

# Remembering Goryeo, a Dynasty that was Open to the Sea

## Opening Remarks

The Korean Peninsula faces the sea in the East, West, and South. Such geographic situation presented both opportunities and challenges to the Korean people. Their response to those occasions led to all sorts of actions on the sea. Ensuing conflicts and exchanges with the outer world shaped the path and course on which the history of Korea would continue to unfold.

Coastal areas were the first to feature that aspect, as battlefields or marketplaces were formed on the coastlines amidst foreign encounters. Then the roads connected to such focal points would serve as conduits where political, economic, and social interests would either collide or converge. Eventually inner regions would also share the fruits and fallouts of such interactions. All Koreans had to deal with the sea, and were significantly affected by it as well.

So, one could say that examining Korean life on the sea is crucial in Korean historical studies. Political entities thrived with their access to the sea, while commercial success was no stranger to Korean maritime merchants. Jang Bogo and Wang Geon are the prime examples, as the former created a vast trade network in Northeast Asia, while the latter united the Later Three Kingdoms and eventually founded the Goryeo dynasty.

Goryeo (918-1392) was a country whose destiny was literally intertwined with the sea. Wang Geon's successors continued to pursue diplomatic relationships with China<sup>1</sup> and Japan through official convoys across the sea, while the private sector equally buzzed with maritime activities as well. In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, the people of Goryeo welcomed huge waves of Song merchants while also going over to China in a scale and fashion that even scared the Song government and thrilled Chinese customers. Then later in the 13<sup>th</sup>

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1. Such counterparts included Chinese Song and Khitan Liao since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, then Jurchen Jin as well as the Southern Song since the mid-12<sup>th</sup>, and the Mongol Yuan empire since the early 13<sup>th</sup>, and finally the Chinese Ming at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, Goryeo manufacturers and merchants displayed expanded operations on a much larger platform developed by the Mongol empire while at the same time receiving visitors from all around the world.

Countless conferences, symposiums, and exhibitions were held in 2018, which marked the 1,100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Goryeo dynasty's foundation. It was indeed a festive occasion for all Goryeo scholars, and a joyous time which lasted for an entire year. Important themes and topics concerning the Goryeo history were vibrantly discussed, and naturally the question of what the sea meant to Goryeo or to Korean history in general was as well debated. Gimhae City of the Gyeonggsang-do Province<sup>2</sup> and the Jeolla-do region of the Korean Peninsula<sup>3</sup> were separately examined in symposiums held in April and October, while in September a two-day international conference was held in Busan to discuss Goryeo people's interactions with China and Japan on the sea.<sup>4</sup>

In this review, I'd like to introduce the readers to all these works, provide the readers with an overview of these efforts, while as well trying to suggest some elements that would have made the results possibly better. I will also try to quote some other works on Korean maritime history at the end of this review.

### **Goryeo People's Actions on the Sea, and its Relationship with China and Japan: The Two-day Conference in Busan**

First, let's have a look at how things went at the 2-day conference. There were three groups of presenters. The first two groups were headed by special lectures, of which one focused upon the Goryeo dynasty's very beginning (Yi Jeong-shin, "Goryeo's Foundation, its Unification of the Peninsula and the Role the

Sea Played") while the other examined East Asian international order, either compromised or consolidated by maritime conditions (Kim Gi-Seob, "East Asian Order during the Goryeo Period's Latter Half, the Sea, and Internal Politics of the Dynasty"). While the former discussed the personal history of the dynasty's founder Wang Geon and the business his household had with the sea in a rather brief manner, the latter examined the maritime situation in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, when the Yuan-Ming transfer overlapped with the activities of Japanese pirates in Northeast Asia.

Other than these special lectures, the first group included articles from Kang Bong-Ryong ("Founder King Wang Geon's Taking Control of the Sea, Creating a Country and Then Unifying the Later Three Kingdoms"), Yamauchi Shinji ("Oranges from across the Sea, and Horses Charging on the Land"), and Morihira Masahiko ("Travels between Korea and China on the Sea: Maritime Routes in the Mongol Yuan Period").

Gang examined the maritime factions which were operating in the peninsula's west and south sea at the time, and discussed how Wang Geon competed with Later Baekje's Gyeon Hwon over the sea and was able to unify the Korean Peninsula after securing a dominative position on the sea. On the other hand, Yamauchi discussed how oranges from Tamna (today's Jeju-do Island) and Japan were "presented" to the Goryeo king, while horses from the Northern Jurchen tribes were provided to Goryeo as well. And while Yamauchi mostly examined Goryeo-Japan trades in the 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, Morihira focused on the period since the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century by discussing Goryeo's maritime exchanges with other countries as well as certain routes used in the process. He examined how the Mongol authorities secured transport routes along the Korean Peninsula's coastline, and connected Goryeo with the north and south parts of China as well as the Liaodong region.

Meanwhile, the second group was composed of articles from Wei Jujang ("Maritime Silkroad between Goryeo and Song, and Cultural Exchanges on the Sea"), Lee Jin-Han ("Song Merchants who Came to the Korean Peninsula, and Nature of the Northeast Asian Trade Network"), and Park Yong-Jin ("Exchanges over the Sea: Interactions among Goryeo, Chinese, and Japanese Buddhist Communities").

Wei discussed how transport routes on the sea between Chinese Song and the Korean Peninsula changed over time (in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries), while economic trades and cultural exchanges (encounters between religious figures

2. "Jungse dosi Geumju, Gimhae ui jaebalgyeon" (Medieval City Geumju: Rediscovering the Nature of Gimhae City), held by Hanguk jungse sahakhoe (The Korean Medieval History Society) and supported by Gimhae City authorities.

3. "Goryeo geonguk gwa Jeonnam ui heyang seryeok" (Goryeo's Foundation, and the Maritime Factions in the Jeolla Namdo Region), jointly held by the Hanguk jungse sahakhoe, Doseo munhwa yeonguwon (Institute for Marine & Island Cultures, Mokpo National University), and Chang Bogo haeyang gyeong-yeongsa yeonguhoe (Research Society of Jang Bogo's Operations on the Sea).

4. "Goryeo geonguk gwa tongil ui woncheon bada" (Sea, the Source of Power behind Goryeo's Foundation and Unification of the Peninsula), jointly held by the National Maritime Museum, Hanguk jungse sahakhoe, Pukyong National University, and Gukje haeyang munje yeonguso (Korean Maritime and Ocean University Institute of International Maritime Affairs).

or at least their philosophical ideas) continued along them. Lee, focusing more on the economic aspect, discussed the role of Song merchants who frequented the Korean Peninsula while commenting upon the possibility that the Jurchen tribes may have visited Goryeo by the sea as well. Then Park examined what kind of cultural contacts had been unfolding between the three regions on the sea in the early, middle, and late Goryeo periods. He did so by first examining Goryeo Buddhist priests who visited China, and then Song, Yuan, and Japanese priests who came to the Korean Peninsula.

And finally, the third group featured works of three presenters: Chung Ui-do ("Goryeo's Maritime Activities Seen through Archaeological Materials"), Furuya Tetsuo ("Goryeo Porcelain Found in Japan"), and Dong Chienri ("Goryeo Porcelain Found in China").

Chung began his discussion by providing an overview on several famous shipwrecks and relics found inside them, and then added a detailed analysis of those ships' types. He also discussed other important vestiges on several Korean islands, which feature traces of maritime transportation and exchanges through important artifacts excavated there. Meanwhile, Furuya analyzed Korean porcelain found in Japan, and classified them into regions they were found in and into periods of their production. It was a wise choice, but the outcome is a little less reader-friendly in terms of featuring correlations between type (of a particular porcelain), time (when it was produced), and region (where it was made or found). On the other hand, the article from Dong, which immediately followed Furuya's article and did virtually the same task on Korean porcelain in China, seems relatively more systematic in delivering us information regarding specific regions that revealed porcelains produced in specific periods: the Song/Jin period, the Yuan period, and the Yuan/Ming transitional period.

Overall, the themes and subjects tackled by all these groups are quite extensive. And it is always good to see so many Korean, Chinese, and Japanese scholars gathered together to work in concert. The vision of this conference was quite audacious, as not only many prominent scholars were able to attend, but the themes ranged from politics to economy, and from religion to archaeology.

However, internal structures of respective groups seemed a bit unbalanced, and a thematic flow that should have coherently connected all three of them seems to be missing. In retrospect the conference could have used a little tuning and refinement. Such aspect also appears more glaringly in the first two groups.

The first group, which began with a special lecture on the issue of how

Goryeo's foundation was enabled by the founder's relationship with the sea, features three other articles which actually do not share a unifying theme. One is about Wang Geon's military control over the sea, while another is about commercially traded commodities like oranges and horses, and the last one is about maritime trade routes between Korea and China during the days of the Mongol Yuan empire. The three articles managed to cover the early and late periods of Goryeo history, and deal with not only political but economic aspects of maritime contacts initiated by Goryeo as well. Then again, among these three, the first one was the only one to share some themes (war, diplomacy) with the opening lecture, while the other two, which dealt with trade items and routes, were purely from an economic point of view and had nothing to do with Goryeo politics affected by maritime conditions in the dynasty's middle and later periods.

The last two articles, while being fine works in their own rights, also featured some additional problems. While the article by Yamauchi lacked adequate consultation of works done on the subject by Korean scholars, Morihira's work contained some misinterpretations of previous Korean works. The latter is less heavily relying upon Japanese works than the former and prudently consulted recent Korean studies, yet there are still clear disagreements between his thesis and some Korean scholars that should be worked out in the future. In the meantime, one could not help but notice that the actual amount of reference dedicated to the sea in the headlining special lecture was surprisingly small.

The second group benefited from the fact that all three articles shared the same theme, which would be maritime exchanges either commercial or cultural in the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. While the second and third articles were mainly about economy or culture, the first one tried to examine both. And while the first and second ones focused on a period up until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the last one examined the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries as well.

The efforts are admirable and the results are interesting, yet it would have been better if some other aspects had also been included in the fold. The transmission of Confucianism from China to Korea through maritime exchanges should have received more attention, and the lack of discussion on Goryeo foreign trades in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries hurts the overall balance of both this group's presentation and that of the entire conference. Of course, some issues were referred to in Morihira's article from the first group, yet his work was

mainly about transportation routes and individual maritime encounters. What was recently made a well-known fact is that Goryeo people's business with the outer world showed visible increase in mass and frequency and even went through some evolutions during the Mongol period,<sup>5</sup> yet such aspect of Goryeo maritime history is completely missing from not only this segment's discussion but the conference's topical perimeters as well. And last but not least, it does not help the group presentation either that the opening special lecture, which should have provided the reader with an insight penetrating the following articles, is somewhat thematically isolated—concentrating upon power-shifts in China as well as the Waegu pirates—from the other three.

The third and final group was significantly less problematic than the first two, as its focus was solely archaeological. There was no special opening lecture, but a general overview of Goryeo maritime history utilizing archaeological findings prepares the audience for following presentations. And arranging two foreign scholars to respectively provide research on Goryeo porcelain relics found inside Japan and others found in China seemed like a particularly wise choice, as they turned out to be not only more informative but inductive to comparative contemplations as well. However, it may have been more ideal if other kinds of relics such as fabrics, lacquerware, and bronze utensils were also examined here, as they were all famous Goryeo products that had been frequently exported to China. And there is also the matter of Chinese coins imported into Goryeo. I suppose trying to cover them as well may have strained the discussion and hurt cohesion of the group for the sake of pursuing thematic variety.

In retrospect, the first group may have benefitted from additional political angles to review the relationship between Goryeo and the sea, while the second session could have improved with a balanced perspective that would include all periods of Goryeo. Religious matters could have also formed a full group if other works had additionally been solicited. And while the third group was more solid theme-wise, it would have been nice to see other kinds of findings, or Goryeo relics found in other regions—for example, the Southeast Asian regions—as well.<sup>6</sup>

## Quintessential Port to the Western Sea: Jeolla Namdo

Next, let's have a look at the "Jeonnam" (abbreviated from Jeolla Namdo) symposium. In Part 1, keynote speaker Gang Bong-Ryong provided the attendees with an overview of the Jeolla Namdo Province's significance as a region which had direct access to the sea ("The Nature of Jeolla Namdo Region, in Terms of Maritime History during the Goryeo Period"). His lecture was then followed by two more articles, from Goh Gyeong-seok ("Jang Bogo's Legacy on the Sea") and Kim Myeong-jin ("Wang Geon and Sudal Neungchang, a maritime force on the Abhae-do Island").

Gang first examined Goryeo and Later Baekje's activities on the sea, and then continued his examination on a variety of topics, which included Goryeo's shipbuilding skills, maritime transport capabilities, famous 9<sup>th</sup> century ports in the peninsula's southwest region, and Goryeo's strategy to utilize its islands during the Mongol invasion. On the other hand, Goh focused his observation on the Cheonghae-jin base created by Jang, in terms of several facets of that base: the area in which it had jurisdiction over, the economic basis that would have sustained its operations, new transport routes connecting the base and China that emerged in Jang's time, how junior factions grew alongside Cheonghae-jin, and the probability of Cheonghae-jin's porcelain production. And Kim examined the competition between Wang Geon and Sudal Neungchang over the sea, which resulted in the latter's fall and the prevailing of the former.

Then later in Part 2, three presenters delivered their articles. Mun An-Shik talked about the early years of the region, right before the unification of the Korean Peninsula ("Gyeon Hwon's Founding of Later Baekje and the Hojok Factions in the East Side of Jeolla Namdo"), while Kim Gab-dong discussed early figures of the Goryeo period ("Wang Geon's Founding of Goryeo and the Roles of Figures such as Na Chong-Rye, Oh Da-Ryeon, and Choi Ji-Mong"), and Kim Byeong-In discussed Wang Geon's so-called "10 Injunctions" to reevaluate its nature in terms of the particular history of Jeonnam ("Reexamination of the 8<sup>th</sup> Segment of *Hunyo sib-jo*").

Mun focused his examination on the east side of the Jeonnam region where Gyeon Hwon gloriously rose and ultimately fell, and then provided the audience with details of Gyeon Hwon's legacy in this region by engaging in a meticulous geographical survey. Then Kim Gap-dong examined how Wang

5. General impression on this period, which prevailed for quite some time, was that the Mongol oppression prevented the people from Goryeo from continuing their outward external activities.

6. Further, debates and discussions were hosted by Hong Yeong-Ui, Cho Myeong-Je, and Han Seong-Uk, all experts in their respective fields. And Park Chong-gi provided a closing address for the conference.

Geon secured the Naju region by accepting a surrender from Na Chong-Rye and marrying the daughter of Oh Da-ryeon, and explained what kind of assistance he elicited and then got from Choi Ji-Mong. And finally, Kim Byeong-in tried to introduce a new point of discussion to the age-old debate over the validity and reliability of the *Hunyo sib-jo* (*Ten Instructions*) from founder King Wang Geon, by not only examining the regions that were supposedly criticized by Wang but also ascertaining the nature of individuals Wang explicitly referred to (“slaves and lowly servants”). Ultimately Kim is suggesting that what should be more carefully examined in the future are not only the possibility of a “revision” of the founder’s original instructions, but the people who may have been behind it (and their agendas) as well.<sup>7</sup>

During Goryeo days, the Jeollado Province was a key region essential to coastline transportation, so the region had always been extremely important to Goryeo in terms of both domestic economy as well as foreign trade. In that regard, choosing to examine the region’s history in details in the honor of Goryeo’s legacy was nothing but adequate. In fact, this sort of occasion was a long awaited one.

Yet the overall focus leaves some things to be desired. With the exception of the keynote lecture by Gang, all the other five articles are examining the very early stages of the Goryeo period, while two of them are not even about the legacy of Wang Geon but Jang Bogo in the 9<sup>th</sup> century (which was quite some time before Goryeo’s foundation) or Gyeon Hwon in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century. Even the keynote speech is only dedicating mere one-third of its volume to Goryeo’s later periods, and the rest is again in reference to the early 10<sup>th</sup> century and even the late 9<sup>th</sup> century. The history of the Jeollado region was actually quite long and eventful, so having a focus on a rather limited time period is a bit disturbing. All the works here are meticulous and thoughtful, but it is somewhat disappointing to leave the symposium without having a chance to hear about the history of this region in Goryeo’s later periods. Social unrest occurring here and there during the Military Regime period (1170-1269), Mongol initiatives that unrattled the region (since the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century), and the region’s role in defending the country when the Japanese pirates continued to attack the entire

Korean Peninsula (since the 1350s) are all topics that could have respectively sustained an entire conference on their own.

Added to that problem, the themes are generally political or about military conflicts, so the economic aspect of the region (such as the aforementioned coastal transports) is greatly missing from the discussion. A unique level of accessibility the region provided for Goryeo merchants to several Chinese regions should have been one of the prime focuses of this conference, while the region’s prominent status in the economy of Goryeo as the biggest grain producer on the peninsula and the huge influence it had on both adjacent and faraway regions by occupying most of the transportation centers (roadway stations) of the entire country, should have been brought up as well.

### The City on the Edge of the Southeastern Coastline: Gimhae

And for the last, we shall examine what kind of works were presented at the “Gimhae” symposium. In Part 1, Ku San-Wu discussed local governance in old Geumju (“Structural Elements Featured in Gimhae Area’s Local Administration”), while Choi Yeon-Ju talked about Buddhist traditions in the area (“Buddhism and the Buddhist Monasteries in Gimhae during the Goryeo Period”).

Ku delivered a layered portrayal of the inside of the Gimhae City, by covering both its general history and regional details. The latter was especially discussed in terms of the city’s internal composition of counties (*hyeon*) and sub-counties (*sok-hyeon*), location of defense posts and the Dongnamhae dobuseo post (Southeast Sea Monitor Office), and the *bugok* settlements it housed, while prefects and clerks, soldiers and stations, and other local procedures of governing were all adequately examined. On the other hand, Choi provided an overall view of the Buddhist monasteries located in the region, while highlighting the characteristics shared by these Gimhae-based monasteries or temple vestiges. Choi also tried to ascertain specific monasteries’ time of construction, and classified them into several time periods (the Three Dynasties period, the Unified Silla period, and the early and later halves of Goryeo, etc.), revealing the fact that more temples were built in the Goryeo period than before.

Then in Part 2, Chung Yong-Beom discussed the economic aspects of the old Geumju City (“Circulation and Commerce in the Gimhae Area during the

7. And other than the presenters, Hwang Sang-Seok, Shin Seong-Jae, Cheong Dong-Rak, Kim Jong-Sun, and Lee Byung-Hee served as discussants, while the concluding debate was led and overseen by Yun Yong-Hyuk.

Goryeo Period”), while Bae Sang-Hyeon talked about the administrative center of Geumju (“The Chiso-seong of Geumju, and the Nature of Such Space”).

Chung first observed the traffic routes both surrounding and penetrating the city, as well as the traffic stations positioned upon them. Then he shifted his focus to the local commercial center of the city, and certain past traces of commercial circulation throughout the city. Especially in taking on the latter, he analyzed certain relics excavated from the region’s burial mounds and temple vestiges, which generally match the type and shapes of other relics uncovered from shipwrecks known to have served commercial and transport functions across the country at the time, or famous porcelain production centers located in other regions of the peninsula. Meanwhile, Bae examined the fortress-styled administrative center (Chiso-seong) of Gimhae City. He also observed some historical events that would have involved the area, the city center’s natural geographical surrounding, and vestiges of artificial constructions.<sup>8</sup>

While the Jeollado Province was a region which was directly facing China, the Gyeongsang Namdo area was a gateway for the Korean people to access another segment of Northeast Asia, which included the Japanese islands and other regions too. Other than that, Gimhae was also the birthplace of the proud Gaya polities, whose significance in local politics as well as its influence on other regions were felt in both the Unified Silla and Goryeo dynasty periods. In that regard, the symposium did a fairly good job of choosing to examine the history of Gimhae, which was a focal point in Gyeongsangdo’s past activities. The symposium also managed to cover a variety of Gimhae’s own diverse facets, such as the city’s political, economic, spiritual, and administrative aspects.

Yet there were also some things that were apparently left behind. While the symposium chose to cover the entire Goryeo period, the historical changes the city had to go through from the 10<sup>th</sup> century through the 14<sup>th</sup> are not that much “chronologically” explored. Although the overall history and nature of Geumju City was more than adequately observed, specific aspects from specific time periods, and how those aspects changed over the passage of time, are highlighted not nearly enough. It was more like a neutral picturing of the city as an isolated piece of region that happened to exist on the Korean Peninsula, rather than exploring the meaning it had in the political, economic, religious,

and institutional history of Goryeo. How this city was different from the others and what unique meaning this city ever had throughout Korean history or within the Goryeo society are questions that were never asked nor answered in this conference.

And curiously enough, its nature as a city that had relatively easy access to the sea was never mentioned at all. Its role in the Korean Peninsula’s southeast region’s maritime trades with other states (such as Japan) should have been more examined, and so is its role in the Goryeo government’s management of the peninsula’s Eastern coastline (in both, defense and administration). Particularly frustrating is the lack of examination of the plights this region had to go through in the dynasty’s latter half, because the “Mongol factor” imposed quite a lot of changes on the area, with the Mongols’ preparation for the Japanese campaign, and the garrison farms the Mongol authorities established in the region, just to name a few. Along with the city’s important status within the local network of the entire Gyeongsangdo Province, these aspects are never sufficiently discussed here.

So, in retrospect, through these three separation occasions, scholars were able to have an extensive and comprehensive review of the Korean people’s maritime activities in the past, or regions which traditionally witnessed such activities. The result is more or less adequate, but as mentioned above there are things that would have been better included, with some that rather should have been.

## Closing Remarks

Aspects which have been continuously studied for quite some time now yet were not fully discussed or referred to in the above-examined conferences and symposiums, probably due to time restraints and preconceived focuses, may fit in the “better included” category and sometimes even the “should have been” one. Currently there are many studies in progress regarding Goryeo people’s maritime activities, or their exchanges with other regions on the sea.

First of all, in terms of historical studies of the Goryeo people’s commercial trades on the sea, several scholars have contributed to the field. The whole academic society in this area owes a huge debt to Prof. Chang Dong-Ik (1997, 2000, 2004), as he spent years in collecting all kinds of Goryeo references from

8. Rounded discussants included Yun Gyeong-Jin, Han Gi-Mun, Kim Do-Yeon, and Choi Jong-Seok, while the wrapping debate was hosted by Kim Gi-Seob.

Song, Liao, Jin, Japan, and Mongol Yuan official sources. Many of them had both direct and indirect references to the Goryeo people's relationship with the sea, their actions on it, and the interactions they had with Northeast Asian neighbors through maritime traders and diplomatic convoys.

Then there are Lee Jin-Han (2011) and Kim Yeong-Je (2009, 2012), who have both been engaged in the studies of the Song-Goryeo relationship. For years they have focused upon various subjects, including the Goryeo and Song merchants who were essentially carriers, transmitters, and messengers in the maritime world of the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. On the other hand, Lee Kang Hahn (2013, 2016a, 2016b, 2018) has been focusing on the Goryeo kings' and traders' interaction with the Mongol Yuan empire and beyond, including West Asia and India, in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. All these studies are doing their own parts of mapping an integral part of Korean Maritime History: history of Goryeo-based commercial trades on the sea.

Then there have been studies of coastline routes for domestic and foreign transportation, as well as of the roles the Korean islands played in maritime traffic during the Goryeo period. Professor Morihira (2013) is famous for his detailed and meticulous research of the Korean Peninsula's shores, while a renowned institute at the Mokpo National University in its namesake city and a study project at the Kookmin University in Seoul have been both separately and sometimes cooperatively progressing their studies of all things related to Korean islands.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, the National Research Institute of Maritime Cultural Heritage deserves an especially huge notice, as it has been the most important institute in Korea exploring the Western coastline of the peninsula for over four decades. With the famous Sinan Wreck in its custody, and with gifted talents and equipment, it has since been producing magnificent publications of artifacts found and excavated from the bottom of Korean ocean floors in the West and Southern Sea.<sup>10</sup>

9. The Institution for Maritime & Island Cultures (website: www.Islands.mokpo.ac.kr) has been contributing to the field for decades, and a study group based at Kookmin University has been engaged in creating a vast database of Korean islands in the last couple of years. For this, please see Hong 2016.

10. This institute (website: www.seamuse.go.kr) has also been publishing important studies in a journal entitled *Haeyang munhwaje* (*Maritime Cultural Heritage*) every year. The 11<sup>th</sup> volume was published in 2018.

In other words, there is so much more that we could discuss in terms of Korean maritime history from the Goryeo days. It is as if only a fraction of what was to be said was actually discussed last year, but that is okay. The conferences in 2018 played their role of kickstarting yet another wave of discussions of this aspect embedded in Korean medieval history, and the rest is for us to further explore. I salute all the scholars mentioned above, and as a fellow scholar studying this area as well, I believe with confidence that amazing studies would continue to pour out from Korean scholars in the future. For foreign scholars who are interested in Korean medieval maritime history, please stay tuned.

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