SAMGUK YUSA

Legends anc History of
the Three Kingdoms of Ancient Korea

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founders of states. These are set down here as precedents for the stories of the founders of the Three Kingdoms, to be found in the following chapters.

1. Old Chosun (Wanggŏm Chosun)

In the *Wei-shu*[2] it is written, "Two thousand years ago (Traditional date: 2333 B.C.) Tangun, otherwise called Wanggŏm, chose Asadal, also described as Muyŏp-san in the province of Paekju east of Kaesŏng, at a place now called Paegak-kung (? modern P'yŏngyang) as his royal residence and founded a nation, calling it Chosun, at the same period as Kao (legendary Chinese Emperor Yao)."

In the Old Book it is written, "In ancient times Hwan-in (Heavenly King, Chesŏk or *Sakrodeveendra*) had a young son whose name was Hwan-ung. The boy wished to descend from heaven and live in the human world. His father, after examining three great mountains, chose T'aebaek-san (the Myohyang Mountains in north Korea) as a suitable place for his heavenly son to bring happiness to human beings. He gave Hwan-ung three heavenly treasures, and commanded him to rule over his people.

"With three thousand of his loyal subjects Hwan-ung descended from heaven and appeared under a sandalwood tree on T'aebaek Mountain. He named the place Sin-si (city of god) and assumed the title of Hwan-ung Ch'ŏnwang (another title meaning heavenly king). He led his ministers of wind, rain and clouds in teaching the people more than 360 useful arts, including agriculture and medicine, inculcated moral principles and imposed a code of law.

"In those days there lived a she-bear and a tigress in the same cave. They prayed to Sin-ung (another name of Hwan-ung) to be blessed with incarnation as human beings. The king took pity on them and gave them each a bunch of mugwort and twenty pieces of garlic, saying, 'If you eat this holy food and do not see the sunlight for one hundred days, you will become human beings.'

"The she-bear and the tigress took the food and ate it, and retired

into the cave. In twenty-one days the bear, who had faithfully observed the king's instructions, became a woman. But the tigress, who had disobeyed, remained in her original form.

"But the bear-woman could find no husband, so she prayed under the sandalwood tree to be blessed with a child. Hwan-ung heard her prayers and married her. She conceived and bore a son who was called Tangun Wanggŏm, the King of Sandalwood.

"In the fiftieth year of the reign of T'ang Kao (legendary Chinese emperor Yao, traditional date some time before 2000 B.C.) in the year of Kyŏng-in (if it was Kyŏng-in, it must be the 23rd year) Tangun came to P'yŏngyang (now Sŏgyŏng), set up his royal residence there and bestowed the name Chosun upon his kingdom.

"Later Tangun moved his capital to Asadal on T'aebaek-san and ruled 1500 years, until king Wu of Chou (ancient Chinese dynasty) placed Kija on the throne (traditional date 1122 B.C.). When Kija arrived, Tangun moved to Changtang-kyŏng and then returned to Asadal, where he became a mountain god at the age of 1,908."

In the book of P'eichu-chuan of T'ang (Chinese dynasty, 618–907 A.D.) it is written, "Koryŏ (i.e. Koguryŏ) was originally Kojuk-kuk (now Haeju) and was called Chosun by the Chou emperor on the investiture of Kija. During the Han dynasty (Chinese, 206 B.C.-222 A.D.) Chosun was divided into three counties—Hyŏnto, Nangnang and Taebang." The book T'ung-tien gives the same account. However, the Han-shu tells of four counties (Chinbŏn, Imtun, Hyŏnto and Nangnang) with names different from those in the other sources, for some unknown reason. *(This is an allusion to a portion of northwestern Korea which was under direct Chinese rule from 108 B.C. to 313 A.D. The only one of any enduring importance was Nangnang, called Lolang in Chinese.)*

2. Weiman Chosun

(The following account is a somewhat more detailed and historically more accurate description of the ancient Kingdom of Chosun and its wars

chia, so he became king more than 40 years later than Hyŏkkŏse (Silla founder) and Tongmyŏng (Koguryŏ founder). (This statement corresponds fairly well with the traditional foundation dates, which are Silla 57 B.C., Koguryŏ 37 B.C. and Paekje 18 B.C.)

The T'ang-shu states that the ancestors of Pyŏnhan lived in the land of Nangnang because Onjo was descended from Tongmyŏng. Perhaps a hero of Nangnang origin established a state in Pyŏnhan which was in rivalry with Mahan before the reign of Onjo, but this does not mean that Onjo himself came from the north of Nangnang. (The latter statement is purely conjectural.)

Some scholars call Mt. Kuryong Mt. Pyŏnna, but this is a mistake. According to an authentic statement of an ancient sage there was a mountain named Pyŏn-san in the land of Paekje, hence the country was called Pyŏnhan. (This is evidently a mistake.)

In her heyday Paekje had a population of 152,300 households.[9]

15. Chinhan

In the Houhan-shu it is written, "The men of Chinhan said, 'When the refugees from Ch'in (One of the Chinese kingdoms during the Warring States period in China, previous to the Han dynasty) arrived in Korea, Mahan ceded them an area along her esatern frontier, and host and guest called each other 'to,' meaning fellow-man. The Chinese pronunciation was 'tu.' This and other similarities led to the writing of the name of Chinhan in Chinese fashion, using the name of the Chinese state of Ch'in plus the character designating Korea, Han. Chinhan was divided into 12 small states, each consisting of about 10,000 households."

16. Kyŏngju (Pleasure Ground for Each of the Four Seasons)

(This section is somewhat out of place chronologically but is left in its original place as it sets the scene for much of what is to follow.)

When Silla reached the height of her prosperity the capital, Kyŏngju, consisted of 178,936 houses, 1,360 sections, fifty-five streets

and thirty-five mansions. There was a villa and pleasure ground for each of the four seasons, to which the aristocrats resorted. These were Tongya, the east field house, for spring; Kokyang house, for summer; Kuchi house, for autumn; and Kai house for winter.

During the reign of the forty-ninth king Hŏngang, houses with tiled roofs stood in rows in the capital and, not a thatched roof was to be seen. Gentle sweet rain came with harmonious blessings and all the harvests were plentiful.

17. King Hyŏkkŏse, the Founder of Silla

In ancient times there were six districts in Chinhan, each belonging to a separate clan. They were the Yi, Chŏng, Son, Ch'oe, Pae and Sŏl clans, each of which claimed to have a divine progenitor.

On the first day of the third month of Ti-chieh (during the Chinese Han dynasty) the chieftains of these six clans and their families gathered on the bank of a stream called Alch'ŏn to discuss problems of common interest. There was general agreement as follows: "It is not good for us to live in scattered villages without protection. We are in danger of attack by strong enemies nearby. We must therefore seek a noble and glorious king to rule over us and defend us as our commander-in-chief."

The chieftains and their families then climbed a high mountain, where they worshipped and prayed to heaven to send them a gracious prince according to their wish. Suddenly there was a lightning-flash, and an auspicious rainbow stretched down from heaven and touched the earth in the south by the well called Najŏng in the direction of Mt. Yang, where a white horse was seen kneeling and bowing to something.

In great wonderment they ran down to the well. When they came near, the white horse neighed loudly and flew up to heaven on the rising veil of the rainbow, leaving behind a large red egg (some say a blue egg) lying on a giant rock near the well. When the people cracked the egg they found within it a baby boy whose noble face shone like the sun. When he was given a bath in the East Stream (where Tongch'ŏn Temple stands, to the north) he looked even more bright and handsome.

The people danced for joy, and the birds and beasts sang and danced round the boy. Heaven and earth shook, and the sun and moon shone brightly (indicating that this was indeed the king they had prayed for). They named him King Hyŏkkŏse, meaning bright ruler. (Ilyŏn goes on to cite similar stories of fabulous births such as the goddess mother of the Fairy Peach from Chinese sources, perhaps to authenticate this one. The official records—compiled, of course, long after the event—list Hyŏkkŏse as the first king of Silla and give his reign dates as 57 B.C. to 3 A.D.)[10]

They offered the wonderful boy the royal title "Kŏsŭlgam" or "Kŏsŏgan" because when he first spoke he declared "Alji-Kŏsŏgan (baby-king) is rising." For this reason succeeding Silla sovereigns all bore the title Kŏsŏgan. (King) All the people in the country welcomed the boy-king with cheerful acclamations and hoped that he would marry a virtuous queen.

On the same day a she-dragon descended from heaven to another well, called Aryŏngjŏng in Saryang-ni, and from under her ribs on the left side produced a baby girl, who burst like a flower from a bud. (Some accounts say the she-dragon appeared and died, and the baby was found inside when the body was opened.)

The child was fair of face and graceful of form, but her mouth was like the beak of a chick. However, when the people bathed her in the North Stream of Moon Castle, the beak fell off, revealing her cherry-red lips. The stream was thenceforth called Palch'ŏn (beak-falling stream).

The people erected a palace at the foot of South Mountain and brought up the two babies, who grew to be a noble prince and princess. Since the prince had been born from an egg in the shape of the gourd called "pak" in the native tongue, they gave him the family name Pak. (Evidently a foundation-myth of the Pak clan. The official records do indeed indicate that the first three Silla kings and some later ones were of this clan. The name is a common one in modern Korea.) The princess was named Aryŏng after the well where she was born.

When they reached the age of thirteen in the first year of Wufeng,

the prince was crowned king with Princess Aryŏng as his queen consort. The country at this time was called Sŏraböl or Soböl, a native dialect word. The name Silla was not used until a later time. during the reign of Kirim-Nijilgŭm (although some historians attribute this naming to the reign of Chijŏng Maripkan or King Pŏphŭng.)

(Ilyŏn here inserts a brief account of the founding of the Kim clan. The original Kim—the word means "gold"— was said to have been found in a forest where a golden cock crowed. The Kim clan eventually took over the Silla throne and kept it until the end of the kingdom. Kim is the commonest surname in Korea.)

Thus Hyŏkkŏse, the Great Chief of the Pak family founded the kingdom of Silla and ruled over it for sixty-two years, after which he ascended to heaven. After seven days the ashes of his body fell to the earth and scattered, and the soul of his queen ascended to join him in paradise.

All the people wept over the ashes of their good king and queen, and tried to bury them in the same tomb, but a large snake appeared and prevented this. So the royal remains of each were divided into five parts and interred in pairs in the Northern Mausoleum, within the precincts of a temple called Tamŏm-sa. The people called these the Five Mausoleums, or Sanŭng (Tomb of the Snake). The Crown Prince succeeded to the throne and was given the title Namhae-wang (second Silla king in the official records, reigned 4–24 A.D.)

18. King Namhae

Namhae Kŏsŏgan was also called Ch'ach'a Ung or High Chief, a unique title honoring this king. His father was King Hyŏkkŏse, his mother was Lady Aryŏng and his queen was Lady Unje. Now to the west of Yŏngil-hyŏn rises Mt. Unje, where dwelt the queen's goddess mother. She sent down rain in times of drought when the people offered prayers to her.

King Namhae ascended the throne in the fourth year of Yuanshih (Kapcha) during the reign of P'ing-ti of the prior (Chinese) Han

General's Voice: I, Your Majesty's humble subject, in life assisted the throne as a soldier by destroying enemies and enhancing the royal power and after death became a protective spirit guarding the kingdom against catastrophe. Nevertheless, in the year of Kyŏngsul (771) my guiltless descendant was shamefully put to death. It is evident that both the present king and his court have forgotten my patriotic deeds. I would like to move to another place and cease caring for these ungrateful creatures. Now I pause for a reply in the hope that Your Majesty will grant my request.

King's Voice: If you and I do not guard this country with our immortal strength, what will become of our poor people? I command you to continue to display your patriotic spirit with loyal mind for the welfare of the state.

Thrice the King's spirit spoke persuasively and thrice the angry general's ghost grumbled and complained. Then the wind arose once more and he was gone.

King Hyegong was astonished when he heard of this. He sent the grand vizier Kim Kyŏng-sin to the tomb of Kim Yu-sin to apologize to his spirit. In addition, he donated a tract of royal land to Ch'usŏn Temple so that the income might be used for sacrifices to appease the general's wrath and pray for the repose of his soul. This temple had been erected in honor of Kim Yu-sin's triumphant return from P'yŏngyang after a great victory over Koguryŏ.

Had it not been for the persuasion of the virtuous spirit of King Mich'u. Kim Yu-sin's anger could not have been appeased. In this way the great king protected Silla even after his death. For this reason his countrymen remembered his august virtue and offered sacrifices to his spirit with the same piety with which they worshipped the three sacred mountains. Moreover they elevated his tomb to the highest rank, even above that of the founder of the kingdom.

24. King Naemul and Pak Che-sang[15]

(King Naemul reigned from 356 to 402, so that his thirty-sixth year would be 391. Japan at this time was not yet unified and historical data on the period are extremely sketchy. The oldest Japanese records do mention a Korean who may possibly be identified with Mihae. Which of the Japanese islands Mihae was sent to is not specified, but Kyushu seems the most likely. Throughout this story Ilyŏn consistently refers to the Japanese with the contemptuous term wai (dwarfs), probably an indication of his own attitude rather than that of the people whom he describes.)

In the thirty-sixth year of King Naemul (391), the seventeenth Silla King, a Japanese ruler sent an envoy to Kyŏngju to pay homage to the King. The envoy denounced Paekje for her attacks on Silla (there was more or less constant war among the three kingdoms throughout their history) and conveyed his lord's request that a prince of Silla be sent to return the courtesy. (All this amounts to an offer of alliance.) So King Naemul sent his third son Mihae,[16] who was then ten years old, with an elderly courtier named Pak Sa-ram to take care of him. But the Japanese ruler did not respect his status as an envoy and held him hostage. He did not return to his homeland until he was forty years old.

In the third year of King Nulji (419; King Nulji reigned from 417 to 458), the nineteenth sovereign of Silla, King Changsu of Koguryŏ sent an envoy with the request that Pohae (in Samguk Sagi, Pohae is represented as Pokhae), King Nulji's younger brother, be sent to his court for a friendly visit. The King made peace with Koguryŏ and sent Pohae to P'yŏngyang with Kim Mu-al, an old courtier, to attend him. But King Changsu, like the Japanese ruler, held the young prince hostage and would not release him.

(There is some chronological confusion in what follows. Between King Naemul and King Nulji another sovereign, King Silsŏng, is recorded to have ruled from 402 to 417. A possible explanation is that King

Silsŏng was King Naemul's brother rather than his son, since passing on the throne to a brother was a common practice in East Asian monarchies.)

In the tenth year of King Nulji, even in the year of Ŭlch'uk (426), the King invited his courtiers and military leaders to attend a court entertainment. Amid the flowing of the wine and the singing and dancing the King suddenly burst into tears and spoke as follows:

"My father (King Naemul, evidently) sent his beloved son to Japan and died without the joy of seeing him again. Since I ascended the throne my strong neighbor (i.e. Koguryŏ) has warred against me and attacked our frontier time and again. Believing that the king of Koguryŏ wanted peace with me, I sent my own younger brother to his court. But now he holds my brother hostage and will not let him return. Though I am rich and noble, tears flow from my eyes day and night. If only I could see my two brothers again and we could apologize before the shrine of my father, I would be most happy. Who can bring the two princes back to my palace?"

"Your Majesty," the courtiers replied, "this is not an easy matter. None but a wise and brave man can perform such a great mission. We recommend Pak Che-sang, the magistrate of Sapna county."

Pak Che-sang was accordingly brought before the King and charged with the mission of returning the two princes. In accepting it he replied. "When the King is grieved his subjects are disgraced. If the King is in disgrace his subjects must die. If the subjects do only what is easy and will not undertake what is most difficult, they are disloyal, and if they consider only saving their own lives they are cowards. Though I am an unworthy subject I will faithfully execute this mission, given me by royal command."

The King was choked with emotion. He drank with Pak Che-sang from the same cup and bid him a fond farewell, holding him by the hand. Pak took leave of the court and immediately journeyed northward in disguise. In Koguryŏ he gained access to the place where Pohae was being held. After explaining his plan of escape and setting a time and place to meet, he hastened away to the rendezvous on the

seacoast at Kosŏng.

In order to disarm suspicion Pohae feigned illness and did not appear at the king's morning audience for several days. Then on the appointed evening he fled secretly to Kosŏng.

When the king of Koguryŏ was informed of Pohae's flight he ordered out a score of soldiers to pursue and bring him back. But the Prince of Silla was so loved by Koguryŏ people for his deeds of kindness that the soldiers shot at him with headless arrows and thus he escaped and arrived safely at the royal palace of Silla.

When the King saw Pohae he embraced him with the tenderest affection, shedding tears of both joy and sorrow, saying "I have regained one arm of my body, one eye of my face, but I am still sad without the other."

"Your Majesty," Pak Che-sang replied, "only command and I will bring back Prince Mihae[16] also." He prostrated himself before the throne, striking his head twice on the floor, and took leave of the King. Without even visiting his home he journeyed to the seacoast at Yulp'o.

His wife pursued him on a white horse, but when she arrived at the port he had already embarked and was sailing far over the blue sea. She wept and called to him to return for a last farewell, but her loyal husband only waved his hand and sailed straight on.

Pak soon reached the Japanese island where Mihae was being held, and was received in audience by the king. "Who are you and what has brought you here?" the king asked.

"I am a nobleman of Kerim (another name for Silla)" Pak replied. "The king of Kerim killed my father and brothers without legitimate reason, so I escaped and drifted to your shores seeking asylum."

"The king of Shiragi (Silla) is not good," responded the Japanese ruler. "I will give you a comfortable house to live in."

Pak Che-sang soon made contact with Prince Mihae and the two began to go fishing on the seashore every morning. They made a practice of presenting their catch regularly to the king, who was highly pleased and suspected nothing. Finally their opportunity came, a day when thick fog covered the island. As they put out to sea in their

fishing boat, Pak said, "Prince, today you must escape. It is now or never."

"I want you to come with me," the prince replied.

"If we go together," counselled Pak, "the Japanese will pursue us. I must stay behind to prevent them."

The prince was distressed. "I look up to you like my own father and elder brother. How can I leave you behind and go alone?"

"If I can save your life and comfort my king I will be content. I cannot think only of myself."

Pak poured wine into a cup and offered it to the prince in farewell. Then he ordered Kang Ku-ryŏ, a Silla boatman, to take the prince with him under full sail. He returned to Mihae's quarters and stayed there till the following morning. When the Japanese became curious, Pak came out and told them that Mihae had been hunting the previous day and was relaxing in bed. At noon they came again, and Pak at last told them that Mihae had escaped a long while before.

The king was very angry and ordered cavalrymen to go in pursuit, but to no avail. He had Pak Che-sang arrested and brought before him.

"Why did you send the prince home without my knowledge?"

"I am a subject of Kerim and not your vassal. I have simply obeyed the command of my king. I have no more to say."

The king became angrier still. "You became my vassal and now you say no. What an insolent fellow you are! Now you must suffer the five penalties (extreme torture).[17] But even now, if you will become my subject, I will give you big rewards and make you rich and noble."

But there was no persuading the loyal Pak. "I would rather be a dog or a pig in Kerim than a nobleman in Japan. I would rather be beaten with long whips in Kerim than receive court titles here."

"Here, men! Peel off his skin from thigh to ankle and make him walk on the swordlike stubble of the harvested reeds." (Ilyŏn points out here that an old tradition attributed the red color of a certain variety of reed to the blood of Pak Che-sang.)

When Pak had been tortured for a time the king said, "Now, fellow! Of what kingdom are you a subject?"

"I am a subject of Kerim."

"Stand him on red-hot iron." The men did so. "Now whose vassal are you?"

"I am a vassal of the King of Kerim."

"You are straight like a bamboo, unbending and unyielding. But you are of no service to me. Hang him, men." So the Japanese hanged him on a tree on Kishima and burned him to death.

Meanwhile, Mihae crossed the eastern sea and landed safely in Silla. He sent Kang Ku-ryŏ, the sailor, to the palace to inform the King of his arrival. His Majesty expressed great joy and commanded his courtiers to meet the returning prince on the coast. Together with Prince Pohae he went out to the southern outskirts of Kyŏngju, and when he saw Mihae, fell on his neck and wept for joy.

The King gave a great banquet at the palace and proclaimed a general amnesty throughout the kingdom. He conferred the title of Grand Duchess on the wife of Pak Che-sang and married Prince Mihae to her daughter.

The courtiers praised the noble deeds of Pak Che-sang, saying, "In old China a vassal of Han named Chou Ko was captured by the soldiers of Ch'u in Yingyang. Hsiang Yü said to Chou Ko, 'If you become my vassal I will make you a governor, rich and noble.' But Chou Ko would not yield and suffered death at the hand of Hsiang Yü. Now Pak Che-sang's unswerving loyalty outshines that of Chou Ko."

Pak Che-sang's wife, overwhelmed with grief, prostrated herself on the sand beach south of Mangdŏk temple gate and cried long and bitterly. People still call the place Changsa, meaning long sand. The good lady could not long endure the yearning of her heart for her husband, who would return no more. She took her three daughters with her to Ch'isul-lyŏng (Kite Pass) in the mountains. There she looked away in the direction of Japan and wailed for sorrow till she died. She became the tutelary spirit of Kite Pass, and the people of Silla erected a shrine to her there.

drum. Becoming curious he asked the villagers what it was all about, and a little girl told him that the daughter of a nobleman had been washing clothes in a mountain stream and had relieved herself in the forest.

Now really intrigued, the courtier visited the nobleman's house and found that the girl was indeed a giant, seven feet five inches tall. He hastened to inform the King, who immediately sent a royal carriage drawn by two horses to bring her to the court. There they were married and lived happily. (Another source gives her family name as Pak. She was popularly known as Yŏnje Puin, the lady of the long emperor.)

During King Chich'ŏllo's reign the people of Ullŭng-do (Dagelet Island), two days' sail to the east, ceased to pay tribute to the King's court, boasting that the deep sea was their ally. The King was very angry and commanded General Pak I-jong to go to the island and punish its disobedient inhabitants. Pak had wooden lions made and mounted them on the decks of his ships. Then he sailed to Ullŭng-do, and said to the islanders, "If you do not surrender we will set the lions upon you." Much afraid, the people fell on their knees and begged for peace. The King rewarded Pak I-jong and made him governor of Ullŭng-do.

28. King Chinhŭng (540–576)

The twenty-fourth sovereign was King Chinhŭng. He was crowned king at the age of fifteen (the Samguk Sagi says seven), with his mother as regent. She was King Pŏphŭng's daughter, wife of Ipjong-Kalmun-wang (Pŏphŭng's younger brother.)

On his deathbed, King Chinhŭng had his head shaved and suffered his royal person to be clad in the robe of a Buddhist monk. (An extraordinary act of piety which would have been thought beneath the dignity of a king.)

In the ninth moon of the third year of Chengsheng, an army from Paekje invaded Chinsŏng and carried off 39.000 people, both male and female, together with 8,000 horses. Previously Paekje had proposed

to Silla that the two kingdoms launch a joint attack on Koguryŏ. King Chinhŭng flatly refused, however, saying "The rise and fall of kingdoms depends upon heaven. If Koguryŏ has not provoked the wrath of heaven, how can I dare to attack her?" When he heard of this the king of Koguryŏ was deeply moved, and strengthened his ties with Silla. This caused the exasperated king of Paekje to vent his anger by attacking Silla.

29. Tohwanyŏ and Pihyŏngnang

The twenty-fifth ruler of Silla was King Saryun (posthumous name Chinji, 576–579). His family name was Kim and his queen was Lady Chido, a daughter of Kio-kong. During his short reign he was hated by the people for his misgovernment and sexual indulgence. For these reasons he was ultimately deposed.

While he was on the throne there lived in Saryang-pu a country woman who was so beautiful that people called her Tohwarang or Tohwanyŏ, meaning Peach Girl. The King heard of her extraordinary beauty and had her brought to the inner palace.

"Tohwarang," he said, "you are my peach. I love you and I must enjoy you tonight." And he attempted to take her in his arms.

"Let me go!" she cried. "I am a married woman and I cannot accept your love. My body belongs to my husband and him only. Even a king or an emperor shall not take away my woman's treasure."

"What a bold wench!" the King said angrily. "Don't you know I am an absolute monarch and everything in the kingdom belongs to me? I can take any pretty woman I want for my concubine. If you do not obey my command, I will kill you. Do you still dare to say no?"

But the woman was resolute. "I would rather die than be your mistress."

The King laughed. "If your husband were to die, would you come to me?"

She was crying now. "Yes, then it would be possible,"

The King sighed resignedly and said, "Go home in peace but do

not forget me, for I will keep your beauty in my heart forever."

The woman sobbed, "May you live ten thousand years, O King!" and left the palace.

In that same year the king was deposed, and died soon afterwards. Three years later the woman's husband died, and ten days later the king appeared to her at midnight, looking just as he had in life.

"You gave me a promise long ago," he said, "and now your husband is no more. Will you come to me and be my lover?"

"Yes, but first I must ask the advice of my parents."

Tohwarang's parents told her that the command of a king must be obeyed. So she arrayed herself as a bride and entered her bedchamber. She did not emerge for seven days and nights, during which time the scent of incense emanated from the room and five-colored clouds hovered constantly over the roof of the house. Then she emerged alone, her royal lover having vanished, and eventually it was found that she was pregnant. When the hour of her confinement drew near heaven and earth shook with thunder. The child was a boy, whom she named Pihyŏngnang.

When King Chinp'yŏng, Chinji's successor (579–632), heard this story, he had Tohwarang and her baby brought to the palace to live, and when the boy was fifteen he was made a knight. (This probably means that he was enrolled in the order of Hwarang, a quasi-military, quasi-religious organization of aristocratic youth in the Silla kingdom.)

It was noticed at court that the boy often wandered far from the palace at night alone and the king, becoming curious, one night assigned fifty soldiers to keep watch over him. Early next morning the captain of the soldiers reported to the King as follows:

"Your Majesty, we saw Pihyŏng fly over Moon Castle and land on the bank of Hwangch'ŏn Stream (west of Kyŏngju). There he disported himself with a crowd of spirits from heaven and goblins from earth until the ringing of the temple bell at dawn. Then he dismissed his ghostly crew and turned his flying footsteps toward the palace."

Pihyŏng was summoned to the throne forthwith, and the King enquired, "Is it true that you consort with ghosts and goblins?"

"Yes, sire, it is true."

"Then I command you to build a bridge across the stream north of Sinwon Temple."

"I obey, sire."

He gathered all his ghosts and goblins together and conveyed the royal order to them. They fell to at once, and by morning a stone bridge across the stream had been completed. The King was pleased, and called it Kwi-gyo, the Bridge of Ghosts. Thinking to make further use of Pihyŏng's supernatural acquaintances, he then asked, "Do you know any ghost who could return to life and assist the throne in administration?"

"Yes," replied Piyhyŏng, "Kildal is a fine statesman."

"Bring him to me."

The following morning Pihyŏng presented Kildal before the throne. The King made him a courtier, and found him to be loyal and straight as a bamboo. He commanded Yim Chong, the grand vizier, to adopt Kildal as his son, since Yim had no son of his own. Yim Chong complied, and later ordered Kildal to erect a pavilion south of Hŭngnyun Temple and to stand guard there day and night, for which reason the temple entrance became known as Kildal Gate.

But one day Kildal changed himself into a fox and ran away. (Foxes are closely associated with ghosts and spirits in East Asian folklore, somewhat as cats are in the West.) Pihyŏng then sent the other ghosts and goblins to catch Kildal and kill him instantly. After this all the bad ghosts and goblins feared Pihyŏng and came to him no more.

The people of Silla praised Pihyŏng in a song which goes as follows:

Here stands the house of Pihyŏng,
Strong son of the love-spirit of our great king.
All dancing devils, do not come but go away;
Fear the ghost-general and do not stay.

It became a custom to paste up copies of this song on the gates of commoners' houses as a protection against evil spirits.

30. The Jade Belt from Heaven

The twenty-sixth sovereign of Silla was King Paekjŏng (posthumous title Chinp'yŏng, 579–632). He ascended the throne in the eighth moon of the eleventh year of Takien of Hsüan-ti of Chen (579) even in the year of Kihae. He was eleven feet tall.

On one occasion King Chinp'yŏng visited Ch'ŏnju Temple, which had been constructed at his order. As he was ascending the stone steps, three of them broke beneath his weight. He gave no sign of surprise, however, and told his attendant to leave the stones as they were to show his successors. These stones still exist and are counted among the five "immovable" stones in the walled city of Kyŏngju.

In the year of King Chinp'yŏng's coronation, an angel from heaven appeared before the throne and said, "The heavenly emperor has commanded me to deliver this jade belt to you as his gift. Rise and accept it." When the King had accepted the heavenly gift with due decorum, the angel flew back to heaven. Silla kings from that time on always wore this jade belt while attending important sacrificial rites at national shrines.

Long afterwad Wang Kŏn, the founder of the Koryŏ dynasty (posthumous title T'aejo) cautioned his generals and officials on the eve of his conquest of Silla (935): "I forbid you to lay hands on the three treasures of Silla—the sixteen-foot Buddha image in Hwangnyong Temple, the nine-story pagoda at the same temple, and the jade belt of king Chinp'yŏng." So these treasures were never touched and the jade belt remained the property of the Silla royal family even after the surrender of the kingdom.

In the fifth moon of the fourth year (Chŏng-yu) of Ch'ingtai (937), Kim Pu, the grand vizier (King Kyŏngsun) presented to King T'aejo (Wang Kŏn, the founder of Koryŏ) a belt measuring ten armspans, carved in gold, studded with jade and glittering with sixty-two jade pendants. This was the heavenly belt given to King Chinp'yŏng. King T'aejo accepted it and kept it safe in the treasury of his.

palace.

The court musicians sang:

Heaven has given a long jade belt
To decorate our king's jeweled waist;
His Majesty's jade body is now heavier than ever—
Rebuild the palace with steel for him to tread!

(Jade was not only regarded as precious and beautiful but also had religious significance, One of the Chinese deities was known as the Jade Emperor.)

31. The Three Prophesies of Queen Sŏndŏk

The twenty-seventh sovereign of Silla was Queen Tŏkman (posthumous title Sŏndŏk, 632–647). She was the daughter of King Chinp'yong and ascended the throne in the sixth year (Imjin) of Chen-kuan of T'ang T'ai-tsung. During her reign she made three remarkable prophecies.

First, the Emperor T'ai-tsung (of the Chinese T'ang dynasty) sent her a gift of three handfuls of peony seeds with a picture of the flowers in red, white and purple. The Queen looked at the picture for a while and said, "The flowers will have no fragrance." The peonies were planted in the palace garden, and sure enough they had no odor from the time they bloomed until they faded.

Second, in the Jade Gate Pond at the Holy Shrine Temple a crowd of frogs gathered in winter (when frogs are normally hibernating) and croaked for three or four days. The people and courtiers wondered at this, and asked the Queen what its significance might be. She immediately commanded two generals, Alch'ŏn and P'ilt'an, to lead two thousand crack troops to Woman's Root Valley on the western outskirts of Kyŏngju to search out and kill enemy troops hidden in the forest.

The generals set off with a thousand troops each, and when they reached the valley found five hundred Packje soldiers hidden in the forest there. The Silla soldiers surrounded them and killed them all.

Then they found a Paekje general hiding behind a rock on South Mountain, whom they also killed. Finally, they intercepted a large Paekje force marching to invade Silla. This they routed, killing one thousand three hundred in the process.

Third, one day while the Queen was still in perfect health, she called her courtiers together and said, "I will surely die in a certain year, in a certain month, on a certain day. When I am gone, bury me in the middle of Torich'ŏn." The courtiers did not know the place and asked the Queen where it was, whereupon she pointed to the southern hill called Wolf Mountain.

On the very day she had predicted the Queen died, and her ashes were interred on the site she had chosen. Ten years later (656) the great King Munmu had Sach'ŏnwang Temple (the Temple of the Four Deva Kings) built beneath the Queen's tomb. Buddhist scripture alludes to two heavens called—Torich'ŏn and Sach'ŏnwangch'ŏn. All were amazed at the Queen's prescience and knowledge of the afterlife.

(The second temple was presumably built further down the hill, not directly under the tomb. The four deva kings are the Buddhist guardian spirits of the four directions, and representations of them are to be found at the entrance gates of most Korean Buddhist temples. King Munmu (661–681) could have been living in 656 but could not have been reigning as the date is early in the reign of his predecessor King Muryŏl. 654–661.)

During her lifetime the courtiers asked the Queen how she had been able to make these prophecies. She replied: "In the picture there were flowers but not butterflies, an indication that peonies have no smell. The T'ang Emperor teased my having no husband. As to the frogs at Jade Gate Pond, they seemed like soldiers, and Jade gate refers the female genitals (and so is similar to the name of the valley, which also contains the expression Okmun, jade gate). The female color is white, which is also the color symbolic of the west, so I knew the invaders were coming from the west (i.e. from Paekje). If a male organ enters a female organ it will surely die (lose its erection after orgasm), so I knew it would be easy to defeat the enemy.[19]

(The T'ang emperor who sent the picture of peonies in three colors meant it to symbolize the three queens of Korea, Sŏndŏk, Chindŏk and Chinsŏng, so perhaps he too had knowledge of the future. Chindok succeeded Sŏndŏk, reigning from 647 to 654, and Queen Chinsŏng did not ascend the throne until 888.)

The book Yangjisa-jŏn contains a detailed description of Queen Sŏndŏk's erection of Yŏngmyo (Holy Shrine) Temple. It was also this queen who built the stone astronomical observatory called Ch'ŏmsŏngdae. (This last still stands in Kyŏngju and is one of the most famous sights in Korea.)

32. Queen Chindŏk (647–654)

Queen Chindŏk was the twenty-eighth ruler of Silla. During her reign she composed a poem called T'aep'yŏng-ga, the song of peaceful reign. This, together with a piece of silk brocade which she had woven and embroidered, she sent to the T'ang Emperor in China. In great delight, the Emperor invested the Queen with the title of ruler of Kerim.

(Ilyon mentions a variant account from another source here, mostly because of a discrepancy in dates. But the real significance of this episode is that Silla was to conquer the other two kingdoms shortly with the help of T'ang Chinese armies, and subsequently to acknowledge T'ang suzerainty, though there was little Chinese interference at home. The Silla kings, however, agreed to seek official confirmation from the Chinese court of their accession to the throne, and no Korean monarch thereafter was regarded as a legitimate ruler unless he had the assent of the Chinese Emperor.)

Poem: "Great T'ang created the powerful Celestial Empire,
The glorious royal achievements so high bloom for aye;
The reigning monarch ceases war giving his soldiers rest,
He esteems culture as a noble heir to a hundred Kings.
He presides over wide heaven and sends down sweet rain;
He rules over the whole creation and gives luster to everything—
His deep benevolence is matched only by the sun and moon.
His circulating fortunes turn toward the world of Yao and Shun:

Brightly his banners flutter, covering the sky,
Loudly his gongs and drums ring, filling the earth.
Foreign barbarians who disobey the Emperor's commands
Fall to his swords and suffer heavy penalties;
Love and respect for warm-heartedness under his sway
Shine on myriads in light and shade.
Far and near happy people vie in raising voices
To praise his august virtues.
The four seasons rotate harmoniously like burning candles;
The seven luminaries shine wide all over the universe.
From the high mountain descend his assisting ministers,
The Emperor entrusts his administration to loyal vassals.
The virtues of the five emperors and three kings in one
Radiant body illuminate our T'ang sovereign"

(A few notes will be helpful here. The seven lights were the sun and moon and the five planets then known, which were thought to correspond to the five elements which the Chinese believed were the basic materials of the universe. They were fire (Mars), water (Mercury), wood (Jupiter), gold (Venus), and earth (Saturn). The "high mountain" referred to is in the Kunlun mountains far to the west, and the line is quoted from the Confucian Classic Book of Odes. Yao and Shun, together with the five emperors and three kings, were legendary rulers of China, whom its people believed had introduced the arts of civilization.)

One day six of the Queen's distinguished courtiers—Alch'ŏn-gong, Yimjong-gong, Suljong-gong, Horim-gong (father of the famous monk Chajang), Yŏmjang-gong and Yusin-gong—held a meeting on a giant rock on South Mountain to discuss state affairs. Suddenly a big tiger rushed in among them. The other courtiers shrieked in fear, but Alch'ŏn-gong only laughed. He seized the tiger by the tail, swung it against a rock and dashed out its brains.

In respect for his great strength and courage the courtiers offered Alch'ŏn-gong the presiding seat at their meeting, but they admired most the majestic air and wise strategy of Yusin-gong. (This last was quite possibly the famous Kim Yu-sin, who comes next. "Gong" was

evidently a title of rank.)

Silla had four sacred places where state ministers held councils on national issues to insure success (i.e. the sacred nature of the places insured success). These were Ch'ŏngsong Mountain in the east, Kaeji Mountain in the south, P'ijŏn in the west and Kŭmgang Mountain in the north. During the reign of Queen Chindŏk the first royal audience was given on New Year's Day. The title of Sirang was first conferred on high dignitaries during her reign.

(Some Korean historians hold that these council meetings were a survival of the meetings of clan leaders that preceded the formation of the monarchical government. They ceased after the unification.)

33. Kim Yu-sin

(Kim Yu-sin was a close relative of the royal family and a famous general. It was mostly under his direction that the kingdoms of Paekje and Koguryŏ were conquered in cooperation with forces from T'ang China and the peninsula unified under Silla rule.)

In the seventeenth year of King Chinp'yŏng, even in the year of Ŭlmyo (595) Kim Yu-sin was born to the royal Kim family of Sŏhyŏn-Kakkan, the son of Horyŏk-I Kan. (These last are evidently titles.) Seven star-crests were seen on the baby's back. His younger brother was Hŭm-sun and his two younger sisters were Po-hŭi (Ahae) and Munhŭi (Aji).

From his childhood he was admired by all who knew him for his wonderful deeds, and they called him the seven-star general. At the age of eighteen he mastered the art of swordsmanship and became a Hwarang (the patriotic youth organization mentioned earlier).[20]

Now among the Hwarang there was a doubtful character named Paek-sŏk (White Stone) who had mingled with them for many years, though nobody knew his origin. He knew that Yu-sin was making plans day and night to conquer Koguryŏ and Paekje. One night he whispered secretly to Yu-sin, "My comrade, we must spy out the enemy's true strength before we go to attack him."

Yu-sin gladly agreed, and soon thereafter they set out on their journey. One day as they paused on a mountain-top to rest, two girls appeared from the forest and followed after Yu-sin. When they arrived at the village of Kolhwach'on to put up for the night, a third girl appeared, and all three, in a most engaging manner, presented delicious cakes for Yu-sin to eat. (Paek-sok was presumably somewhere else and knew nothing of this.) Yu-sin was transported with joy and immediately fell in love with the three of them.

"My beautiful ladies," he said, "you are three laughing flowers and I am a humming bee. Will you suffer me to suck honey from your golden hearts the whole night?"

"Yes," they replied coyly, "we understand. Come to the forest with us and there we shall have our pleasure in beds of fragrant flowers, unseen and unheard by the other boy."

So Yu-sin went into the forest with the three girls, but as soon as they arrived the girls changed into noble goddesses. "We are no laughing flowers or nymphs," they told Yu-sin, "but three goddesses who guard the three sacred mountains—Naerim, Hyŏllye and Kolhwa. We have come to warn you that you are being lured by an enemy spy. Be on your guard! Farewell!" And with these words the three goddesses rose into the sky and flew away.

Yu-sin prostrated himself in amazement and gratitude before the departing goddesses and then returned to his tavern in Kolhwa-kwan where Paek-sŏk was fast asleep. Early next morning Yu-sin awakened him and said, "Look! We started on a long journey to a foreign country in such a hurry that I forgot my purse, and left it at home. Let's go back and get it before proceeding any farther."

Paek-sŏk suspected nothing, and they returned to Kyŏngju, where Yu-sin immediately had him arrested and bound hand and foot. "Fellow!" he roared, "drop your Hwarang disguise and confess the truth!"

Completely cowed, Paek-sŏk confessed. "I am a man of Koguryŏ. The officials of my king's court believe that Kim Yu-sin of Silla is the reincarnation of Ch'u-nam, a renowned fortune-teller in my country.

"Listen! On the frontier between Silla and Koguryŏ there is a river that flows backwards. So King Pojang (642–668) called Ch'u-nam to the inner palace and said to him, 'Look here! Why does the water of this river flow backwards, upside down and inside out? Why do they call it Ungja-su (male and female water) while all other streams are called Jaung-su (female and male water)? Can you tell me whether this has any unusual significance?'

" 'Your Majesty,' replied the soothsayer, 'the Queen acts against the natural course of ŭm (yin) and yang, and the abnormal situation in the royal bed-chamber is reflected on the mirror-like surface of the river.' "

(This is in reference to yin and yang, the male and female principles whose interrelations are the basis of all natural processes in Chinese philosophy. Ch'u-nam is implying that the Queen is the real ruler and not the King, an evil situation from the contemporary point of view.)

" 'I am perplexed with shame,' the King said.

"The Queen was angry. 'He talks nonsense,' she said. 'This is a disloyal libel by a cunning fox to undermine the Queen's position.'

" 'I have told the truth, Your Majesty,' said Ch'u-nam. "What is done in the shade is brought into the light by my magic art."

"O King,' said the Queen, 'if he knows everything let him answer one more question, and if he is wrong let him suffer a heavy penalty." She retired to her inner chamber and returned with a box in which she had concealed a large rat.

" 'What is in the box?' the King asked.

" 'A rat,' said Ch'u-nam.

" 'How many rats?' asked the Queen.

" 'Eight.'

" 'Your answer is wrong,' the Queen said triumphantly, 'and you shall die.'

" 'When I am dead,' said Chu'u-nam, 'I shall be reborn as a great general who will destroy Koguryŏ.'

"So they cut off Ch'u-nam's head. But when they slit open the

belly of the rat they found seven unborn rats in it. Then everyone in the palace knew that Ch'unam had told the truth. On that very night King Pojang had a dream in which he saw the spirit of Ch'u-nam enter the bosom of the wife of Sŏhyŏn-gong (Kim Yu-sin's father) in Silla. The King awoke in astonishment and discussed the matter with his courtiers. They remembered Ch'u-nam's vow and sent me to take you to Koguryŏ. So here I am."

Yu-sin put the Koguryŏ spy to the sword and offered sacrifices of a hundred delicacies to the three goddesses who had saved his life.

When Yu-sin's wife Lady Chaemae died, they buried her in the upper valley of Ch'ŏngyŏn (Blue Pool), which has been known as Chaemae Valley ever since. Every spring when the birds and flowers returned the royal Kim clan used to gather on the bank of a stream in a pine forest there to feast and do honor to her spirit. They also erected a small temple there called Songhwa-bang (Pine-Flower Hermitage) dedicated to her.

During the reign of King Kyŏngmyŏng the fifty-fourth sovereign (917–924), the King conferred on Yu-sin the posthumous title of Hŭngmu-Taewang (Great King of Mars). His tomb now stands on a mountain peak, facing east, to the northeast of Moji Temple on the West Mountain.

34. T'aejong Ch'unch'u-gong (King Muryŏl. 654–661)

The twenty-ninth ruler of Silla was Kim Ch'un-ch'u, known as T'aejong the Great. His father was Yongsu-kakkan, his mother was Lady Ch'ŏnmyŏng, a daughter of King Chinp'yŏng, and his Queen was Munmyŏng-hwanghu, Mun-hŭi, the youngest sister of Kim Yu-sin.

One night Mun-hŭi's sister Po-hŭi had a dream in which she climbed up Sŏ-ak Mountain and urinated, and the stream of water from her body rolled down in cataracts and inundated the whole city of Kyŏngju. In the morning she told her sister about it.

"That is very interesting," said Mun-hŭi, "I will buy your dream."

"What will you give me for it?" Po-hŭi asked.

"I will give you my skirt of embroidered brocade."

"Very well, I agree."

Mun-hŭi spread her skirt and said, "I am ready to catch your dream."

"Fine!" laughed Po-hŭi. "I give you my dream of last night." Mun-hŭi smiled. "Thank you, sister. Here is my skirt. Wear it and you will look more beautiful."

Ten days later while Yu-sin and Ch'un-ch'u were playing ball on the Festival of the Crow (see above. "The shooting of the harp-case"), he accidentally stepped on a ribbon which was trailing from Ch'un-ch'u's jacket and tore it off. "I am sorry, " said Yu-sin. "Come with me to my house and we will have your ribbon sewn back on."

"Don't worry about it," said Ch'unch'u, and the two youths went off to the ladies' quarters. Yu-sin called to Po-hŭi to come and sew on the ribbon, but she was too shy and said it would be improper for her to be with a young man. Then he called to Mun-hŭi, and she came and sewed on the ribbon, blushing deeply all the while. Ch'unch'u fell in love with her on the spot and from then on visited her day and night.

Somewhat later Yu-sin discovered that Mun-hŭi was pregnant, He was furious and immediately began preparations to have her burned to death as an example to all immoral women.

That day when Queen Sŏndŏk went up South Mountain for a picnic she noticed flames and smoke rising to the sky. Upon inquiring of her attendants, she learned that Yu-sin was about to burn his sister to death because an illicit love affair had resulted in her pregnancy. The Queen looked around and noticed that Ch'un-ch'u was as pale as death.

"So it was you!" she said. "Go quickly and save the girl!" Ch'un-ch'u leaped on his horse and galloped quickly to Yu-sin's house, shouting, "Queen's order! Queen's order! Do not put her to death!" And so Mun-hŭi was saved.

A few days later Ch'un'ch'u and Mun-hŭi were formally married.

Following the death of Queen Chindŏk he was elevated to the throne in the fifth year of T'ang Kao-tsung (654) and ruled eight years, dying at the age of fifty-nine. They buried him near Aegong Temple and erected a magnificent stone monument with beautiful carvings on it which is known as Muryŏl-wang-nŭng (the Tomb of King Muryŏl).

Because this king succeeded in conquering and adding to Silla the three Han territories (Mahan, Chinhan and Pyŏnhan, in the south) with the assistance of Kim Yu-sin, one of the most valiant and skillful generals Korea had ever produced, he was given the posthumous title T'aejong *(T'ai-tsung in Chinese), which means "grand ancestor" (and was customarily given to the second ruler in a dynasty; Ilyon is pointing out that it was an exceptional mark of honor to award this title to Ch'un-ch'u.)*

His six sons, the princes Pŏpmin, Inmun, Munwang, Notan, Chigyŏng and Kaewŏn, were all born of Mun-hŭi, who thus fulfilled her sister's dream, flooding the capital with the issue of her body. In addition she brought up eight children (three boys and five girls) born to the King of concubines and court ladies.

As for meals, the King ate three bushels of rice and nine pheasants a day. After the conquest of Paekje in 660 he stopped eating lunch, but his daily food amounted to six bushels of rice, six bushels (?) of wine and ten pheasants. During his reign one roll (40 yards) of cotton cloth could be bartered for thirty to fifty large bags of rice, and all the people praised his benevolent rule. *(It is unlikely that the King alone consumed such quantities of food. Probably the daily supplies of his court are intended here.)*

While he was crown prince he visited Changan, the capital of T'ang China, to ask for military aid in his coming conquest of Koguryŏ. The Emperor admired his majestic deportment and invited him to stay at the Chinese court, but he excused himself and returned to Silla.

In those days the eldest son of King Mu of Paekje (600–641) was praised for his moral integrity and military valor. But no sooner had he ascended the throne, in the fifteenth year of T'ang T'ai-tsung (641) than he gave himself up to drink and debauchery and forsook the

demanding duties of government. A loyal vassal, Sŏng Ch'ung called Chwap'yŏng (this is an official title for Minister of State) remonstrated with the King, warning him of the imminence of foreign attack, for which patriotic action he was thrown into prison, where he died after sending a memorial to the throne advising the fortification of the mouth of the Paek-Kang (White River now Kŭm-gang) at Kibŏlp'o (Now Changhang) against the coming of a Chinese fleet and the strengthening of fortifications at T'anhyŏn (Charcoal Pass) along the border with Silla, but the dissolute King Ŭija paid no heed to this prophetic advice.

(The unlikely events described in the following paragraphs are all evil omens. It will be recalled that foxes especially were associated with ghosts and spirits, and that white is the color of mourning, and hence of death, in East Asia.)

In the fourth year of Hsienking of the T'ang Emperor Kao-tsung (659), a large red horse appeared at Ohoe-sa (Ohap-sa) Temple in Paekje and galloped around the temple six times. In the second moon of that year many foxes entered the palace of King Ŭija and a white fox jumped up on the monarch's jade table and sat there for a long time.

In the fourth moon a hen in the palace of the crown prince mated with a little bird that swooped down from the sky.

In the fifth moon a thirty-foot-long fish leaped out of the water and died on the bank of Sabi-su (a river in Puyŏ), and everyone who ate the flesh of this fish died.

In the ninth moon the awe-inspiring giant oaks in the palace gardens wailed with human voices, and during the nights ghosts and goblins cried on the boulevard south of the palace.

In the second moon of the fifth year (660), the water in all the wells of Puyŏ and in Sabi-su (White-Horse River or Kŭm-gang) turned blood-red, and small fish leaped out of the water on the western seashore and fell dead. There were so many that the people could not collect and eat them all.

In the fourth moon tens of thousands of frogs appeared in the treetops. The citizens of the capital ran out of their houses in fear, and

fell dead by hundreds as if they had been attacked from behind, and people lost their fortunes by thousands.

In the sixth moon, the monks of Wanghŭng Temple saw as in a mirage a forest of ship's masts rush into the temple on the rising tide, and dogs as big as deer leaped from the west to the banks of Sabi-su, barked at the palace and were gone. The dogs of the city gathered in packs on the roads, where they barked and howled in chorus and then scattered with mournful whines. A terrifying ghost entered the palace and cried loudly, "Paekje is ruined! Paekje is ruined!" and then descended into the bowels of the earth.

King Ŭija ordered his servants to dig in the ground where the ghost had disappeared and at a depth of three feet they found a turtle with ten Chinese characters carved on its back which read, "Paekje is a round moonwheel; Silla is a new moon." The King called for a fortune-teller, and asked him what the inscription meant. The aged soothsayer replied, " 'Round moonwheel' means a full moon, which is about to wane; the 'new moon' will grow larger and larger night by night." The king was angry and had the fortune-teller put to death. Then a courtier flattered him, saying, "Your Majesty, 'round moonwheel' signifies the zenith of power, and 'new moon' represents the weak and small. This means that Paekje is a large kingdom and Silla is a small kingdom." The King laughed for joy.

When King Muryŏl of Silla (Kim Ch'un-ch'u) heard of these grotesque events, he said "These are signs of the doom of Paekje." In the fifth year of Hsienking (660) he dispatched Kim In-mun to the T'ang court to ask for military aid.

The Emperor Kao-tsung ordered out 130,000 crack troops under the command of his Left Tiger Guard General Su Ting-fang and his subordinates Liu Po-ying, Feng Shih-kuei and Pang Hsiao-kung. They crossed the sea on 1,900 war vessels and attacked Paekje. (Ilyŏn notes here that local records put the number of T'ang troops at 122,711, but that no definite figure is given in the official T'ang history.) Moreover the Emperor appointed King Muryŏl commander of ground forces and asked him to send Silla troops to fight on the side of the T'ang

army.

When general Su's forces arrived at Tŏkmul Island to the west of Silla, King Muryŏl commanded general Kim Yu-sin to lead 50,000 picked warriors to cooperate with the Chinese army.

General Su landed his troops at the mouth of the White Horse River and quickly defeated the Paekje defenders. At the same time, his warships rode a favorable tide up the river to the accompaniment of fifes and drums. The T'ang cavalry and infantry killed tens of thousands of Paekje soldiers and laid siege to Puyŏ, the capital.

Meanwhile the Silla army crossed the sky-kissing mountains through the high pass of T'anhyŏn. The patriotic general Kyebaek led his 5,000 soldiers up to the plains of Hwangsan (now Yŏnsan), where he ordered them to hold or die. At first, through valiant efforts, they were able to halt the superior Silla force, but not for long. The general fell on the field of honor, and the last defensive line of Paekje had been broken.

The T'ang and Silla forces now settled down before the gates of Puyŏ while the two commanders planned a coordinated attack. At this time a fierce bird circled around the head of general Su, and a fortune-teller said it was an omen of his sure death in the coming battle. The general trembled from head to foot and was about to order his men to turn back. But Kim Yu-sin unsheathed his long sword, struck the swooping bird dead, and laid it at the general's feet, saying "A small grotesque bird cannot interfere with our great expedition against a bad king."

King Ŭija and his crown prince fled to Ungjin, while his second son Prince T'ae assumed the throne and fought valiantly against the invaders. But seeing his followers desert him and flee, he opened the city gates and surrendered. General Su captured King Ŭija and Crown Prince Yung. He also took prisoner two further princes, the aforesaid T'ae and Prince Yŏn, eighty-eight high officials and generals, and 12,807 Paekje civilians. All these he took away to the T'ang capital, Changan.

Originally Paekje was divided into five provinces, thirty-seven counties, 200 towns and 760,000 households. But the victorious Chinese

reorganized it and placed a Chinese military governor in each of the provinces to take charge of the local administration. General Liu Jen-yuan was put in command of Chinese forces occupying Puyŏ while general Wang Wen-tao was appointed governor of Ungjin (now Kongju) with the special task of pacifying the defeated Paekje troops.

(The significance of this was that the T'ang government plainly intended to incorporate Paekje into the Chinese empire a fact which was not lost upon Silla.)

General Su presented his prisoners to the T'ang Emperor, who, after rebuking them, set them free. When King Ŭija died of an illness soon after, the Emperor conferred a posthumous title on him, ordered a royal funeral and had him buried beside the tombs of Sun Hao and Chen Shu-pao. *(These were the tombs of the rulers of states during two periods of Chinese disunity. By his action the Emperor, while recognizing Uija as having been a legitimate ruler, also announced that the Paekje kingdom was now defunct like the states ruled by the two whose tombs neighbored Uija's and implied that Paekje was now under Chinese rule.)*

In the second year of Lungshuo (662) Emperor Kao-tsung ordered out another large force under general Su Ting-fang to attack Koguryŏ. These troops defeated a Koguryŏ army in the battle of P'aegang and surrounded P'yŏngyang. But the valiant defenders held them off and they were unable to take the city. Finally the Chinese troops were routed in an attack during a snowstorm and forced to scatter and flee.

Returning defeated to China, general Su was apointed the Emperor's special envoy to Liangchow, to pacify the troublesome barbarians in that border area, but died soon after taking up his duties. The Emperor mourned his death and conferred on him the posthumous titles of Left Cavalry Marshal and Military governor of Yaochow. (Ilyŏn says this last paragraph was taken from the official T'ang history.)

Previous to this, a T'ang army had been sent under general Su to attack Koguryŏ a second time, and had pitched its tents on the out-

skirts of P'yŏnyang. A courier was sent to Silla with a request for food supplies.

This posed something of a problem. The supplies, if sent, would have to pass through Koguryŏ territory, and thus there was a risk of their being captured by the enemy. Not sending them, on the other hand, would be abandoning an ally in his hour of need. Kim Yu-sin volunteered to take charge of the transport and managed to reach the Chinese camp with 20,000 bushels of grain under heavy guard.

Sometime later Kim Yu-sin dispatched two messengers to general Su, asking if his army should join the T'ang forces in an allied attack on Koguryŏ. In return he received a drawing by the T'ang commander of a calf and a young phoenix. This was a puzzle, and the great monk Wonhyo was asked to interpret it. He said that both young creatures had lost their mothers, and that this meant the Silla forces operating in Koguryŏ were in danger and should be pulled back at once to rejoin their "parent."

Kim Yu-sin ordered his troops to cross the Pai River (now Taedong-gang) and go north as fast as possible. But while the crossing was in progress Koguryŏ troops attacked them from behind, and thousands were killed. Kim Yu-sin launched a counterattack the following day and slaughtered many Koguryŏ warriors.

An old Silla book contains the following account. "In the fifth year of King Munmu (665) in the eighth moon, the King (of Silla) led a large army to the fortress of Ungjin, where he met with Prince Yung. the (T'ang) puppet ruler of Puyŏ. The two sovereigns built an altar and killed a white horse as a sacrifice to the heavenly gods and guardian deities of mountains and rivers. Then they painted their mouths with the blood of the sacrifice as a symbol of their pledge of friendship. (A very ancient custom is here recorded.) Next they read aloud the following oath. (The oath is interesting evidence of the typical Chinese assumption that because of her superior civilization China was by right the ruler of all other states and that political virtue consisted chiefly in submission to the will of the Emperor.)

" 'The kings of Paekje hitherto have taken a vacillating course in

their foreign relations and have neglected good neighborliness with Silla. Instead of maintaining amity in accordance with the royal marriage tie (there had been marriages between the Silla and Paekje royal houses) they allied themselves with Koguryŏ and Japan in order to commit repeated acts of brutality, raping the fair land and massacring the innocent inhabitants of Silla.

" 'The Celestial Emperor of the Middle Kingdom (China), mindful of the welfare of these calamity-stricken people, dispatched celestial envoys to the scene of conflict to make peace. Nevertheless Paekje, relying on her remoteness and her fortifications, disdained the Celestial Emperor's command, thus provoking him to send out an army to subjugate the rebels.

" 'The palaces of Paekje ought to be demolished and ponds dug in their ruins as an example to posterity. 'Embrace the meek and punish the rebel' was the splendid practice of our imperial ancestors; 'Raise the vanquished and heal the broken' was the benvolent rule of our predecessors, whose noble virtues should be copied to add new luster to the royal chronicles. Thus the Emperor made Yung of Puyŏ, ex-king of Paekje, governor of Ungjin to worship the shrines of his ancestors and rule his native land.

" 'We command Prince Yung to rely upon Silla as an ally and friend, to dispel the old enmity and create new bonds of amity and lasting peace between the two countries in order that they may become our loyal vassals. We hereby send our right guard general Liu Jen-yuan to convey our wish that marriages be contracted between the two royal houses, and that the two kings paint their mouths with the blood of a white horse in token of their pledge to share their joys and sorrows and relieve each other's calamities like brothers.

" 'This our command is to be inscribed on an iron plate in letters of gold and permanently displayed as a symbol of royal loyalty to the imperial throne. If either of you disobeys our command and attacks the other, the spirits of heaven will look down upon your rebellion and send hundreds of catastrophes upon you, so that you will forfeit the privileges of raising your children, ruling your native land and worship-

ping your ancestors.'

"This the Celestial Emperor commanded Prince Yung of Puyŏ, and he now obeys. In witness whereof our solemn vow is inscribed in letters of gold on this iron plate and placed in the royal shrine (of Silla) for our posterity to ten thousand generations to know and keep our pledge and never to violate it. We pray the gods of heaven and earth to drink this divine blood, to partake of the sacrifice and to give us blessings."

After the ceremony the gifts for the gods were buried on the northern side of the altar and the oath was inscribed in golden letters on an iron plate and placed in the (Silla) royal shrine. The oath was drafted by Liu Jen-kuei, military governor of Taebang (i.e. northern Paekje).

The official chronicle of the T'ang dynasty states that King Ŭija and Crown Prince Yung were sent to the Chinese capital by general Su Ting-fang. This oath is clear evidence that the Emperor released Prince Yung and sent him back to rule Paekje in the Chinese behalf.

An old Paekje book states that King Ŭija with his concubines and court ladies leaped from a great cliff north of Puyŏ into the river rather than be captured by the victorious enemy, so that the people call it the Rock of Falling Deaths. But this is a mistake. Only the court ladies leaped from the rock, while King Ŭija died in China as we have seen.

(There is indeed a sheer cliff on the bank of the White Horse River near Puyŏ, from which the Paekje court ladies are reputed to have leaped when the city was taken. It is known today as the Rock of the Falling Flowers.)

A legend from Silla times says that after the destruction of Paekje and Koguryŏ Chinese forces remained in the Sangju area awaiting an opportunity to attack Silla and bring the whole peninsula under Chinese rule. Kim Yu-sin, the legend says, forestalled this plot by inviting the Chinese soldiers to a great banquet and feeding them poisoned birds' meat. The dead were then buried under a huge mound of earth. Even today there is a mound near the T'ang bridge in Sangju county northwest of Kyŏngju which it is claimed is the grave of the

poisoned T'ang soldiers.

But the official T'ang chronicles contain no mention of this incident, either to conceal it or because the legend is groundless. Moreover, had this poisoning occurred at the time stated in the legend, Silla could hardly have asked the T'ang court for help in a later conflict with Koguryŏ. It seems, therefore, that this Silla folk-tale has no basis in fact. It is true that Silla took possession of Koguryŏ territory after the battle of Mujin (668) and was never subjugated to China, but there is no evidence of a murder of Chinese troops.

Following the defeat of Paekje and the withdrawal of Chinese troops the King of Silla sent an army to conduct mopping-up operations. No sooner had they taken up positions in Hansan Fortress, however, then they were completely surrounded by forces from Koguryŏ and Malgal (a Manchurian group ruled by Koguryŏ). Fierce battles ensued, and by the time the siege had endured for forty days the situation of the Silla troops seemed hopeless.

In consternation, the King of Silla called his courtiers together to ask for their advice, but they all hung their heads in silent resignation. But general Kim Yu-sin arose in the royal conference and said to the King, "Your Majesty, this is too great a crisis to be warded off by human strength alone. Only a miracle can bring succor to our men."

So saying he climbed up Sŏngbu-san (Star-floating Mountain) where he built an altar and prayed for a miracle from heaven. Suddenly a huge fireball appeared above the altar and flew toward the north shooting flames. Just as the enemy were about to attack the exhausted troops in the lonely fortress, it changed into lightning and struck their stone-shooting cannons. (The existence of cannons in the seventh century seems hardly likely. Perhaps they were catapults.) With thunderous sounds it smashed bows, arrows, spears and projectiles, knocking many of the enemy troops to the ground. Those who survived this heavenly bombing scattered and fled in all directions, and the Silla troops were saved. This is the reason the place is named Star-floating Mountain, for the fireball floated above it like a fiery star.

There is another story about the Star-floating Mountain which

has nothing to do with the fireball. It seems there was once a foolish old man who planned to become an aristocrat overnight by obtaining a government position through some marvellous trick. He sent his son to the top of a high mountain near the capital every night and instructed him to lift a flaming torch in the air at midnight. The people of Kyŏngju thought that it was a fire-star of war floating low in the sky, foretelling a national calamity.

The King also saw it, and ordered the people to pray to heaven for the removal of this evil omen which had appeared almost over his palace, offering a big reward to anyone who could make it go away. Then the foolish old man came forward and said that he could do it. But the royal astrologer said to the King, "Your Majesty, this is not a sign of national calamity but of private disaster, foretelling a son's tragic death and a father's lamentation." So the King decided to take no further action for the moment but to wait and see. Sure enough, the very next morning as the old man's son was climbing down the mountain he was caught and killed by a tiger.

During the reign of King Sinmun (681–692) the T'ang Emperor Kao-tsung sent an envoy to the Silla court with the following message: "Our august father, because of his unification of the Celestial Empire during his lifetime in harmony with the universal virtues and by the merits of wise ministers such as Wei Cheng and Li Shun-feng, who assisted the throne so well, was honored with the title T'ai-tsung (pronounced T'aejong in Korean). Silla is a small nation outside China and giving your former King (Muryŏl) the same posthumous title as a Chinese Emperor is presumptuous and disloyal. We command you to change this royal title at once."

The King of Silla sent a polite reply to the Emperor as follows: "Though Silla is a small nation, her King was able to unify the three kingdoms during his lifetime by the merit of Kim Yu-sin, who assisted the throne with unexcelled valor. Therefore the King was honored with the title T'aejong."

When the Emperor read this letter he recalled having heard a wondrous voice from heaven before his accession, saying that one of

the great men in the thirty-three heavens was born in Silla and was called Yu-sin. He could not help admiring the great warrior and sent a second message to the court at Kyŏngju, which read "Do not bother to change the royal title T'ai-tsung. It is too good a name to change.—from the T'ang Emperor."

Tradition says that when King Muryŏl ascended the throne (654) a countryman presented to him as a congratulatory gift a pig with one head, two bodies and eight legs. A wise man in the court interpreted this as an omen that the King would annex all the territory in the eight directions under heaven.

The Silla royal custom of wearing T'ang court robes and carrying an ivory scepter in T'ang fashion began with King Muryŏl, for whom the famous monk Chajang brought them back from China.

35. Changch'un-nang and P'arang

At the battle of Hwang-san (now Yŏnsan) between the armies of Silla and Paekje, two Silla Hwarang named Changch'un-nang and P'arang were killed. When King Muryŏl attacked Paekje in a later battle, the two youths appeared to him in a dream and said, "We offered our lives for king and country in a former battle. Though we are now only pale ghosts, we wish to join Your Majesty's army to defend the fatherland forever, but, being overshadowed by Su Ting-fang, the T'ang general, we have to follow behind him all the time. We beg you to give us a small unit of crack troops so that we may attack the enemy and fight for a swift victory."

The King was deeply moved by their patriotic spirit even in death. He ordered a memorial service to be held in a pavilion called Mosan-jŏng, with a solemn Buddhist rite and erected Chang-ŭi Temple in Puk-Hansanju (near modern Seoul) to the memory of their gallant souls. (The ruins of this temple are still to be seen outside Ch'ang-ŭi Mun (gate of righteousness) in the old city walls to the northwest of Seoul.)

Footnotes to Book One

(1) Ilyŏn does not actually give these details, but simply alludes to the Chinese sources in which they are found.

(2) This means "writings of Wei." The passage quoted by Ilyŏn is not found in any extant work of this title, but even the surviving texts are in a fragmentary state. It is most likely that he here alludes to a document that has since vanished.

(3) Properly Sankuo-Weichih, a Chinese book. The passage actually reads as follows: "King Joon took his left and right court ladies with him in his flight across the sea to the land of Han, and assumed the title of the King of Han." The phrase "across the sea" is not to be taken literally; it simply means "to a foreign country."

(4) The Ch'ienhan-shu contains no such passage, but a geographical description of the southern prefecture is found in the chapter "Somyŏng-hyŏn" and one of the eastern prefecture in the chapter "Pul-i-hyŏn."

(5) South Taebang was not established during the Tsao-Wei dynasty (which began in 220) but a state of this name did exist for a time after the destruction of Paekje in the seventh century.

(6) This must be Sungsolgol on the north bank of the Yalu in Manchuria.

(7) Habaek was the spirit of the waters of the Yellow River in China.

(8) This egg myth was widespread in northeast Asia as an explanation of the divine origins of founders of dynasties and the like. The implication in the story that the egg was fathered by the sun indicates the existence of sun-worship in early Korea.

(9) Evidently a mistake. The Old and New T'ang-shu (Paichi-chuan) says that "at the time of the fall of Paekje there were 760,000 households in that country."

(10) Ilyŏn says King Hyŏkkŏse was born of "the goddess mother of Sŏsul." A similar Chinese legend says that the goddess mother of Sŏndo (Hsien-t'ao, meaning fairy peach) gave birth to a sage who founded a nation.

(11) An eighth-century Silla scholar. He is known to have written a book of biographies of famous monks and another concerning the Hwarang, but neither of these works has survived.

(12) This is a reference to the famous songs of Silla, twenty-five of which have survived. They were recorded by using Chinese characters for

their phonetic values only, a system called *Idu*. These songs are the only records extant of the Korean language during this early period.

(13) A reference to the seven symbolic treasures of Buddhist lore. They are represented in the scriptures as gold, silver, glass, the giant pearl-clam of India, agate, amber and coral.

(14) Attention is called to the resemblance of this story to the tale of "Ch'on-ilch'ang (Amanohiboko), the Prince of Silla," to be found in Japanese histories. Also see Dr. Yi Pyong-do's *Outline of Korean History* under "The Colonization of the Chinhan Tribes."

(15) The Samguk Sagi says Pak Che-sang was an off spring of Pak Hyŏkkŏse and the fifth-generation descendant of King P'asa. Ilyŏn gives his family name as Kim, but it is Pak in popular tradition.

(16) In Samguk Sagi (First year of the reign of King Silsŏng) Mihae is represented as Misahŭn, and in the book Nihonshoki (Ninth year of the reign of Chuai Tenno and Empress Zingu) he is called Mishikoji, a son of King P'asa of Silla.

(17) In ancient China the five penalties were, in order, cutting off the nose, both feet, the male organ and finally the head.

(18) An astrologer who foretold the future by observing the heavenly bodies.

(19) Samguk Sagi says, "To the west of the royal palace was a pond called Okmunji and on the southwestern outskirts of Kyŏngju was a valley called Okmun-gok." Okmun, as pointed out in the text, means jade gate, a reference to the female sex organ.

(20) *Hwarang* is literally Flower Youth, representing Silla's knighthood and chivalry. Chosen from among aristocratic sons of physical beauty and trained in civil and military arts, they were promoted to official positions. To cultivate the spirit of loyalty to King, filial piety to parents, sincerity to friends, bravery in war and mercy in killing animals the Hwarang Order was ordained in the days of King Chinhŭng as the flower of Silla's national army whose morale reached its zenith during the unification of the three Kingdoms by Silla, when that country placed military glory above literary skill—all strong youths wished to be knightsof the King and to live and die for the country. Now the campus of the Military Academy near Seoul is called Hwarang-dae (Hill of the Hwarangs).

BOOK TWO

52. King Kyŏngmyŏng (917–924)

During the reign of King Kyŏngmyŏng the fifty-fourth sovereign the dogs in the mural painting at the Temple of the Four Deva Kings began to whine mournfully. The monks chanted scriptures for three days, until the dogs stopped, but after a time they again whined for half a day. In February of 920 the shadow of the pagoda at Hwangnyong Temple appeared upside down on the grounds of the house of Kŭmmo-saji and in October of the same year the strings of the bows held in the hands of the gods of the five directions at the Temple of the Four Deva Kings were mysteriously cut away and the dogs in the mural painting rushed out into the temple courtyard and back into the picture again.

53. King Kyŏng'ae (924–927)

The fifty-fifth sovereign was King Kyŏng'ae. In the first year of his reign, on the 19th of February, the King held a Buddhist seminar at Hwangnyong Temple, and entertained 300 monks of the "Sŏn" sect at a banquet. This was the beginning of the Hundred Seat Preaching of the Sŏn sect. (The practice became a daily one. "Sŏn" is more familiar to Western readers under its Japanese name, "Zen".)

54. King Kyŏngsun (927–935, the last king)

The fifty-sixth sovereign of Silla was Kim Pu, the Great King, whose posthumous title is Kyŏngsun. In the year 926, during the reign of his predecessor King Kyŏng'ae, Chin Hwon, the tiger-spirited general of Later Paekje invaded Silla, attacking Koul-pu. King Kyŏng'ae sent a request for military aid to Wang Kŏn, the King of Koryŏ. but before the troops could arrive Chin Hwon led an attack on Kyŏngju and took the city.

King Kyŏng'ae had been enjoying a party with his Queen and court

ladies, merrily drinking, singing and dancing. When the rebel soldiers entered the city the King and Queen hid themselves in the inner palace, while the attendant nobles and their wives scattered in all directions, prostrating themselves before the victorious enemy and offering to be slaves if only their lives were spared.

Chin Hwon set up his headquarters in the royal palace and ordered his men to plunder both public and private treasures. He forced the King to fall on his own sword, violated the Queen and loosed his soldiers upon the court ladies and the King's concubines. After these outrages he chose Kim Pu, a distant cousin of King Kyŏng'ae, placed him on the throne, and withdrew from Kyŏngju in triumph, carrying off hundreds of aristocrats and pretty women together with precious jewels from the palace.

No sooner had the new King emerged from his coronation than he changed his dragon robe for mourning clothes and his royal crown for a hempen hat. Then he ordered that the body of King Kyŏng'ae lie in state in the West Palace, where he wailed loudly with his courtiers.

The King of Koryŏ in Songdo (Kaesŏng) dispatched a special envoy to Kyŏngju to convey his condolence and deep sympathy. In March of the following year he visited Kyŏngju in person, accompanied by fifty horsemen. King Kyŏngsun and his court came to the outskirts of the city to greet him, and invited him to a welcoming banquet at Imhae Pavilion.

After the formalities had been observed King Kyŏngsŭn shed tears as he told his noble visitor of Chin Hwon's savage raid and the falling fortunes of Silla. In tears himself, the King of Koryŏ comforted his royal host, and extended his visit for ten days before returning home. During his stay in Kyŏngju his soldiers behaved like gentlemen and not one of them violated military discipline or committed lawless acts. The people of Silla—men and women, boys and girls—congratulated each other, comparing Chin Hwon to a man-eating tiger and Wang Kŏn to an affectionate father.

On the day of the mid-autumn moon festival the King of Koryŏ sent an envoy to the Silla court with an embroidered brocade robe and

a saddle for the King and gifts for all the nobles and generals according to their rank.

By October of the year 935 most of the territory of Silla was occupied by rebels, and there were more uprisings daily. The countryside was infested with bandits, the royal troops had lost the martial Hwarang spirit, and famine stalked the land. It seemed to the King that there was no end to his troubles and that his decayed kingdom, despite its glorious history of a thousand years, might collapse at any moment.

In desperation His Majesty called a royal conference of his highest officials and said to them, "We are met to discuss a very grave matter. Should we surrender to Wang Kŏn and cede to this kind-hearted neighboring monarch our sovereignty over Silla or should we continue to fight the fierce wardogs at home and prepare for a final battle for supremacy with Wang Kŏn, which it seems to me would mean the total destruction of Silla?"

Opinions were divided and there was considerable argument. The Crown Prince wished to fight to the end. "The rise or fall of a nation depends on the will of Heaven," he said. "We must rally all loyal subjects and patriotic soldiers to defend the fatherland with all our strength, of one mind with our people till the last minute. Why should we give up without a fight? How can we so easily surrender our thousand-year-old country to a neighbor?"

"Silla is now helpless and we cannot hold out any longer," the King replied. "If we are neither strong nor weak, we will be caught in the middle. It is unbearable to see thousands of good people suffering tragic deaths in a losing war. Rather, we must lose face and surrender peacefully to save the people from great catastrophe. Kim Pong-hyu, my loyal minister! Go and present my official letter of voluntary surrender to the King of Koryŏ. All is over."

"Ah, sad day!" said the Crown Prince, weeping bitterly. "Farewell, King and kingdom! I am going to Kaegol-san (the Diamond Mountains)" So the young prince departed and entered a deep, rocky valley under Pirobong, the highest peak in the range. There he dressed himself in hemp and fed on grass roots, and rallied the loyal sons of the Hwa-

rang to fight Wang Kŏn.

The King's youngest son shaved his head and became a monk of the Hwaŏm sect with the religious name Pŏmgong, residing at Pŏpsu and Haein temples during the rest of his life.

Wang Kŏn, the King of Koryŏ, when he received the letter of surrender, immediately dispatched his first minister of state Wang Ch'ŏl to Kyŏngju with orders to conduct King Kyŏngsun and his entourage to Songdo (Kaesŏng) with an honor guard. The King accordingly set out for Songdo accompanied by the civil and military officials of his court. The long procession of carriages and carts laden with royal treasures stretched over ten miles of the highway, which was lined from Kyŏngju to Songdo with vast throngs of spectators.

Wang Kŏn came to the outskirts of his capital to meet the royal procession from Silla. He celebrated the day with a great feast on Manwol-dae (Full Moon Hill) and gave his eldest daughter, the Princess of Nangnang, to the surrendered Silla king in marriage. He reconfirmed his title as King and promoted him to the highest position in the Koryŏ court, ranking above even the Crown Prince. Moreover, Wang Kŏn granted the Silla King an annual allowance of one thousand large bags of rice and gave him the old Silla territory (which he called Kyŏngju) as his fief.

The alliance between the two royal houses was further cemented when King Kyŏngsun gave the beautiful daughter of his uncle to Wang Kŏn as his wife. (This uncle, Ilyŏn says, was Ŏk-nyŏm, younger brother of the King's father Hyojong-Kakkan. This was Queen Sinsŏng.)

However, according to the royal family tree prepared by Kim Kwan-ŭi during the Koyrŏ dyansty, Queen Sinsŏng was of the Yi family and Wang Kŏn married her during a trip to Hapju county, of which Yi Chŏng-ŏn, a Kyŏngju nobleman, was magistrate. She bore the King a son who was known as Anjong. The day of her death was the 25th of March and her tomb was called Chŏng-nŭng, where a temple, Hyŏnhwa-sa, was erected in her memory. Among the twenty-five queens and concubines of the King, no woman of the Kim family is recorded

in the royal chronicle, but the annalist does record that Prince Anjong was a grandson (on the maternal side) of Silla.

Wang Kŏn's grandson Sin (King Kyŏngjong, 975–981) married King Kyŏngsun's daughter.

When King Kyŏngsun died in 978, his old royal title was again conferred upon him together with the title Sang-pu (royal father-in-law). King Kyŏngjong issued a royal decree as follows:

"Know ye, my loyal subjects: When Chou of the Chi family founded a new kingdom he first invested Lu Wang with an honorary title and when Han of the Liu family rose to power he first invested Su Ho with an honorary title. Hence the royal glory shone far and wide over all the world and the happiness of the royal household bloomed for thirty generations of the Dragon Picture and four hundred years of the Giraffe-Hooves, bright as the sun and moon, coeval with heaven and earth. This institution began with a ruler assisted by his wise ministers.

(The allusions here are to the Chou and Han dynasties of ancient China. The reader will recall the dragon with a picture on its back described in the prologue as the portent of a great king. "Giraffe Hooves" is the title of a section of the Confucian Book of Odes, but is here used to allude to the Han dynasty, which did indeed endure for about 400 years.)

"Kim Pu, King of Nangnang, who is endowed with a fief of 8,000 households, hereditarily residing in Kerim (Silla), and honored with a royal title, possessed eminently noble qualities and was gifted with fine literary talent.

"Looking forward to greater happiness, he lived comfortably in his fief with a Military Strategy (a well-known Chinese work on this subject is here alluded to) in his bosom. The founder of our kingdom, having bound the two royal families in friendly ties, gave him a daughter in marriage. Now the two kingdoms are united and the new state ruling over the Three Hans prospers anew daily, with one patriotic mind from the throne to the plough.

"I hereby confer on him the title of Royal Father-in-law and

increase his fief to 10,000 households in consideration of his loyal and meritorious services to the state. I command you, all competent officials to execute my orders with due ceremony."

"The 10th month of the 8th year of Kaipao
(Royal Sign Manual, Royal Seal)
Countersigned by Yung-sŏn
His Majesty's President
of the Privy Council
and His Majesty's Cabinet Ministers."

According to 'Saron' the progenitors of the Pak and Sŏk clans of Silla were born of eggs, while that of the Kim clan was found in a golden box which descended from heaven on a golden chariot. But these stories are too fantastic to believe, although they have traditionally been accepted by the populace as facts. The early Silla rulers were frugal in their personal lives and generous to others. They maintained few government offices and observed the annual rites simply. They sent tribute to and received envoys from the Middle Kingdom across the sea, and dispatched youths to study in that kingdom, thereby to cultivate decorum in their nation through the influence of the refined customs and advanced culture taught by the ancient sages. Moreover, with the aid of the military might of the Imperial T'ang army Silla subjugated Paekje and Koguryŏ, making them provinces under her single rule in her days of greatness.

However, due to the evils of Buddhism. pagodas and temples lined the streets and the common people deserted their farms to become monks and nuns,. The morale of the army fell into decay, calling down rebellion and destruction upon the nation. King Kyong'ae gave himself up to merriment and soft pleasures. He revelled at the Pavilion of the Stone Abalone with his choicest beauties and flattering courtiers, unaware of his doom until Chin Hwon, like Han Ch'in-hu, sprang at his throat, and his Queen fell prey to Hwŏn, like Chang li-hua. (The King and Queen are compared to figures in Chinese history.)

King Kyŏngsun surrendered voluntarily to the King of Koryŏ

because his kingdom was in extremities, but his decision was nevertheless praiseworthy. Had he chosen to fight on until the end the royal Kim clan would have been exterminated and a great catastrophe would have fallen upon his innocent people. His cession of sovereignty over his kingdom, sealing his royal treasure vaults without awaiting the King's orders, was an act not only of obeisance to our King but of mercy to myriads of living creatures. In the olden days Su Tzu-chen praised Chen-shih as a loyal vassal for surrendering Wu and Yueh to Sung, but the virtue of the Silla King outshines that of Chen-shih. (Yet another Chinese precedent is cited here.)

The founder of the Koryŏ dynasty had many queens and concubines who bore him many children, but ever since King Hyŏnjong ascended the throne (1009) as the maternal grandson of Silla royalty the successive Koryŏ Kings have been his descendants, with the royal throne transmitted in an unbroken line thanks to the charity of King Kyŏngsun.

When Silla fell and the old land passed under the rule of a new dynasty, Agan-Sinhoe, a noble-hearted Silla courtier, withdrew from official life and returned to his native place in Kyŏngju. Seeing the desolate condition of the ruined capital he recited the old poem Shu Li-li (The Millet Hangs its Head, a poem from the Book of Odes about a ruined palace which had been turned into a millet-field). His heart sank with grief and he wept when he saw the millet heads and wild grass tossing among the ruins of the Silla palace. He composed a song about the fall of Silla but unfortunately it has been lost.

(This whole last passage, following the decree, has a decidedly Confucian tone. Its rejection of the old legends and its blaming Buddhism for the fall of Silla are quite unlike Ilyŏn in other parts of the book.)

55. South Puyŏ, Early Paekje and North Puyŏ

Puyŏ-gun(county) was the capital of early Paekje, According to the Samguk Sagi, in the spring of the twenty-sixth year of King Sŏng of Paekje (548)the King moved his court to Saja (or Sabi), calling his kingdom Nam (south) Puyŏ. (Saja or Sabi was another name for Soburi.

now Kosŏngjin.)

In the (Koryŏ) land survey it is registered as Chŏnjŏng Chuch'ŏp in Soburi-gun and the present Puyŏ-gun has had its old name restored in honor of the name of the Paekje royal family, Pu. Puyŏ was also called Yŏju. To the west of Puyŏ is a temple called Chapok-sa on whose curtains the following is embroidered in Chinese characters: "The Great Temple of Merit in Yŏju, May, 15th year of T'ung-huo, year of the chicken (Chŏng-yu)." An old document of the magistrate of Hanam-Imju says that Imju is now Karim-gun and Yŏju is now Puyŏ-gun

In the Paichi Tili-chih it is written (quoting the Hou Han-shu), "Paichi (Paekje) is one of the seventy-eight states of the three Han nations." The Pei-shih says, "Paichi (Paekje) is bounded on the east by Silla, on the southwest by the Great Sea and on the north by the Han River. Its capital was in Kobal-sŏng, also called Koma-sŏng and Obang-sŏng." (The suffix "sŏng" means "fortress.")

The T'ung-tien states, "Paichi (Paekje) adjoins Silla on the south, Koguryŏ on the north, and faces the Great Sea to the west." The Chiu T'ang-shu says, "Paichi (Paekje) is another name for Puyŏ. On its northeast is Silla, on its south and west are Wo (Japan) and Yuehchow across the sea, and on its north is Koguryŏ. The King's palaces are surrounded by two city walls on the east and west" The Hsin T'ang-shu also says Paekje is bounded on the south and west by Wo (Japan) and Yuehchow across the sea and on the north by Koguryŏ. According to the Samguk Sagi the royal founder of Paekje was Onjo, whose father was King Ch'umo, also called Chumong.

When Chumong the good bowman escaped southward from Puk-puyŏ to Cholbon-Puyŏ, the king of that land, who had three daughters but no son, found Chumong a great hero and gave him his second daughter in marriage. When the King died soon after, Chumong succeeded to the throne. Two sons—Pullyu and Onjo—were born to him by this queen.

These two sons were afraid of Yuri, the crown prince, and fled southward with ten courtiers including Ogan and Maryŏ. On reaching

year of Tai-yuan of Tsin Hsiao Wu-ti, he took ten copies of Buddhist scriptures to Liaotung, where he preached Buddhism and won many converts. This was the beginning of Buddhism in Koguryŏ. (Parts of the Liaotung peninsula were at various times included in Koguryŏ.)

In the first year of I-hsi (405) T'an-shih returned to Kuan-chung and preached the gospel of Buddha to the people of Changan and its environs. T'anshih's snowy feet were whiter than his snowy face, so the people called him the white-footed monk. His feet never got wet, even when he waded across muddy streams.

In the closing days of the Tsin dynasty a fierce leader of the northern Hsiung-nu named Ho-lien Po-po led his barbarian army into Kuan-chung from the north, massacring the inhabitants in countless numbers. (The Hsiung-nu were a major group of nomadic tribes in north Asia who plagued China for centuries.) Ho-lien Po-po stabbed T'an-shih through and through with his spear, but the strange monk remained unruffled, repelling every thrust with a laugh, and not taking the least harm. The barbarian admired his superhuman powers and saved the lives of all his fellow monks. T'anshih fled through woods and swamps, undergoing all sorts of ordeals as he traveled in the habit of a mendicant.

When T'o Pa-tao, a general in revolt against the reigning monarch, recaptured Changan from the Hsiung-nu and seized control of the state there lived in Poling a man named Tsui Ho who worshipped paganism (Taoism is intended here), hating Buddhism with a deep hatred. When T'o Pa-tao appointed him prime minister he immediately persuaded the usurper to persecute the followers of Buddha, condemning them as inimical to the state and interfering with the daily lives of the people. K'ou Chien-chih, who called himself a "Heavenly Teacher of Taoism," abetted him in this.

On New Year's Day in the last year of Tap'ing, T'an-shih appeared at the palace gate and asked for an audience with T'o Pa-tao in order to convert him to Buddhism. The usurper became angry and ordered his soldiers to cut off the head of the bold monk. The men struck at his neck with their long scimitars and blue dragon swords, but the

blades rebounded without doing the least injury to T'an-shih. In a towering passion, T'o Pa-tao himself swung his great battleaxe, but to no avail. Finally they threw the monk into a garden where a pet tiger was kept, but the tiger simply ignored him.

T'o Pa-tao at last realized that the monk was under the protection of Buddha. He was confined to his bed with a high fever, while T'sui Ho and K'ou Chieu'chih were stricken with pestilence. As soon as he could, T'o struck off the heads of T'sui and K'ou and destroyed their families, asserting that they had caused him to fall into the grave crime of persecuting a monk.

T'o Pa-tao repented his sins and issued a decree granting freedom of Buddhist belief to the people throughout his domain. The account breaks off at this point, and there is no record of the later days of T'an-shih.

According to this account T'an-shih came to the East in the last year of Tai-yuan and returned to Kuan-chung in the first year of I-hsi, so he lived in the eastern land for ten years, although this fact is not recorded in the Tung-shih. The miracles he worked are similar to those of Ado, Mukhoja and Marananta at about the same period, so it is possible that "T'an-shih" is a pseudonym of one of these.

Song of Praise to Ado

On Kerim's Golden Bridge the snow is deep and the ice is thick;
When will warm light come to melt them away?
Lovely Queen of green, fair goddess of spring!
You bring love and mercy to human hearts,
You come to awake the buds on the plum branches in Morang's (Morye's) garden.

62. The Martyrdom of Yŏmch'ok (Ech'adon)

According to the Silla Pon-gi, in the fourteenth year of King Pŏphŭng (527), Ech'adon, a petty official of the court, immolated

himself for the sake of Buddha. This event occurred in the eighth year of Pao-tung of Hsiao-Liang Wu-ti, when Dharma arrived in Chinling (Nanking) from West Ch'ŏnch'uk (India) and Nangji Pŏpsa the high priest first opened a lecture hall on Mt. Yŏngch'u to preach Buddhism.

During the years of Yuan-huo of T'ang Hsien-tsung (806–820). Ilnyŏm, a monk at Namgan Temple, wrote a eulogy of Ech'adon's martyrdom for Buddha which may be summarized as follows.

When King Pŏphŭng was seated on his throne in the Purple Palace one day, he looked out over his domain in this eastern land and said, "The Han Emperor Ming-ti received a revelation from Buddha in a dream before the flow of Buddhist teaching to the East. I wish to build a sanctuary in which all my people can wash away their sins and receive eternal blessings."

His courtiers did not understand the inner significance of the King's words, and so his desire to build a Buddhist temple went unfulfilled. The King sighed deeply and said, "Because of my lack of virtue heaven and earth show no harmonious signs and my people enjoy no real happiness. I am therefore minded to turn to Buddhism for the peace of my heart, but there is no one who can assist me."

There was in the court a minor official of the rank of Sa-in. His family name was Pak and his nickname was Ech'adon, or Yŏmch'ok, a pun for porcupine. Although his father was undistinguished, his grandfather had held the rank of Ajinjong (fourth of the seventeen court grades of Silla) and his great-grandfather Sŭppo Kalmun-wang (Kalmun-wang is a title bestowed on the father of a reigning king, similar to that of Hŭngsŏn Taewongun, father of King Kojong, during the Yi dynasty).

In the Biography of Ado the Monk compiled by Kim Yong-haeng it is written, ". . . By that time Yŏmch'ok was twenty-six years old. His father was Kil-sŭng, his grandfather was Kong-han and his great-grandfather was Kŏlhae-wang."

The great-grandson of a noble king who had performed virtuous deeds, Yŏmch'ok's steadfast loyal heart was like a straight bamboo

or an evergreen pine tree and his morals were as clear as a water-mirror. He was thus a likely candidate for promotion to high office in the court of the clear river[4] to attend the King.

(When he heard of the King's desire to build a temple) the young official took courage. He looked upon the King's face and said in a dignified tone, "The sages of old would lend their ears even to men of low degree if they gave wise counsel. Since I know Your Majesty's mind, I will dare to say a few words. As the song of birds heralds the approach of spring, so the gush of blood from my neck will foreshadow the full bloom of Buddhism, for in my spouting blood the people will see a miracle."

"For mercy's sake," cried the King, "that is not a thing for you to do."

"A loyal subject will die for his country," Yŏmch'ok replied, "and a righteous man will die for his king. If you cut off my head immediately for disobeying your orders to erect a temple as an example to the stubborn courtiers, who will never believe in Buddha unless they are shown a miracle, the myriad people will prostrate themselves before your throne and will worship Buddha."

"A great and merciful being," the King said, "will cut his own flesh and shed his own blood to atone for the sins of the myriad creatures. He will sacrifice his own life even for the sake of the birds of the air and beasts in the slaughterhouse. Though I desire to save my people, how can I kill an innocent man like you? You would do better to avoid this fate."

Yŏmch'ok remained steadfast. "One man's earthly life is dear," he said, "but the eternal lives of many people are dearer. If I vanish with the morning dew today, the life-giving Buddhist faith will rise with the blazing sun tomorrow. This will bring peace to your heart."

Finally the King assented. "The chick of the phoenix, though young, desires to fly into the high heavens. The chick of the ibis, from its hatching, wishes to swim in the strong waves. If you have set your heart on advancing the spread of Buddhism by the sacrifice of your life, you are a great man."

After this conversation with Yŏmch'ok the King called the courtiers into a royal conference and solemnly declared to them, "I wished to build a Buddhist temple in order to share peace of mind with all my loyal subjects, but you are too headstrong to execute my orders. I will put you to the rack."

All the courtiers trembled from head to foot. White with rage, the King roared at Yŏmch'ok, "You too hindered my orders and miscarried my messages. Your crime is unpardonable and you shall die. You shave your head and wear a long robe, you utter strange words—'Buddha is mystery, Buddhism gives life.' Now let your Buddha perform a miracle and save your life." (This would seem to indicate that Yŏmch'ok had actually become a monk, a fact not indicated in the foregoing.)

On the day appointed for Yŏmch'ok's death the executioner lifted his great sword above the young monk's head. The King, courtiers and citizens who had gathered to witness the execution all averted their eyes, for they dared not look on the horrible sight. Looking up to heaven Yŏmch'ok said "I die happy for the sake of Buddha. If Buddha is worth believing in, let there be a wonder after my death."

Down came the sword on the monk's neck, and up flew his head spouting blood as white as milk. Suddenly dark clouds covered the sky, rain poured down and there was thunder and lightning. Fish leaped from the depths of the streams and flapped in the air, frightened monkeys jumped and shrieked as the trees swayed in the whistling wind, tigers ran and dragons flew, ghosts mourned and goblins wept. It seemed that heaven and earth had turned upside down. From afar came the sound of a bell as the goddess of mercy welcomed the martyr's fragrant soul into the Lotus Paradise.

Hot tears rolled down the King's dragon robe and cold sweat wet the courtiers to the bone. Yŏmch'ok's childhood friends clung to his casket and wailed as if they had lost their parents. In tears, the onlookers praised him, saying that his glorious death outshone the heroic deeds of Kaijach'u and Hong-yŏn in old China.[5] They admired him as an immortal saint for his self-sacrificing support of the King's

faith in Buddhism and for the completion of the missionary task of Ado.

They buried his headless body on the western peak of North Mountain (Kŭmgang-san) in the Diamond Mountains, which were named for the Diamond Sutra, one of the Buddhist scriptures, and erected a temple in his memory called Chach'u-sa. Legend says his body was buried in the place where his flying head had fallen.

In the fifth year of King Chinhŭng (544) the King erected Hŭng-nyun-sa as one of the cardinal temples of Kyŏngju where his people might worship Buddha. According to the Samguk Sagi and local tales, the construction of this temple had actually begun in the fourteenth year of King Pŏphŭng's reign (527). In the twenty-first year of this King's reign huge trees were cut down in Ch'ŏnkyŏng-nim (Heaven Mirror Forest) and fashioned into magnificent pillars and other parts of the temple, which stood on large foundation stones, facing beautifully carved stone lanterns and pagodas in the courtyard.

In the first year of Ta-ch'ing of Liang Wu-ti the Liang Emperor's envoy Shenhu brought a gift of *Sari* (Buddhist relics) and in the sixth year of T'ien-chia of Chen Wen-ti the Chen Emperor's envoy Liu Szu and the monk Ming-kuan brought Buddhist scriptures with them to Silla. By that time in Kyŏngju and its environs the golden roofs of temples glittered against the sky like the Milky Way and lotus-crowned pagodas stood in unending lines like flights of wild geese. There were bell-towers with Sanscrit-inscribed bronze bells and Buddhist banners flew from every housetop.

Strong, brave monks, like elephants on the land and dragons in the sea carried the blessings of Buddhism to every corner of the land. Living Bodhisattvas appeared, such as Chinna at Punhwang Temple, Pogae at Pusŏk Temple and Odae at Naksan Temple, while celebrated monks from the West (China) visited these temples. This heavenly faith made the Three Hans one nation and their inhabitants one family, with the name of Buddha written on the heavenly door and his merit reflected in the Milky Way. Thus Buddhism arose in Silla through the grace of three sages—Ado, Pŏphŭng and Yŏmch'ok (otherwise

called Ech'adon).

Some years later leading Silla monks including Hyeryung, Hyowon, Nokp'ung, Chinno and Kŭmŭi repaired Yŏmch'ok's grave and carved an elegy on him on his monument nearby.

On the fifteenth of the eighth moon in the twelfth year of Yuanhuo, the ninth year of King Hŏndŏk (817), when Yŏngsu-Sŏnsa, of the Yuga sect, the chief priest of Hŭngnyun-sa offered sacrifices at Yŏmch'ok's grave, he organized his fellow monks into a prayer circle and held a memorial service on the fifth of each month to pray for the repose of Yŏmch'ok's soul. According to a local biography the elders of Kyŏngju went to Hŭngnyun-sa early in the morning of the fifth day of the eighth moon to offer sacrifices to Yŏmch'ok's soul and to mark the day and hour of his martyrdom.

The rise of Buddhism in Silla was brought about by the harmonious labors of King Pŏphŭng and Yŏmch'ok, who were like water and fish in the kingdom of Buddha, as Liu Pei and Chu Koliang were during the Ch'u-Han (Ch'ok-Han) working the wonders of a dragon in the clouds.

When Hŭngnyun-sa was built, King Pŏphŭng doffed his crown and donned a monk's robe. He made temple slaves of his royal relatives and himself became chief priest of the temple. Later, during the reign of King T'aejong (Muryŏl, 654–661), Prime Minister Kim Yang-to became a devout Buddhist and sent his two daughters Hwapo and Yŏnpo (Flower Jewel and Lotus Jewel) to be slaves of this temple. The whole family of Moch'ŏk, a traitor, were also made temple slaves. All the descendants of these families remained slaves of Hŭngnyun-sa, and to this day the slaves of that temple are called "royal children."

Upon succeeding King Pŏphŭng to the throne, King Chinhŭng immediately bestowed upon Hŭngnyun-sa a panel in the royal calligraphy bearing the Chinese inscription, "Great King's Temple of Hŭngnyun." King Pŏphung's family name was Kim and his Buddhist name was Pŏpun or Pŏpkong (Holy Cloud or Empty Spirit).

The Biographies of the Monks and various books of legends say that King Pŏphŭng's Queen became a nun with the Buddhist name

Pŏpun. King Chinhŭng and his Queen also entered the order and both took this same name, Pŏpun. Another book, Ch'aek-pu Wonku, says that King Pŏphŭng's family name was Mo and his given name Chin. In the year in which the construction of Hŭngnyun-sa began, King Pŏphŭng's Queen founded a temple of her own called Yŏnghŭng-sa. She shaved her head when her royal husband did and became a nun, taking the religious name Myopŏp (Holy Mystery), and resided in the temple until she died a few years later.

The Samguk Sagi says that in the thirty-first year of King Chinp'yŏng (614) a Buddha image at Yŏnghŭng-sa fell down, and soon afterward the nun who had been the consort of King Chinhŭng passed away. King Chinhŭng was King Pŏphŭng's nephew and his Queen Sado Puin(Pak-ssi) was a daughter of Yŏngsil Kakkan of Moryang-ni. She also left her palace and became a nun, but she was not the builder and mistress of Yŏnghŭng-sa. It was King Pŏphŭng's Queen Lady Pado who built Yŏnghŭng-sa, with Buddha images erected in its hall, and she died there as a nun.

The Samguk Sagi makes a serious mistake in omitting the fact that Kings Pŏphŭng and Chinhŭng both renounced the throne to become monks. It makes another mistake in the following passage. "In the first year of Ta-t'ung, in the year of the goat (Chŏng-mi) a temple was erected in Ungch'ŏnju called Tait'ong-sa (Temple of Ta-t'ung) in honor of the Liang Emperor in China." Ungch'ŏn is now Kongju and was then part of Silla.[6] But this temple could not have been erected in the year indicated, because at that time the erection of Hŭngnyun-sa in Kyŏngju was in full swing, so that there were neither time nor resources to work on another one. Perhaps Tait'ong-sa was erected in the first year of Chung Ta-t'ung (529).

Song of Praise to Wonjong (King Pŏphŭng)

His holy intelligence ruled the state for ten thousand generations to come,
His fair judgment allowed no diverse argument;
His life-wheel rolled down after the Golden Wheel,[7]

His reign of peace heightened the sun of Buddha.

Song of Praise to Yŏmch'ok

He gave up his life for the sake of righteousness.
Who would not wonder at his noble courage?
The white milk of his blood shot high into the sky
And descended in a spray of heavenly flowers;
After he had lost his head by one stroke of the sword,
The beating of drums in many temples rumbled over the metropolis.

63. King Pŏp Prohibits Killing

The twenty-ninth sovereign of Paekje was King Pŏp. His childhood name was Sŏn and he was also called Hyosun. He ascended the throne in the tenth year of Kai-huang of Sui Wen-ti (599). In the winter of that same year he promulgated a law prohibiting the taking of life (in accordance with Buddhist belief) and commanding his people to free falcons and destroy fishing tackle in private homes. In the following year he ordained thirty new monks and began the construction of Wanghŭng Temple in his capital, Sajasŏng (Sabisŏng). Work had hardly been finished on preparation of the site, however, when he died, leaving completion of the task to his son King Mu, who finally finished it in the thirty-fifth year of his reign.

This temple was also called Mirŭk-sa (Temple of Maitreya Buddha). Behind it stood a picturesque mountain like an embroidered wind-screen, overlooking the silvery Saja River. The temple was a scene of natural beauty in all seasons, with rare flowering plants and awe-inspiring trees within its precincts. The King often sailed down the river to visit the temple and admire its beauty.

This account is at variance with those given in old books of legends, which say that King Mu was born of a poor woman who had fallen in love with a pond-dragon and that his childhood name was Sŏdong (Potato Boy; see the account in Book Two under this name). After

his romantic marriage to Princess Sŏnhwa of Silla he ascended the throne of Paekje and had this temple built to gladden her heart.

Song of Praise to King Pŏp

He spared the lives of the fowls of the air and the beasts of the land—
His grace reached a thousand hills and streams;
His beneficence rejoiced a thousand pigs and fish;
The four seas were filled with his benevolence.
Sing to the Great King, for he descended to earth from the Buddha Land
In Tosol-ch'ŏn[8] above the fragrant spring is in full glory.

64. Taoism and the Downfall of Koguryŏ

According to the Koryŏ Pon-gi, in the closing days of that kingdom, during the days of Wu-te and Chen-kuan (T'ang Emperors Kao-tsu and Tai-tsung, 618–649), the people of Koguryŏ turned to the worship of Taoism, contributing five bushels of rice each to the priests. When the T'ang Emperor Kao-tsu heard of this, he sent a Taoist priest to Koguryŏ with portraits of Lao Tzu to expound his Classic of Morality (probably the Tao Te Ching is intended here) to the people. Among those who listened to this priest was King Yŏngnyu of Koguryŏ, who had been on the throne for seven years, the date then being the seventh year of Wu-te (624).

In the following year the King sent an envoy to the T'ang court to seek knowledge of Taoism and Buddhism and the Emperor (Kao-tsu) granted his wish.

After his coronation in the sixteenth year of Chen-yuan (642), King Pojang wished to see Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism flourish in harmony in his kingdom. Thereupon his prime minister Hapsomun (also called Kaesomun; full name Ch'ŏn or Yŏn Hapsomun or Kaesomun) said, "Confucianism and Buddhism are popular among the people but there are only a few believers in the mysterious doctrine

Song of the Blind Child

I fall on my knees and clasp both my hands
To pray thee to have mercy on me, O Kwanŭm Bodhisattva!
Thou hast touched so many dark eyes with thy thousand hands
And made them bright as daylight;
Pray give me one eye for love and another for charity.
If thou givst me mine eyes, I will sing thy great mercy.

Song of Praise to the Goddess of Mercy

Riding a bamboo horse, playing an onion pipe.
I played on hills and streams.
But alas, in a twinkling I lost the sight of both eyes!
Had the goddess not given me back my bright eyes,
How many springs would have come and gone without my seeing the pussy-willows!

85. The two Buddhas of Naksan and Chosin, the Lovesick Monk

In the olden days, when Ŭisang Pŏpsa had returned from his first visit to China, he heard that the goddess of mercy (Kwanŭm) had taken up her abode in a cave on the seacoast. He therefore called the place Naksan, after the Indian mountain Pota-Nakka-san, which is better known as So-Paekhwa (Small White Flower) because the graceful white-clad image of Kwanŭm Bodhisattva there resembled a white flower on a slender stem.

(Ŭisang evidently went to this place for a religious retreat of some sort). On the seventh day of his purification, Ŭisang stood up and pushed his cushion into the sea so that it would float away on the morning tide. Eight gods from the Four Deva Kings then conducted him into the cave. There he looked up to heaven and worshipped Buddha, and a crystal rosary was given to him. He took it, and as he stepped backward the Dragon of the Eastern Sea offered him a bead-like gem (*Cintamani)*, which he also accepted. Ŭisang purified himself

for a further seven days, after which he beheld the splendid face and graceful figure of the living Buddha.

The Buddha said, "If you climb this mountain you will see a pair of bamboos growing at the top. There build a palace for me." When Ŭisang had left the presence of the Buddha he climbed the mountain, and above the cave two bamboo plants shot suddenly out of the ground and then disappeared. Ŭsiang therefore knew that this was the holy abode of Buddha, and on this spot he built a temple called Naksan-sa with a lifelike image of the graceful Buddha in its Golden Hall, where he also deposited the crystal rosary before his departure.

Soon afterward Wonhyo, another famous Silla monk, made a pilgrimage to worship this Buddha. When he arrived at the southern foot of the mountain, he saw a woman harvesting rice in a field. Wonhyo liked women and pleasantry, so he said to her jestingly, "Will you give me some rice?"

"No, I am sorry, I cannot," she replied. "It is a lean year and beggars are not welcome."

Proceeding further, he met a woman washing her menstrual band in running water under a bridge. She too he addressed in jest: "Let me have a drink of the cool water."

"All right, come and drink," rang out her clarion voice, and she scooped up some of the unclean water in a half-moon-shaped gourd and pressed it to his lips. Wonhyo drained the gourd and dipped more water from the mountain stream to quench his thirst.

As he did so, a blue bird in a pine tree nearby called to him "Come on, my good monk Huiche-Hwasang!" and disappeared, leaving a woman's shoe under the tree. When Wonhyo reached the temple he found another shoe, of the same size and shape, by the pedestal of the Kwanŭm Bodhisattva. He then realized that these shoes belonged to the two women whom he had met, and that they were both incarnate Buddhas. From that time on people called the pine from which the bird had called the Kwanŭm pine.

Wonhyo wished to enter the cave and see the graceful figure of the living Buddha there, but a storm was raging at sea and his little boat

almost capsized, so he was forced to desist.

Many years later Pŏmil, the founder of Kulsan Temple, traveled to China in the years of T'ai-huo (827–835) and visited Kaikuo Temple in Mingchow. There, occupying the lowest place in the temple, he met a strange monk whose left ear was missing. This monk said to Pŏmil, "I am one of your fellow countrymen. My home is in Tŏkki-pang, Iknyŏng-hyŏn, on the boundary of Myŏngju (Yangyang in Kangwon Province). When you return home, visit my native place and build a house for me."

Pŏmil visited all the famous Chinese temples and learned much esoteric Buddhist doctrine. When he returned home in the seventh year of T'ang Hui-ch'ang, the year of the hare (847) he founded Kulsan-sa. On the night of the fifteenth of February in the twelfth year of T'ang Ta-chung, in the year of the tiger (858), Pŏmil had a dream about the one-eared monk whom he had met years before in China. The monk stood under his bedroom window and said, "You made me a promise at the temple in Mingchow. Why are you so late in keeping it?" In great surprise Pŏmil arose and gathered a party of fellow monks to seek the native place of the one-eared monk near Iknyŏng (Wing Pass).

In a village at the foot of Naksan he met a woman named Tŏkki whose eight-year-old son was accustomed to play near a stone bridge south of the village. One day the child said to her, "Mother, one of my playmates has a face that shines with golden rays." The woman told this to Pŏmil, who in great joy took the child with him to the stone bridge. Under the bridge in midstream he found a stone Buddha image. When it was taken from the stream he saw that it exactly resembled the monk he had met in China—its left ear was missing. This was the noble image of Chŏngch'wi Bodhisattva. Pŏmil selected an auspicious site on Naksan and built a temple, enshrining the holy image in its Golden Hall.

(Ilyŏn notes here: In an old book the stories of Pŏmil are placed before those of Ŭisang and Wonhyo. But since Ŭisang and Wonhyo lived during the reign of T'ang Kao-tsung in China(649–683) and Pŏmil in the days of Hui-ch'ang 170 years later, this is a mistake in chronology. Some scholars say that Pŏmil was a disciple of Ŭisang, but this also is a mis-

take.)

In a forest fire which broke out a hundred years after these events, all the temples and shrines on Naksan went up in flames except the temples of the Kwanŭm and Chŏngch'wi Bodhisattvas.

After the Invasion of the West Mountain (the Mongol invasion, 1253–1254) the images of the two Bodhisattvas together with the two jewels were moved to Yangju-sŏng (Yangyang, Kangwondo). When the city was about to fall to the Mongols, Ahaeng the abbot (formerly called Hŭi-kŏ) tried to save the rosaries by hiding them in a brass vessel. Kŏlsŭng, a temple slave, buried this vessel in the ground and swore an oath: "If I do not escape death in this war these treasures will vanish from the human world forever, but if I survive I will present them to the King."

Finally, on the twenty-second of October in the year of the tiger (1254) Ahaeng was killed when the city fell, but Kŏlsŭng escaped. When the enemy had evacuated the ruined city he dug up the brass vessel and presented it to Yi Nok-yu, the keeper of the royal treasury, to be preserved under strong guard. In October of the year of the horse (1258) Kakyu, the abbot of Chirim-sa, said to the King, "The two rosaries are sacred treasures of the nation. Before the fall of Yangju Kŏlsŭng the temple slave buried them in the city, and after the enemy left he dug them up and presented them to the royal treasury in Myŏngju. Now Myŏngju is in imminent danger of falling into enemy hands, so they should be transferred to Your Majesty's inner palace."

The King approved this plan and sent ten soldiers to Myŏngju by night to fetch the rosaries and bring them to his inner palace. He rewarded the ten soldiers with one pound of silver and five large bags of rice each.

During the Silla period when the Kings ruled in Kyŏngju there was in Nalli county in Myŏngju prefecture a manor belonging to Sekyu Temple (now called Hŭnggyo-sa). The abbot of this temple appointed a young monk named Chosin caretaker of the manor. No sooner had he arrived to take up his duties than Chosin fell in love with the daughter of Kim Hŭn-kong, the county magistrate. She was a girl of sixteen,

fairer than the moon and more charming than all the flowers put together. But though she smiled on him she was unyielding, like a bellflower growing between rocks too high for his hands to reach.

At length he knelt before the goddess of mercy, who now appeared to him in the semblance of his love, and prayed, "Oh great Buddha! Only make this girl my wife for even a moment's joy if not for life, for she is my jewel, which I wish to cherish in my bosom in love's palace on earth before I enter the lotus paradise in heaven. So be it, Namu-amitabul!"

Thus he prayed all through the flowering spring and the rainy autumn, but all in vain, for the girl was betrothed to another man. When he thought of the blooming bride in her glittering jewels and compared the richly-dressed bridegroom with himself—a poor monk in a grey hemp robe—he shed tears of bitter despair.

At last the wedding day arrived, and as Chosin knelt for his evening prayers he saw in his mind's eye the magnificent wedding feast and the lovemaking of the young couple. A flame of jealousy rose in his heart, and he said to himself, "Go and kill the bridegroom! Set fire to the rich man's house! Destroy everything and jump into the flames! If you die you will forget the girl and everything else in this tragic world."

Chosin writhed in an agony like that of death, complaining to Buddha for not answering his prayer. At last, worn out with weeping, he felll asleep in the Buddha Hall.

Suddenly an autumn breeze blew out the candles. Chosin looked toward the door, which was ajar, and as he did so it was flung open and there in the moonlight stood the bride, fresh as a rosebud in her wedding dress. She threw her arms around his neck and pressed her face to his bosom, sobbing softly.

Chosin was dumbfounded with joy and surprise. "This is your wedding night," he said. "Why have you forsaken your bridegroom?"

"He is my parents' choice," she said softly through her tears. "I do not want him. You have my love." And her slender body moved in his arms like a butterfly dancing on a flower.

"You love me?" Chosin asked.

"A woman is kept within her garden walls," the girl replied. "She is forbidden to meet young men. Though I am a girl of gentle birth, since we met in the rosebed under the tunnel of wildflowers, eye to eye and lip to lip, I have not forgotten you for a moment. I am yours, and I have come to live with you and be your love until we go together to the same grave."

Chosin clasped his bride in his arms and danced for joy. Then he took her hand and led her from the Buddha Hall and down a mountain path, until they reached a quiet valley near his native place. Here he built a snug cotttage in the green forest. It was only a one-room cabin but it was sweet to Chosin, for he and his wife loved each other passionately. He was familiar with the forest and made his living by cutting wood and hunting hare and deer. which he and his love-mate cooked in a pan over crackling flames and ate with good appetite.

Time sped by like a warrior's arrow, and at last they had lived together in the forest for forty years, during which five children were born to them. They had been able to live for some time by selling the bride's jewelry, but at last it was all gone and they were reduced to abject poverty. There was not a grain of rice or barley in the house and the family had to subsist on grass and roots. Chosin hunted and cut wood as diligently as he was able, but he could not supply his now large family with even the bare necessities of life. He knew that killing the mountain creatures was against the commandment of Buddha, not to speak of the sin of living with a woman, but now he would have killed even human beings to keep his wife and children from starvation.

The whole family wandered in rags through the mountain villages begging for food. As they were crossing Haehyŏn-nyŏng (Crab Pass) their fifteen-year-old eldest son fell dead of hunger. With many tears Chosin and his wife buried the beloved child on the mountainside and continued with the remaining four to Ugok-hyŏn (now U-hyŏn), where they built a lowly cottage with a thatched roof.

More years passed. Now Chosin and his wife were as grey as if snow had fallen on their heads, and thin and pale as death. Both of them fell ill, while their children cried for food. The ten-year-old

daughter walked fifteen miles through the mountain villages begging for food for the family. She was bitten by a stray dog and collapsed in pain on her return. Tears streamed down the sunken cheeks of the aged couple.

At last, wiping away her tears, the old wife spoke to her husband: "When I married you in the flower of my youth and beauty, you kissed my blushing cheeks and called them roses. Then we had fine clothes to wear and good food to eat, and our married love deepened as long as the mellow wine flowed from our barrels, But now my rosy cheeks and cherry lips and the glow of strength in your eyes are gone. Nothing is left to us but sunken stomachs, the pains of old age, sorrow and the fear of death. No one in this wide world will give us so much as a night's sojourn in a storeroom or a bottle of soy-sauce. We have become a laughing-stock.

"If we cannot feed our own children, how can we enjoy our remaining years in love? Coquettish smiles have vanished like the dew, and the pledge of our love has fled like the pussy-willows on the four winds. The passionate, carnal desires of our green youth have led only to this bottomless grief of the grey winter. It would be better to be a lone bird pecking at a mirror and calling for its mate than a pair dying with its young in hunger and cold. It is intolerable that lovers should meet in wealth and part in poverty, but such is the end of our ill-fated love. Since there is no other remedy, let us kiss and part, each taking two of the children."

Chosin consented, though he grieved deeply at the thought of parting from his loving wife and two of his children. "Farewell, husband," said his wife. "I am going to my old home in the north; you go south." At this bitter parting, Chosin gave a great cry, and awoke.

It had all been a dream. He lay in the Buddha hall, before the altar, where the candle he had lighted had burned down to a stump. In one night he had tasted all the sweetness and bitterness of life. Tears of disillusion stood in his eyes. As the dying moon sank into the bosom of the sea, the dawn light revealed that his hair and beard had turned white in a few hours. With his disenchantment with love came a turning

away from all worldly ambition. He was tired of work, and the hot flame of greed in his heart melted away as if it had been cold ice. In shame and remorse he turned his eyes from the holy Buddha images to the frost-covered tiles of the temple roof, which shone like spearheads.

Chosin then went to Haehyŏn-nyŏng (Crab Pass) where he had buried his son in the dream. Digging in the place of the imagined grave, he discovered a stone image of Maitreya Buddha, which he enshrined in a nearby temple. After this he returned to his home temple in the capital and resigned from the position of caretaker of the country manor at Myŏngju. Before his death he built Chŏngt'o-sa (Temple of the Purified Land) with funds from his private fortune.

Reading this story, we realize that not only Chosin but many people like him dream the same dream, and we give them warning in the following lines.

Youth and beauty may meet in love for a moment's joy,
But rosy cheeks soon pale in sadness, like autumn leaves;
Wealth and nobility are like floating clouds,
And this temporal life of desire is only an empty dream;
Men's good or bad behavior stems from their inner minds,
Yet young men dream of fair brows and thieves of treasure;
Behold how one night's dreaming under the autumn sky
Can lead a man to enjoy the cool air with closed eyes.

86. The Reflection of Buddha on Fish Mountain

(In what follows, Ilyŏn first tells a story which was evidently taken from Indian sources and applied to Korea, then quotes the Indian source itself. The place-names he uses, however, are mainly Korean, perhaps derived from the Chinese versions of Indian place names. The country of Buddha's birth, for example, is given as "Nakal." Buddhist tradition places Buddha's birth at the town of Lumbini in the present kingdom of Nepal.)

In an antique record it is written that the site of Man-ŏ-sa (Temple of Ten Thousand Fish) was formerly called Mt. Chasŏng or Mt Ayasa

How many times have their lone ships sailed from the east!
Once gone, they returned no more;
Year after year the floating clouds sail back
Yet we never hear the tap of their staffs journeying homeward.

101. Miracles of Hyesuk and Hyegong

The monk Hyesuk was in his youth a follower of Hoserang, one of the most renowned of the Hwarang of Silla. When his master was excluded from this order, Hyesuk retired to a mountain villa called Chŏksŏn-ch'on (Chŏkkok-ch'on in Ankang-hyŏn), where he led the life of a religious recluse for twenty years.

One day Kugam, a noble Hwarang came riding to hunt in the mountains near his residence. Hyesuk ran out to meet him and held his horse's head. "Welcome, master," he said. "Permit me to follow you in the hunt. I can keep up with your steed on my flying feet."

"Fine!" said Kugam. "Come along, then." They had a long chase over the hills, and when they had killed many birds and animals with their arrows they sat down to rest while the meat was cooked and fell into conversation.

"I have some meat more delicious than this," Hyesuk said. "May I serve it to you?"

"Good, bring it," said Kugam. "I have a good appetite today."

Hyesuk thereupon cut a piece of flesh from his thigh with a sharp knife and set it before Kugam. "Please help yourself," he said.

"What are you doing?" Kugam exclaimed in astonishment.

Then Hyesuk admonished him. "I thought you were a kind-hearted gentleman and merciful to your fellow creatures, so I followed you in admiration of your high virtues. But now I see that you are a cruel and selfish man who likes to kill living creatures, doing harm to others in order to fill your stomach. This is not the way of benevolence and you do not belong to our order." And with these words he went away.

"Ah, the sad day," said Kugam, blushing with shame. "But what is this? I have eaten my fill, and yet the table is still spread with the same

dishes and appears untouched."

Kugam returned and told his strange story to King Chinp'yŏng. The King thought that Hyesuk must be an uncommon monk, and sent an official to fetch him to the court. When the official arrived he found Hyesuk (as he thought) lying in bed with a woman, and cursing him for his shameless breach of Buddhist law turned back. But he had gone only seven or eight *li* when he met the same monk coming from the opposite direction. "Hello, good monk," he said, "where have you been?"

"I have been at a rich man's house in the city." Hyesuk said. "I officiated at a memorial service and offered prayers for the departed soul for seven days, and now I am returning to my home in the mountains."

The official went and reported his experience at court. Puzzled, the King sent a messenger to the house Hyesuk had mentioned and found that indeed the monk had been there when he said he was.

Not long after this Hyesuk died and the village people buried him on a hill east of E-hyŏn (Ear Pass). But while his friends were still crowded around the grave a traveler arrived from the other side of E-hyŏn who said that he had just met Hyesuk over the hill. When asked where he was going, Hyesuk had said, "I have lived too long in this mountain village and now I am going on a sight-seeing trip." Then, the traveller said, the monk had mounted a cloud and soared into the sky about half a mile from where he had said goodbye. Amazed. the villagers dug into the grave they had just finished, and found in it only one of the monk's old shoes.

Even today there is a temple called Hyesuk-sa north of Ankang-hyŏn, where the mysterious monk lived, and visitors can see his image in bas-relief on one of its walls.

Another famous Silla monk was named Hyegong. He was the son of a woman servant in the house of Ch'ŏnjin-kong and his childhood name was Ujo. One day the master of the house was taken seriously ill with a malignant growth, and felt that death was approaching. The house was constantly full of people, noble and common, who came to enquire after his health. Ujo was only seven years old, but he

knew that something unusual had happened.

"O my mother," the child said, "What has brought so many peope into this house?"

"Don't you know," she replied, "that the master of the house is very sick, and lies upon his deathbed?"

"I can cure his disease," said Ujo.

"What! You can, can you?"

"Yes I can."

With a wondering heart the woman told Ch'ŏnjin-kong what her child had said, and the nobleman sent a servant to fetch the lad. When Ujo appeared he sat down at the foot of the sick man's bed with his mouth shut tight. Then suddenly the abcess burst and the patient was saved. Ch'ŏnjin-kong did not wonder greatly at this, however, considering it to have been a mere coincidence.

When Ujo had grown into a youth he tamed Ch'ŏnjin-kong's pet falcon, and was such a good fowler that his master could not help liking him. One day Ch'ŏnjin-kong's younger brother set out on a long journey to take up a new official post in the country and took this hawk with him by permission of the nobleman. But one night Ch'ŏnjin-kong bethought him of his faraway falcon and decided to send Ujo to bring it back early the next morning.

Ujo knew the mind of his master. Magically, he brought the falcon back in an instant and presented it to Ch'ŏnjin-kong before daybreak. The latter reflected that this was the same lad who had cured his abcess earlier. "I did not know a great sage was living in my house," he exclaimed, "and I abused him with mad words and discourtesy. How can I apologize enough to you? And he stepped down into the courtyard and made a low bow to the fowler boy.

When Ujo's wonder-workings had become widely known in the world he became a monk, changing his name to Hyegong, and went to live at a small temple. He often drank wine like a whale and staggered about the streets singing and dancing like a madman, with a pan-shaped refuse basket slung over his shoulder. The people called him Pugwe-Hwasang (Basket-carrying monk) and named his temple

Pugae-sa (a corruption of Pugwe-sa).

He often went down into the temple well and would not come out for two or three months, so this well was named after him. When he did come out a heavenly being dressed in blue was sure to precede him. Stranger still, even though he had been sitting in the water for so long, his robe never got wet.

Late in life he went to live at Hangsa-sa (now Oŏ-sa in Yŏngil-hyŏn), where he associated with the great monk Wonhyo, who was then compiling a commentary on the Buddhist scriptures. Wonhyo asked him all sorts of difficult questions which he did not understand, but he would always answer quickly and in jest. One day the two monks went fishing and made a good catch. While they were eating some of the fish on a rock, Hyegong laughingly said, "You eat my fish." From that time the people called the temple Oŏ-sa (My Fish Temple.)

One day when Kugam-kong was out on a picnic he found the body of Hyegong on a mountain path, mouldering in the open air and infested with maggots. He mourned over the body of the faithful follower of his Hwarang days and returned to Kyŏngju, where he found Hyegong singing and dancing merrily in his cups. (This sounds as if Hyegong had gotten confused with Hyesuk.)

Another time Hyegong twisted rice-straw into a long rope and wrapped it round and round the Golden Hall and the south gate tower of Yŏngmyo-sa. Then he said to the chief monk, "Undo this fastening in three days and you will see a miracle." The dumbfounded monk followed his directions and sure enough, in three days the beautiful Queen Sŏndŏk visited the temple and the flames of Chigwi, the "Love fire of the heart" swallowed the temple pagoda, but the Golden Hall and the tower were not damaged.[1]

Myŏngnang, the founder of Sinin-sa (Heavenly Seal Temple) also founded Kŭmgang-sa (Diamond Temple) and held a ceremony on this occasion in which the nation's most eminent monks participated. Hyegong was absent, and it was not until after Myŏngnang had lighted incense and chanted prayers that he appeared in the temple. He came through a heavy downpour but his robe was not wet, nor were his

feet soiled with mud. He smiled at Myŏngnang and said, "You called me, so here I am."

After working countless wonders like this he disappeared into the sky, from which thousands of *sari* fell to eartth. While in this life he read the "Commentary on Buddha" by one Cho, an illustrious monk, and said, "This book was written by myself long, long ago." From this it would appear that Cho was one of his previous incarnations.

(Some of the antics of Hyegong are strongly suggestive of the tenets of the Sŏn (Zen) sect, which held that the study of scripture was worthless and that only pure meditation could bring salvation. The apparently pointless tricks of the monks of this sect were intended to detach the neophyte's mind from the logic and conventions of the material world so that it might more readily penetrate to the spiritual reality behind it and thus achieve enlightenment.)

Song of Praise to Hyesuk and Hyegong

Suk! You go out hunting birds in the fields
And return to sleep in a woman's bed.
Gong! Going out, you drink, sing and dance,
And returning, sleep in the well.
Where are your buried shoe and your floating body?
You are a pair of treasures, like two lotus blossoms in a flame.

102. Chajang Establishes the Buddhist Laws

The family name of the great monk Chajang was Kim-ssi and he was the son of Murim, a nobleman of Chingol (royal) stock who was honored with the third-rank title of Sopan in Chinhan. His father was an important court official who, since he had no son, prayed to Kwanŭm Boddhisattva, pledging, "If I have a son I will make him a bridge to the world of Buddha."

On the night when he ended his prayer, his wife dreamed that a star fell from heaven and entered her bosom. She conceived that very

night and in due time bore a son. This was Chajang. Because he was born on Buddha's birthday he was named Sŏnjongnang.

Chajang was pure of heart and keen of mind. He had no use for worldly pleasures and occupied himself solely with literature and art. In his youth fine verses rich in noble conceptions already flowed from his brush. He was orphaned early in life. Tired of the annoyances of worldly society he took leave of his wife and children and gave away his estates to found a temple called Wonyŏng-sa. There he lived a hermit's life in the deep mountains, unafraid of tigers and wolves, and meditated on the transience of this life, seeing all human beings as no more than withered bones.

In order to combat weariness and idleness he built a small cell whose four walls were covered with brambles and thorns and whose ceiling consisted of chestnut burrs. He sat naked and erect in the middle of this cell with his head tied to a roof-beam to help keep his mind in full awareness.

At that time a ministerial post fell vacant at court and Chajang was repeatedly asked to fill it in view of his noble birth,[2] but he consistently refused. The King was displeased and sent a message saying, "If you do not accep. this official position I will have your head cut off for disobedience to your King."

But the dauntless monk replied, "I would rather die in one day for the sake of keeping Buddha's commandments than live for a hundred years while breaking them." When the King received this reply, he finally gave formal permission for Chajang to remain a monk for life.

There was nothing to eat among the rocks and trees where he lived, and he would surely have starved to death had it not been for a strange bird which brought him dainty and nourishing fruit for his daily food. One day he fell into a trance in which a heavenly being appeared to him and expounded the Five Commandments of Buddha. After this he walked down into the valley and began explaining these commandments to the people, who gathered from near and far with great rejoicing.

The stranger cooly replied, "Go and tell your master that I am here to see him—only that and nothing more."

When the incident was described to Chajang he wondered if the fellow were a madman. But when they shouted at him to go, the old man said "How can a Narcissus see me?" and turned his basket upside down. Out of it came, not a dead puppy but a lion on a throne, radiating a dazzling light for a moment, and then the old man vanished. (A symbol of Buddha as preeminent among both men and beasts.)

Informed of this miracle, Chajang hastened to pursue the light until he reached Namnyŏng (South Pass), where it vanished in a mist. As it did so, Chajang fell dead. He was cremated there and his bones enshrined in a cave.

During his lifetime Chajang founded more than a dozen temples and pagodas, and on each such occasion unusually auspicious signs appeared. This brought faithful followers to him in crowds to help complete the sacred buildings quickly. His personal effects, including his wooden pillow (carved with a duck design) and his robe (once worn by Buddha), which had been presented to him by the dragon of T'aiho pool in China, are now preserved in T'ongdo Temple.

In Hŏnyang-hyŏn (now Ŏnyang) there is a temple called Apyu-sa. It was so named in honor of the duck carved on Chajang's pillow which used to play there and did some miracles. A monk named Wonsŭng preceded Chajang to China and returned to Silla with him to help in the propagation of Buddhism there.

Song of Praise to Chajang

When he awoke from a dream at Ch'ingliangshan and returned home,
Seven volumes and three collections of commandments opened before his inward eye.
Ashamed of the coarse robes of the courtiers.
He reformed the dress of the East to that of the West.

103. Wonhyo, the Unbridled Monk

The family name of the sacred monk Wonhyo was Sŏl-ssi, His grandfather was Ingp'i-kong, otherwise called Chŏktae-kong, whose shrine now stands near Chŏktaeyŏn pool. His great-grandfather was Tamnal-naemal.

The birth of Wonhyo came about in this manner, When his mother was near her time she was passing under a chestnut tree to the southwest of Yulgok (Chestnut Valley) north of Puljich'on (Village of the Buddha Mind) south of Apnyang county. There suddenly her labor pains came upon her. As there was no time to reach shelter her husband's clothes were hung from the branches of the tree to hide her from view. The local folk call this chestnut tree Sala-su and its fruit Sala-yul. It has a peculiar shape and an uncommon flavor.

(This story is remarkably similar to that of the birth of Buddha as recorded in the scriptures. "Sala" is the name of the tree under which Buddha is said to have departed this life and entered Nirvana.)

There is a legend that long, long ago an abbot gave his temple slave two chestnuts for his supper. The indignant slave brought suit against the abbot because of his meager rations. The local magistrate ordered the slave to produce the chestnuts, and when he did so it was observed that one of them was large enough to fill a wooden bowl. The magistrate therefore ruled that henceforth only one chestnut should be given for a meal. Since that time the place where these chestnuts grew has been called Yulgok (Chestnut Valley).

When Wonhyo became a monk he gave away his house for the foundation of a temple called Ch'ogae-sa (Temple of First Opening) and near a tree in his garden he built another temple named Sala-sa.

In his biography Wonhyo is represented as a man of Kyŏngju because his grandfather lived there, but the T'ang Biographies of Monks describes him as a native of Ha-Sangju. In the second year of Lin-te (665) King Munmu of Silla divided the old land of Sangju and Haju to create Sapnyangju in the new territory. Haju is now Ch'ang-

nyŏng county and Apnyang county was originally a sub-prefecture of Haju. Pulchich'on was part of the Chain-hyŏn of today, a sub-prefecture of Apnyang county.

Wonhyo's childhood names were Sŏ-tang (Pledging Flag) and Sin-tang (New Flag). On the night he was conceived his mother dreamed that a shooting star entered her bosom, and when he was born five-colored clouds covered the earth. This was in the thirty-ninth year of King Chinp'yŏng of Silla (617).

As the boy grew into a healthy and handsome youth he proved to be an uncommon person. He did not study with a teacher, but knew everything already. He was a playboy. His companions, his adventures, his wits and his great achievements are all described in detail in the T'ang Biographies of the Monks and in his autobiography, so here we will include only a few anecdotes from the Biographies of Silla.

One day Wonhyo saw bees and butterflies flitting from flower to flower, and he felt a strong desire for a woman. He walked through the streets of Kyŏngju singing, "Who will lend me an axe that has lost its handle? I wish to cut a heaven-supporting pole." The passers-by laughed at him, not realizing the real meaning of his song, but T'aejong (King Muryŏl) said when he heard it, "The love-lorn monk wants to marry a noble lady and get a wise son by her. If a sage is born, so much the better for the country."

(Wonhyo's song alludes to a poem in the Book of Odes, one of the Confucian Classics. In this poem the axe-handle symbolizes the male sexual organ, so that an axe without a handle means a widow. Wonhyo is looking for a go-between to find a widow to be his lover, and the King agrees to play this part. This is one more example of Wonhyo's disregard of convention, since Confucian custom forbade widows to remarry or otherwise have to do with men.)

There was at this time a widowed princess living in Yosŏk Palace (now a monastery, Ilyŏn says). The King told his servants to conduct Wonhyo to that palace, and they found that he had already descended Namsan (South Mountain) and reached Munch'ŏn-gyo, the Mosquito Stream Bridge. Here he deliberately fell into the stream and got his

clothes wet. When he reached the palace the princess, already in bridal attire, suffered him to change into a bridegroom's robes, and so they were married and passed the night together.[3]

The princess became pregnant as a result, and bore a son whose name was Sŏl Ch'ong. He was so intelligent that he mastered all the classical histories in his youth. He composed books on folk customs and the place-names of China and Silla, using the "Idu" system of simplified Chinese characters as phonetic signs to convey the Korean language. Until then there had been no method of writing the Korean language and people who wished to be educated had to read and write in Chinese, although the spoken Korean language is distinctly different from Chinese.

Sŏl Ch'ong also translated the Six Chinese Classics (Probably the Confucian Classics are meant) into Korean by this method and wrote commentaries on them. All these have been handed down to the scholars of the East (Korea). For his virtuous deeds and literary accomplishments, Sŏl Ch'ong is acclaimed as one of the ten sages of Silla. (Unfortunately, all but one of Sŏl Chong's works are lost.)

Having broken a Buddhist commandment by his union with the princess and the birth of Sŏl Ch'ong, Wonhyo doffed his monk's robe and put on secular dress, adopting the punning nickname Sosŏng Kŏsa (Little Hermit). One day he met an actor and performed a gourd dance, wearing a grotesque mask on his face. He made a utensil in the shape of a gourd and called it Mu-ae (Boundless; this is an allusion to the Hwaŏm sect scriptural phrase, "Both life and death are Nirvana and paradise when a sage king rules within the bounds of decorum and music"). He composed a song about the gourd for this dance. Wearing the mask and carrying the gourd he performed his dance in every corner of the country, so that even usurers and poor old bachelors (both much despised) could understand the golden sayings of Buddha and the Buddhist invocation, Namuami-tabul. His native place Pulji (Buddha Land), his temple Ch'ogae (First Opening) and his religious name Wonhyo (Breaking Dawn) all refer to the first dawning of the Buddhist faith on earth.

When he wrote a commentary on the Hwaŏm scripture he stopped at the fortieth chapter, and when he lived at Punhwang temple in early life he was constantly occupied with public affairs. For these reasons he never rose above the lowest ranks of the monks. Guided by a sea dragon, he received a commandment from Buddha to write while traveling a song about Sammae-gyŏng. He put his ink-stone and his writing brush on the two horns of the ox he rode, and therefore people called him Kaksŭng (Horn Rider). The two horns represented the awakening of his inner self and of the inner selves of others. He met Taean Pŏpsa, another famous monk, who presented Wonhyo with writing paper, and they chanted the song together.

When Wonhyo died his bones were crushed and incorporated into a lifelike image of him which his son Sŏl Ch'ong enshrined in Punhwang-sa, where he held a memorial service and chanted a dirge in his father's memory. As Sŏl Ch'ong prostrated himself to one side of the image, it suddenly turned its head toward him This image is still to be seen, with its head turned to one side. Legend says that Sŏl Ch'ong lived in a cottage near a cave where his father had once lived. The ruins of this cottage are still there.

Song of Praise to Wonhyo

His Ox-horns unveiled the mystery of Sammae-gyŏng;
His gourd dance awoke the underworld to holy things.
In the moonlit Jade Palace he enjoyed a spring dream and was gone;
Over the closed Punhwang Temple his shadow dances alone.

104. Ŭisang Transmits the Hwaŏm Sutra to the Cardinal Temples

Ŭisang's father was Han-sin and his family name was Kim. At the age of twenty-nine he shaved his head and became a monk, residing at Hwangpok Temple. Soon afterward he decided to go to China to study Buddhist doctrine, and set out on his journey with Wonhyo. But when he reached Liaotung he was arrested by Koguryŏ border guards and

detained for ten days, after which he was allowed to return home. (Ilyŏn says this account is found in Ch'oe Hu's Chronicles and in Wonhyo's Autobiography.)

In the first year of Ying-hui (650) he joined the party of a T'ang envoy returning to China and entered the Middle Kingdom. When he arrived at Yangchow, the Chinese military commander there gave him a luxurious reception and provided him with living quarters in the government headquarters. After a few days he visited the monk Chih-yen on the South Mountain of Changan. Chih-yen had had a dream the night before in which he had seen a great tree growing in Haedong (Silla) whose boughs and leaves covered the whole of Shenchow (Land of God, i.e. China) and in the top of which was a phoenix nest. He climbed the tree, and his eyes were dazzled by *Manipao* (jewels said to have been emitted from the brain of a king dragon) whose light radiated far and wide. Waking in wonder and surprise, he tidied his house and waited until Ŭisang knocked at his door. After receiving his guest with special ceremony he said, "In a dream last night I saw signs of your coming." The two sat facing each other and discussed the mysteries of the Hwaŏm Sutra to the profoundest depths. Chih-yen was glad to hear the intelligent words of Ŭisang, and declared that his visitor outshone him on many points of Buddhist scripture.

At this time the Silla ministers Kim Hŭm-sun (another book says Kim In-mun, Ilyŏn notes) and Yang-to were detained in Changan by T'ang Emperor Kao-tsung, who was planning to attack Silla with a large army. Ŭisang was informed of this by Hŭm-sun, who urged him to return home at once and warn the court. Therefore, in the first year of Hsien-heng (670), Ŭisang returned to Silla and told King Munmu of the imminent danger. At the same time he ordered Myŏngnang, a clever monk, to improvise a secret Buddhist altar to deceive a Chinese envoy who had come to Kyŏngju for purposes of espionage. Thus the King was able to surmount the crisis.

Hsüan-shou Fa-tsang, a Chinese monk and fellow student of Ŭisang at Chih-yen's monastery, sent Ŭisang a copy of his Selections from Sou-hsüan-shu and a personal letter in the most cordial terms

Peach. Here is her lifelike image.' "

When Wang Hsiang, a Sung envoy, came to Koryŏ, he offered sacrifice to the goddess-mother and read a memorial which said in part, "She gave birth to a sage who founded a nation."

Shasu donated gold to make a Buddhist image. She lighted the incense and established a ferry and bridge, not for herself to enjoy long life, but for all creatures to enter paradise. (Here is a perfect example of the way in which Buddhism assimilated the beliefs which it encountered. The goddess-mother, who very probably constitutes a legend antedating the coming of Buddhism, is incorporated into the Buddhist scheme of things by being given the attributes of a Bodhisattva.)

Song in Praise of the Goddess-Mother of the Fairy Peach

Many a starry night and frosty day she lived alone on the West Hill of the Hawk;
She called the heavenly emperor's daughters to weave her rainbow dress.
How she envied wondrous thrills in her long human life!
She saw the golden spirit (Buddha) and became a jade empress (goddess).

115. Ukmyŏn, the Slave Girl who Entered the Lotus Paradise

During the reign of King Kyŏngdŏk (742–765) a group of devoted Buddhists in Kangju (now Chinju) built a temple called Mita-sa in a grove of trees and began to worship Buddha for ten thousand days in order to enter the lotus paradise. Among the worshippers was a female slave belonging to the aristocratic family of Kwi-jin whose name was Ukmyŏn. She followed her noble master to the temple every evening and offered a prayer, standing outside in the courtyard and bowing toward the august image in the main hall.

Her unkind master did not like this. He gave her two large bags (ten bushels) of rice to pound to pearly white each day, to keep her

busy at home. But she worked so diligently that she was able to attend prayers before dawn and after sunset each day. Moreover, as a sign of her devotion, she gouged holes in her two hands and passed a straw rope through them, which was then tied to two pegs on opposite sides of the temple courtyard.

One evening the assembled worhsippers heard a voice from the sky, which said, "Ukmyŏn, my faithful maid, enter the main hall of the Buddha and offer your prayer." They invited the poor girl to enter, and she approached the image of the merciful Buddha on her knees and murmured her prayer in a low voice, lifting her eyes in rapture to the half-closed eyes of Buddha. Suddenly the sound of heavenly music was heard from the west, and a swift whirlwind swept into the palace of the Buddha. Ukmyŏn was lifted into the sky through a gaping hole in the ceiling and roof, higher and higher as she flew toward the western side of the temple. There her mortal body fell away and she became a Kwanŭm (Goddess of Mercy) seated on a lotus pedestal and flew to the lotus paradise while heavenly music continued from the sky and brilliant rays illuminated the rapturous spectators below.

Another version of this story is found in the Book of Monks (Sŭng-jŏn). Tongnyang-P'aljin, an incarnation of Kwanŭm, organized a Hwarang order of one thousand men and divided them into two groups, one for physical labor and one for mental culture. One of the members of the labor group violated the Buddhist commandments and in consequence was reborn as a cow at Pusŏk Temple. While carrying Buddhist books on her back the cow died and was reborn as a human being by the power of the books. This was Ukmyŏn, a slave in the household of Kwijin, a nobleman.

One day Ukmyŏn went on an errand to a mountain called Haga-san, and there she experienced a trance in which she saw Buddha and was possessed with the holy spirit.

Mita-sa, founded by Hyesuk Pŏpsa, was not far from the house of Kwijin. For nine years, whenever her master went to worship Buddha in that temple, Ukmyŏn followed him to offer her prayers.

On the twenty-first day of the first month of the tenth year, while she was worshipping Buddha, she soared up into the sky, breaking through the ceiling and roof of the palace of Buddha. She flew above the highest peak of Sobaek-san, where she dropped one of her straw shoes. The first Bo Temple was built near this mountain crest. The second Bo Temple was built in a grove of Bo trees (Bodedrum) below the mountain, where she shed her earthly shell and her soul entered the lotus paradise. At Mita-sa there was hung a gilt panel which read "Ukmyŏn's Ascension Palace."

In the roof of the temple there was a hole large enough for a man to pass through, and wonderful to tell, even during heavy rain and snow the palace of Buddha where her image was seated never got wet. In later generations, however, the admirers of Ukmyŏn filled the hole by building a gilt pagoda on the floor of the temple, decorated with lotus petals and buds, and on this pagoda they inscribed the story of Ukmyŏn the slave girl.

After Ukmyŏn had gone to the lotus paradise, Kwijin donated his house to the monks, declaring it to be a holy place where an angel had lived. When it had been remodeled into a temple he called it Pŏpwang-sa. He also donated farmland to the temple.

After many years, when the temple lay in ruins on a hillside, a pious monk named Hoegyŏng, together with Yusŏk and Yi Wonchang, two local officials, promoted its reconstruction. Hoegyŏng, the strong monk, carried the timbers on his shoulders. In a dream one night an old man gave him two pairs of shoes woven of hemp and arrowroot vines, led him to the old shrine, and pointed out some giant trees in the forest, giving him instruction in Buddhist doctrine. (When he awoke) Hoegyŏng felled the trees and used them in building the temple, which was finished in five years. This was the famous temple of slaves in the southeast. All the pilgrims who visited it said that Kwijin had been reborn as Hoegyŏng, the good monk.

An old local legend book says the miracle of Ukmyŏn occurred during the reign of King Kyŏngdŏk, whereas the Biography of Jin says that she lived during the reign of King Aejang and did this wonder

in the third year of Yuan-huo (808). There were four kings between the reigns of Kings Kyŏngdŏk and Aejang during a period of more than sixty years. In fact, Kwijin came first and Ukmyŏn last. The biography differs from the legend in introducing them the other way around.

(This is fairly mystifying as the present text represents them as contemporaries.)

Song in Praise of Ukmyŏn

When Buddha's lantern was bright in the old western temple,
She finished pounding rice to worship Buddha at midnight;
She punctured her clasped hands with a straw rope to mortify her flesh;
As she murmured softly in prayer she flew to heaven in Buddha's arms.

116. Kwangdŏk and Ŏmjang, Two Friendly Monks

During the reign of King Munmu (661–681) two friendly monks lived in Kyŏngju. Kwangdŏk lived in a quiet place in the western precincts of Punhwang Temple with his wife and made his living by weaving straw shoes, and Ŏmjang worked on a farm near a hermitage which he had built in the valley of Nam-ak.

One evening as the last rays of sunlight illuminated the silent treetops. Ŏmjang heard a voice: "I am going to the lotus paradise. Be faithful to Buddha and come to see me there soon. Goodbye."

Ŏmjang saw that a rainbow had made a bridge from earth to heaven, while sweet music played above the clouds. He envied his friend, who had gone to the world of eternal peace and comfort ahead of him, and sighed, "Ah me! It is his voice telling of his journey home to paradise. Indeed, we promised to inform one another of our final departure from earth to heaven, and now the angels have taken him first."

Early next morning Ŏmjang visited the home of Kwangdŏk and

three pieces, He wept bitterly over this, and at length fell into a trance. During the night gods and goddesses descended from heaven and restored the stone to its original condition. Tae-sŏng awoke in joy and climbed the southern peak of Mt. T'oham, where he burned incense and worshipped the celestial deities. People thereafter called the place Hyang-nyŏng (Incense Peak).

The two stone bridges of the blue and white clouds, the seven-treasure lotus flowers and the two pagodas, Tabo-t'ap (Pagoda of Many Treasures) and Sŏkka-t'ap (Pagoda of Sakyamuni) at Pulguk-sa, in addition to the seated image of Buddha and the bas-reliefs of Kwanŭm on the walls and ceiling of Sŏkkul-am, are unsurpassed in exquisite workmanship among the art works in the temples of Korea.[4]

In addition to the above account, which is derived from old legends, the official records of these two temples give the following information: "During the reign of King Kyŏngdŏk, Tae-sŏng, the King's first minister, commenced the construction of Pulguk-sa in the tenth year of T'ien-pao (742). Tae-sŏng died during the reign of King Hyegong, on the second of December in the ninth year of Ta-li (774); the construction of the temple was finished some years later."

Song in Praise of Kim Tae-sŏng.

When spring ended in Moryang he donated three furrows of land;
When autumn came to Hyang-nyŏng he harvested ten thousand pieces of gold.
His mother knew poverty, wealth and nobility in a hundred years;
Her son rose from a low servant to a high aristocrat in a dream.

136. Hyangdŭk-Saji Feeds his Father with His Own Flesh

In Ungch'ŏnju a man named Hyangdŭk-Saji lived on a little farm. One year famine visited the land and the poor soil would yield no crop, so that his old father was all but starved to death. Hyangdŭk cut some flesh from his thigh and fed the old man. Deeply moved, the people of the province reported this to King Kyŏngdŏk. The King praised this

unusual deed of filial piety and gave Hyangdŭk five hundred large bags of rice as a reward.

137. Son Sun Offers to Sacrifice his Son.

During the reign of King Hŭngdŏk a poor man named Son Sun lived in the mountain village of Moryang-ni near Kyŏngju. After the death of his father (Hak-san) he and his wife worked at a neighboring house as day laborers and supported his old mother with the rice and vegetables they earned in this way.

Son Sun had a little son. This baby ate all the food served to his grandmother, for she was very fond of her grandson and would put the dainties she got into his mouth.

"This is good for our son but bad for my mother," Son Sun said. "We may have another son but we can never have another mother. We must get rid of this hindrance to our first duty." His wife was deeply moved by her husband's filial piety and readily agreed.

One night the mother took the child and carried it at her breast while her husband carried a spade on his shoulder, and they climbed the northern side of Mt. Ch'wi northeast of the village. With heavy hearts and many tears they began to dig a grave in which to bury their son alive. But Son Sun's spade struck a stone which gave a musical sound, and when he dug it out he found it was a small bell of exquisite beauty, about the size of the water jars which women carry on their heads.

The young couple looked at the bell with wondering eyes. They hung it on a tree and struck it with a pebble and it rang with a wonderful sound. In great joy the wife exclaimed, "We have discovered a wonderful bell, a God-sent gift. My good husband, do not bury my child, but spare his life." Son Sun agreed. With singing hearts and dancing feet they descended the hill with the bell and the baby.

On reaching home at daybreak they hung the bell under the eaves of their thatched house, and it swung in the wind and rang out its music far and wide. The King heard it in his palace and said, "I hear the