyeo, the shift to lineal succession is suggested by the records of the King Ui-ryo (?-285 AD) succeeding his father on the throne at the age of six. The father-to-son succession is recorded in Koguryeo from the reign of King San-sang (197-227 AD). Even then, the queen was drawn from an important non-royal ruling clan. The political authority often lay in the hands of the senior members of the royal clan or of the aristocratic clan from which the queens were drawn. The Puyeo and the Koguryeo were not nomads, and yet somehow they had retained nomadic social formations of a martial outlook and maintained an aristocratic class whose

from the king of Koguryeo, and even from the leaders of the Puyeo ...” Quotes from Twitchett and Loewe (1986: 450).



2. Koguryeo Tomb Paintings (top) from Duck-heung-ri, Kang-seo, Nam-po, and (middle and bottom) An-ak, Tomb No. 3, Whang-hae-do

<sup>6</sup> See Schreiber (1949-55: 393-5).

<sup>7</sup> Schreiber (1949-55: 425)

<sup>10</sup> See Schreiber (1949-55: 466-8).  
資治通鑑 卷第九十七 晉紀十九  
成帝 ...翰言於皝曰 宇文彊盛日  
久 ...今若擊之 百舉百克 然高  
句麗 去國密邇 常有闕覩 之志  
彼知宇文亡 禍將及己 必乘虛  
深入 掩吾不備 若少留兵則不足  
以守 多留兵則不足以行 此心腹  
之患也 宜先除之 ...高句麗之地  
不可戍守 今其主 亡民散 潛伏  
山谷 大軍既去必 復鳩聚 收其  
餘燼... 請載其父尸 囚其生母而  
歸 俟其束身自歸 然後返之 撫  
以恩信 策之上也 皝從之

<sup>11</sup> The last military expedition during Murong Huang's lifetime was directed against the Puyeo. The Puyeo, in former times, had lived in the Lu Mountains. After the invasion of their country by Paekche, the weakened and scattered tribes moved westward toward the territory of Huang to whom they were helplessly exposed. In the spring of 346 Huang sent his heir apparent Jun 儁, the three generals Murong Jun 軍, Murong Ke 恪, Mu-yu Gen 慕輿根, and seventeen thousand horsemen against them. The Puyeo were defeated, their king Xuan with other fifty thousand of his subjects was captured and brought to Yan. See Schreiber (1949-55: 473-4).

main occupation had been the practice of war (cf. Di Cosmo, 2002, p. 43).

During the third century, Koguryeo was still entrenched in the Hun-Yalu river valleys. In the late third century, the Murong tribe of Xianbei moved down into the Liao River basin and cut off Le-lang from the Jin empire. The Samguk-sagi records frequent armed conflicts between the Koguryeo and the Murong Xianbei from 293 to 296.

According to the *Jin-shu*, Murong Hui's ancestors had lived for generations among the Northern Barbarians, and they were called Dong-hu. At the beginning of the Wei Dynasty (220-65), Murong Hui's great-grand-father led all his subjects into Liao-xi and settled there. We do not know why Hui's father decided to leave Liao-xi and to move into the north of Liao-dong. When he died in the year 283, his younger brother Shan took over the leadership. In 285, Shan was killed by his subjects and the people proclaimed Hui as their chieftain.<sup>6</sup> Murong Hui invaded Puyeo in 285, prompting the king to commit suicide.

In 311, the Xiong-nu sacked the Jin capital at Luoyang, and Koguryeo took over the Le-lang commandery in 313. In 319, Koguryeo, in coalition with two Xianbei tribes, the Yu-wen and the Duan, attacked Murong Hui (r.285-333), but was defeated by the troops led by Hui and his heir apparent Huang. Huang was the second son of Hui and the first son of Hui's legitimate wife who was a former princess of the Duan.<sup>7</sup> Hui let another son defend Liao-dong. In 320, the Koguryeo army attacked Liao-dong but was beaten back.

The armed conflicts between the Xianbei and Koguryeo continued from 339 to 343. The *Zi-zhi-tong-jian* records the advice of Murong Han given to Huang (r.333-349). "Our nearest neighbors, the Koguryeo, are always vigilant. They know that as soon as we have annihilated the Yu-wen, we will attack them. Therefore, if we move to invade the territory of Yu-wen, they surely would attack our country while our army is abroad. Were we to leave a few of our troops to guard the home country, the army of Koguryeo would ravage the country. Were we to leave a sufficient number of troops to prevent an invasion, our expeditionary army would be too weak to conquer the Yu-wen. We should, therefore, first conquer Koguryeo." Huang invaded Koguryeo in 342-3 with forty

thousand of his elite soldiers, and captured its capital Hwan-do. At that time, Huang was further advised by one of his generals: “It is impossible to keep Koguryeo occupied. The king managed to escape and the people are scattered and hidden in the mountains. Upon our departure they will emerge from their hiding places and gather together. Let us take Chao’s mother along as prisoner, and remove the corpse of his father to Longcheng. Under such circumstances Chao [King Ko-guk-won] will beg for the restoration of his parents. Then you may return the corpse of his father and may treat Chao with kindness and give him your confidence. In my opinion this is the best way of handling Koguryeo.” Huang gave his consent.<sup>10</sup>

We see the replay of an intimate relationship (i.e., armed conflicts) between the Mongolic Xianbei and Ye-maek Tungus.<sup>11</sup> The name of the Ye-maek Tungus antagonist changed from Chosun to Koguryeo, but the name of the Xianbei opponent stayed identical, “Yan.”

According to Farris (1998: 77), the Xianbei learned to use the stirrup c. 300 (at first slung over only the left side of the animal), and “the first Koreans to use the horse in combat were soldiers of Koguryeo doing battle with the Xianbei.” The technique of using stirrups seems to have entered the Korean peninsula courtesy of the incessant fighting between the Xianbei and Koguryeo. It is interesting to recall that iron-making technology was also transferred through the armed conflicts between the Old Yan and Old Chosun around 400 BC.

The incessant fighting between the Mongolic Xianbei and Ye-maek Tungus seems to have generated a strong enough cultural assimilation between these two peoples as to find in the History of Liao the statement that the Oidan Liao, the descendants the Xianbei, had originated from the old Chosun land, having the identical customs and tradition of “the Ki-ja (Ji-ji)’s Eight Clauses of Instruction” as the Chosun.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> 遼史 卷四十九 志第十八  
禮志一 遼本朝鮮故壤 箕子八  
條之教 流風遺俗 蓋有存者

According to the Ye Section of Dong-yi Zhuan, Ki-ja (Ji-zi) in Chosun had formulated the Eight Clauses of Instruction and educated the people. The Ye Section further records that, about forty generations after Ki-ja [c. 323 BC, when the ruler of Yan assumed the title of king], the Lord of Chosun, named Jun, arrogated kingship to himself.

三國志 魏書 烏丸鮮卑東夷傳  
濊傳 昔箕子既適朝鮮 作八條之  
教 以教之 無門戶之閉而 民不  
為盜 其後四十餘世 朝鮮侯准僭  
號稱王



3. Koguryeo Tomb Painting  
Duck-heung-ri, Kang-seo

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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