

**Tangun**

**Founder-King of Korea**

“Our people, whose father is Tangun, have lived steadfastly through the succession of one and the same bloodline, language and cultural tradition for a historical period of five thousand years. This encourages our 70 million Korean people to turn out courageously in the sacred struggle to end the tragedy of national division and to reunite the country, transcending the differences in political views and religious beliefs and property status, no matter whether they are in the north or in the south or abroad.” (An excerpt from the report delivered at the 6th Session of the 9th Supreme People’s Assembly of the DPRK)

Photos by the courtesy of the Archaeological Institute and the Preservation of Culture Institute

Restoration of relics by **Jong Un Gwan**

Translated by **An Jong Ho, Choe Ki Ju,  
Ryom Chol Su, O Su Gun  
and Ryang Sun Chol**

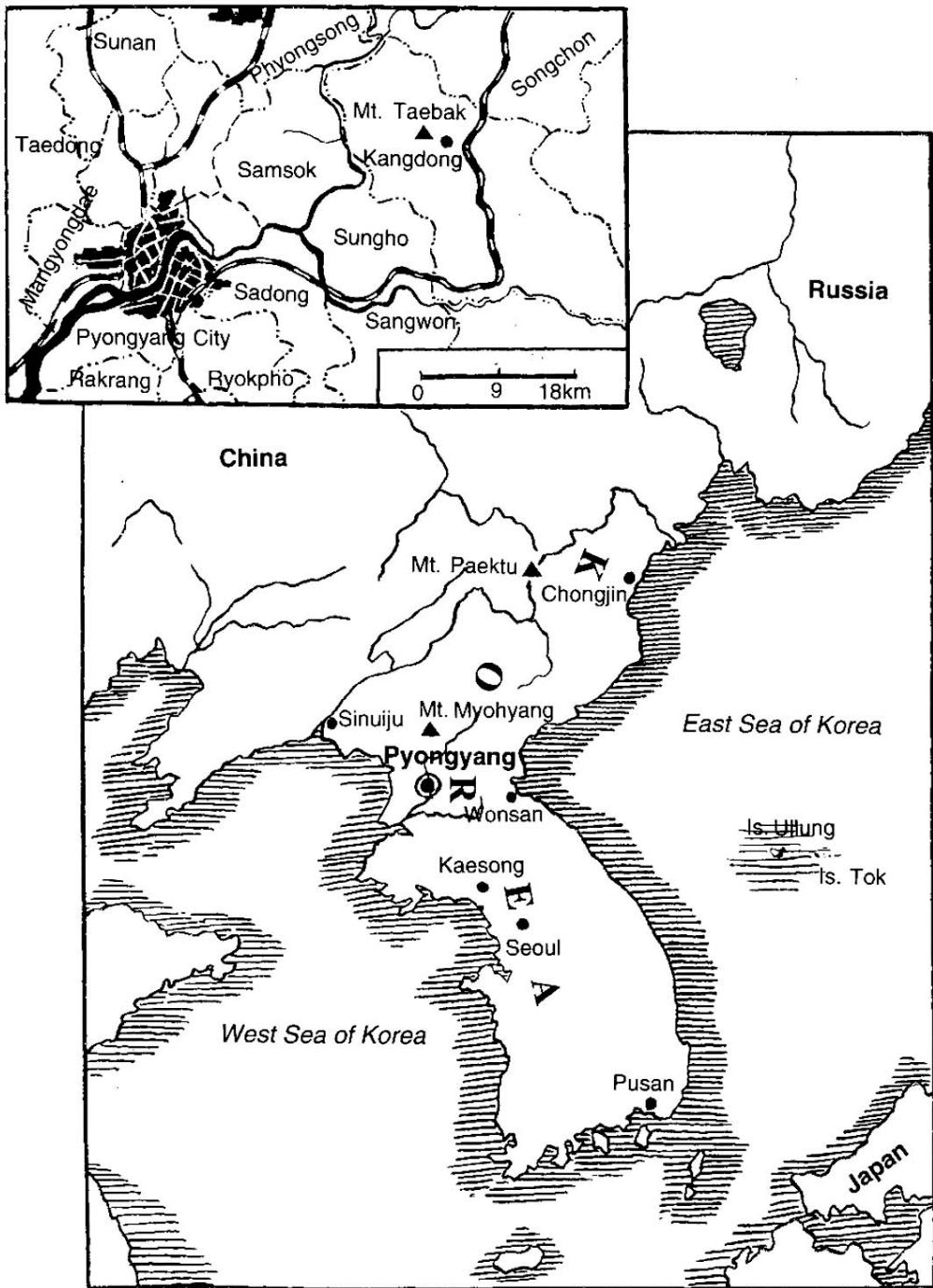
# Tangun

## Founder-King of Korea

(Collection of Treatises)

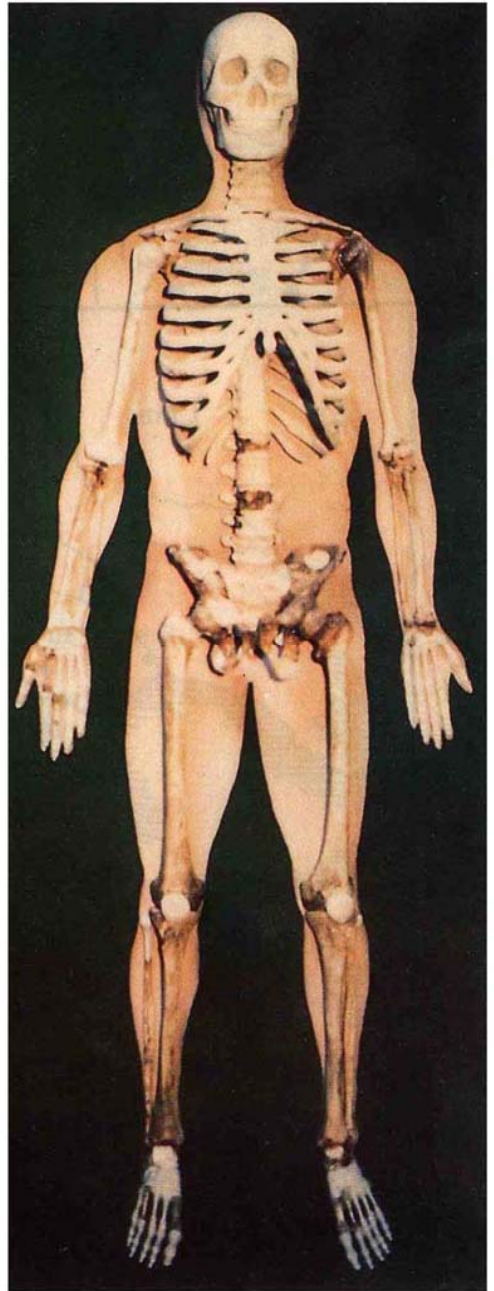
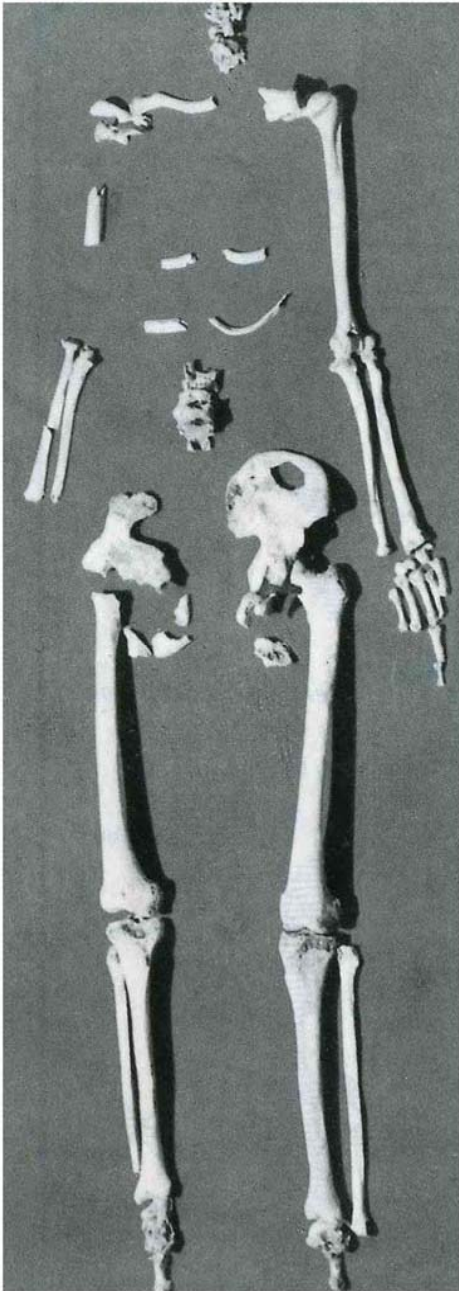


Foreign Languages Publishing House  
Pyongyang, Korea  
1994

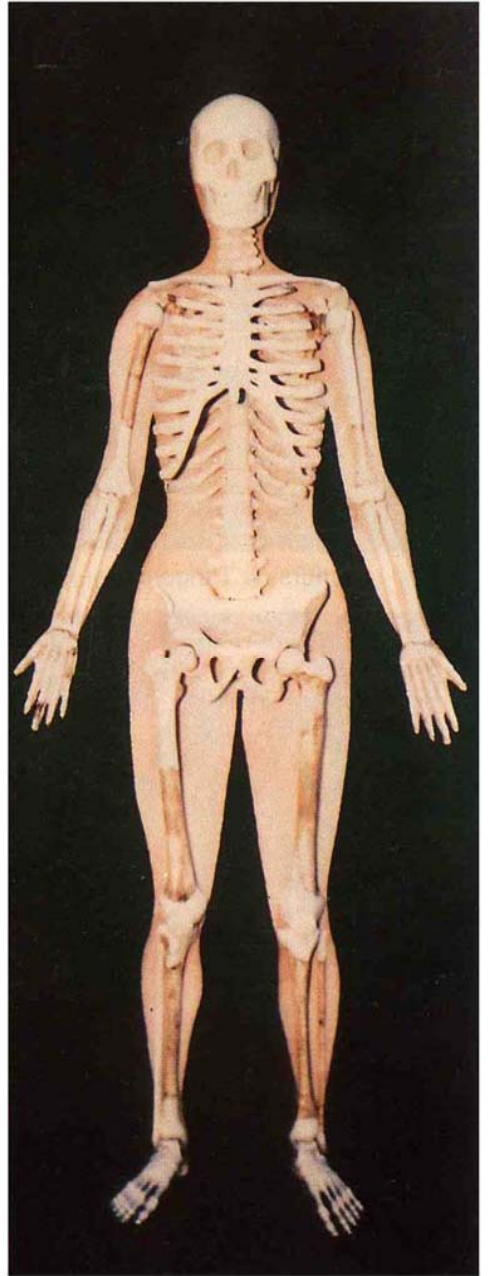
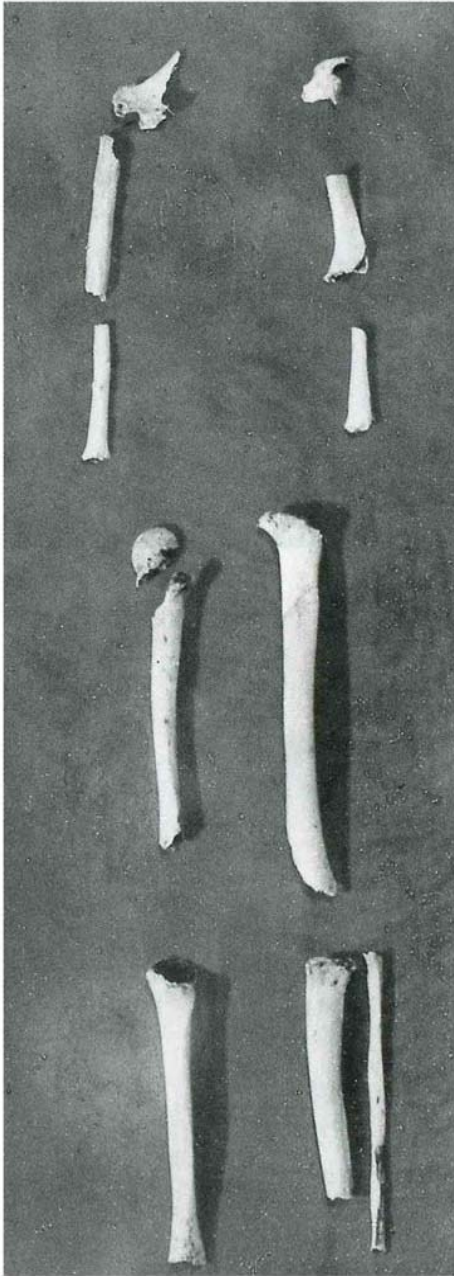


Site of the Tomb of King Tangun

**Skeletons of Tangun and his wife unearthed in the Tomb of Tangun and their reproduction**



**Skeleton of Tangun and its reproduction**



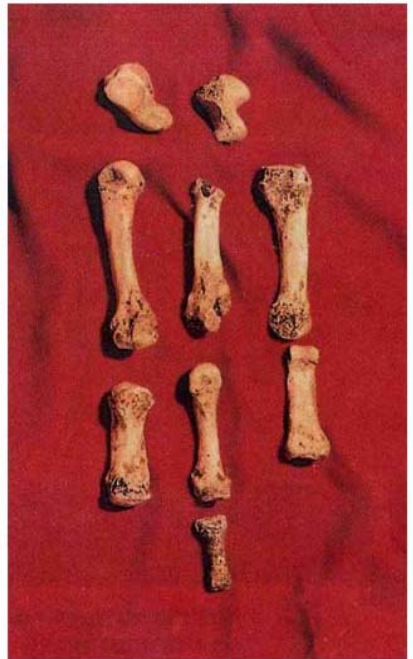
Skeleton of Tangun' s wife and its reproduction



Tangun' s thighbones



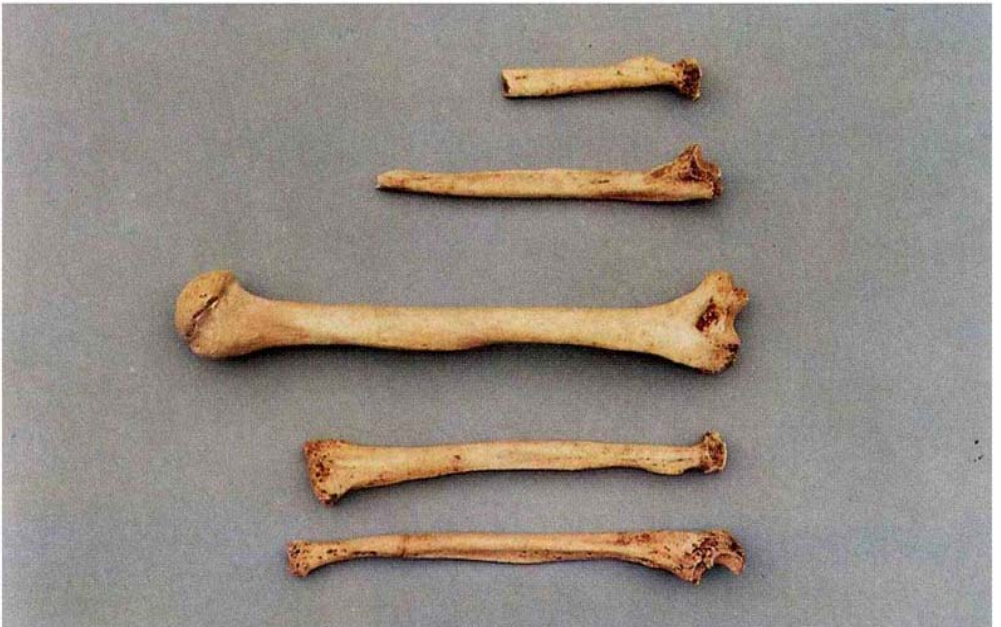
Tangun' s pelvis



Tangun' s metacarpal  
bones and phalanges



Tangun' s shinbone and fibula



Tangun' s humerus, ulna and radius



A plaque of the gilded band, the ornamental upright in front of the gilded royal crown and a fragment of the circlet which were unearthed from the Tomb of Tangun



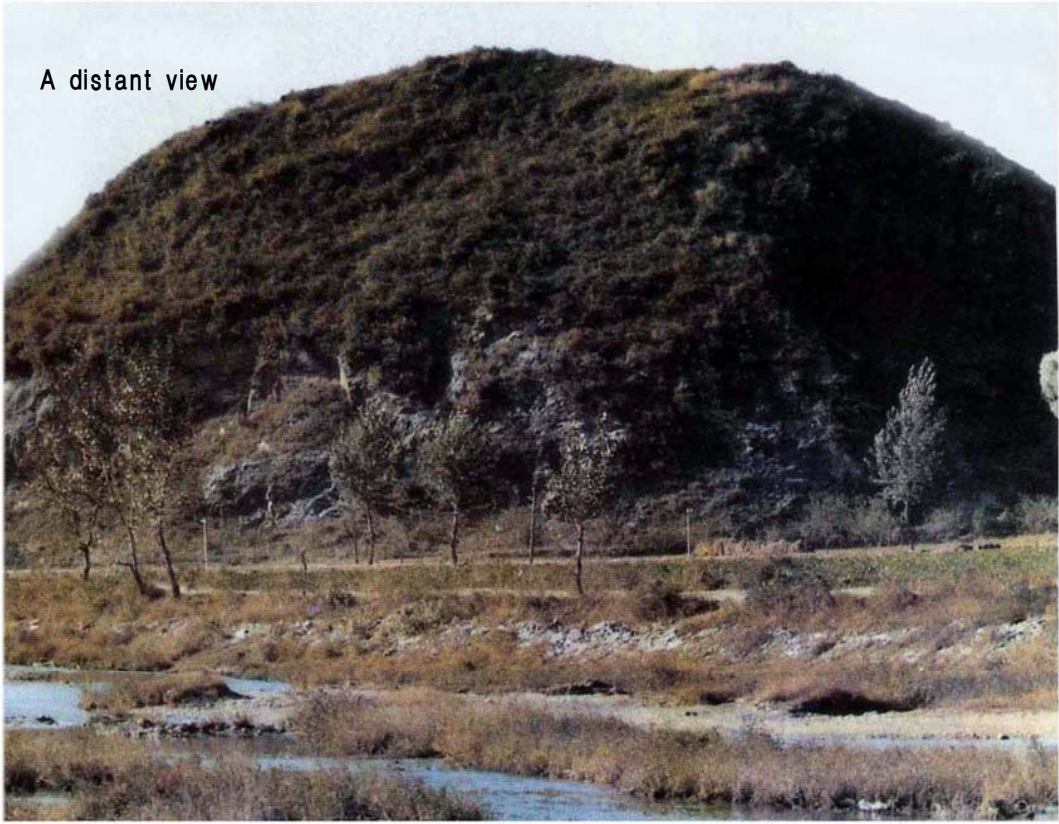
Stone monument at the Tomb of Tangun and monument inscription



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初燕荒率神人以臨初成辰推歲為君乃建國號朝鮮命為虞  
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**The Komunmoru archaeology**  
(Hugu-ri, Sangwon County, Pyongyang City)

A distant view



Trapezoidal stone instrument



Pointed stone instrument



Cresecent stone instrument



The stone instrument used by Homo erectus which was unearthed in the Komunmoru archaeology

A general view



**The Taehyondong  
archaeology**  
(Taehyon-dong,  
Ryokpho District,  
Pyongyang City)

Reproduction of the  
“Ryokpho man”  
(Palaeoanthropic man)



Fragments of the fossil skull of the  
“Ryokpho man”

**The Mandal-ri archaeology**  
(Mandal-ri, Sungho District, Pyongyang City)

The fossil skull of “Mandal Man” (Neanthropic man)



A front view



A rear view of the skull



A side view of the skull



A front view

The fossil lower  
jawbone



A side view



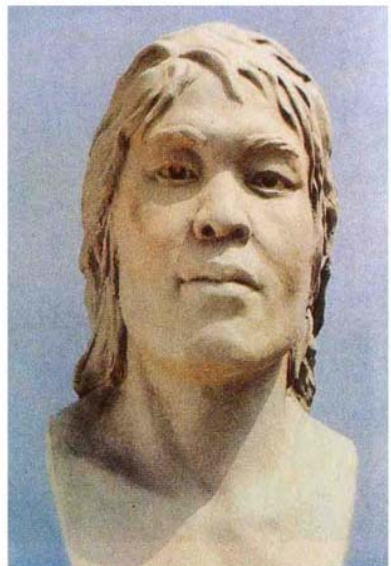
Instrument made  
of obsidian



A side view

The reproduction of the "Mandal Man"

A front view



## The Chimchon-type dolmen



A general view

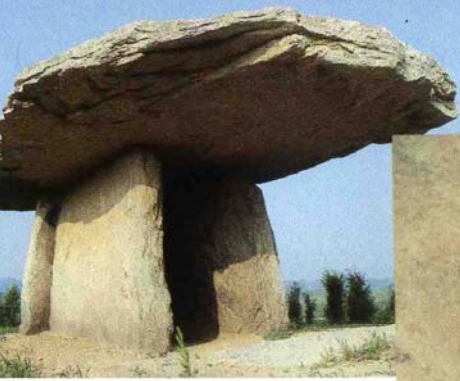


A close view

## The Odok-type dolmen

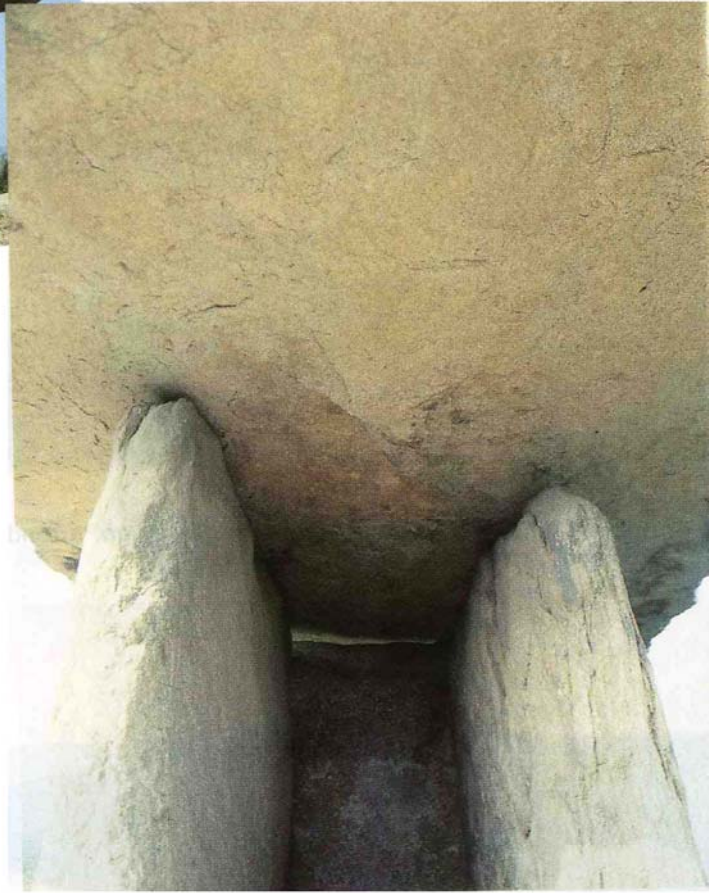
Dolmen No. 1 in Kwansan-ri, Unryul County, South Hwanghae Province





A side view

Interior of dolmen No. 1 in Kwansan-ri



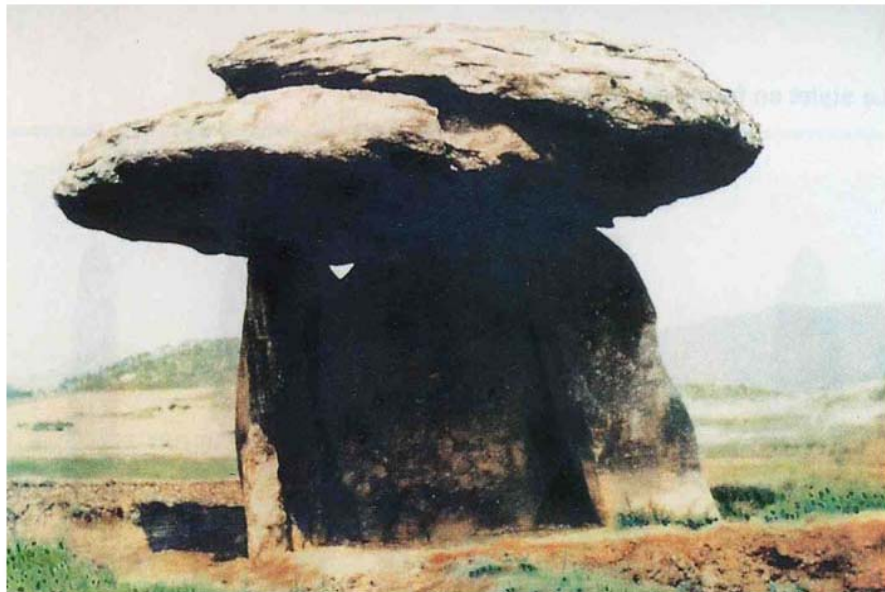
The joint of a dolmen



Dolmen in  
Roam-ri,  
Anak County,  
South  
Hwanghae  
Province

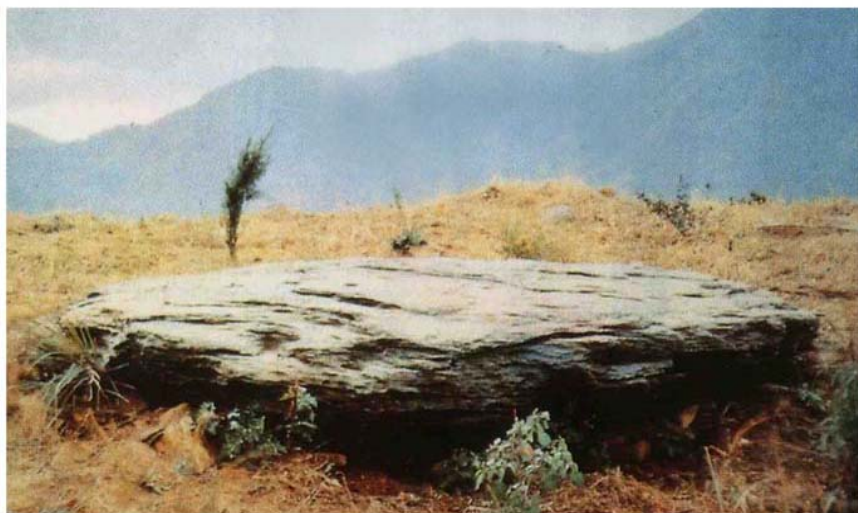






Dolmen in Ryongdong-ri, Paechon  
County, South Hwanghae Province

**Mukbang-type dolmen**



A general view

Interior of a dolmen



*Pipha*-shaped dagger



*Pipha*-shaped daggers  
and *pipha*-shaped brass  
spearhead



Animal-patterned buckle

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# 1. Information on the Disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun

DPRK Academy of Social Sciences

Tangun, the father of our nation, founded Korea or ancient Korea (Joseon)\*<sup>1</sup>, the first state in the East, with Pyongyang as its capital, 5,000 years ago. This marked the end of the primitive age in our country, which had lasted for over a million years, and the entry of our nation into the age of statehood, an age of civilization. This was an epoch-making event in the history of our nation.

Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

“Our People boast a 5,000-year long history, and they are a resourceful people with a brilliant culture.” (Kim Il Sung, *Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. 2, p. 401.)

The 5,000-year long history of our nation began with the founding of the state by Tangun.

Tangun was born in the Pyongyang area. The authors of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and the *Notes to Poems Written on the Emperor's Order*, who tell the legend of Tangun, inform us that Mt. Thaebaek, which was said to be the place where Hwanung (Tangun's father) descended from Heaven, was in the Myohyang Mountains. The *Reference Book on Eight Provinces* has it that there was a stone cave under a *pakdal* tree in the Myohyang Mountains where Tangun was born, while the *Reference Book on Nyongbyon* points out that Tangun was born in a cave south of Hyangro Peak in the Myohyang Mountains.

After establishing a state, centred on present-day Pyongyang, Tangun annexed some tribal areas surrounding it, and gradually expanded its territory. Ancient Korea founded by Tangun, existed for nearly 3,000 years, and developed into a powerful ancient state in Asia, stretching far and wide, all the way up to the Great Wall of China. Tangun died and was buried in the Pyongyang area.

The history of Tangun and ancient Korea, however, could not be confirmed due to the distortions and acts of obliteration committed by the sycophants and historians in the service of the Japanese imperialists.

On learning this, Comrade Kim Il Sung instructed the Tomb of Tangun to be unearthed. He said that in order to clarify the history of the nation from an independent point of view, it was necessary to correct, above all, the history of Tangun and ancient Korea, the material that had been destroyed by the Japanese imperialists.

Following his instructions, archaeologists from the Academy of Social Sciences excavated the Tomb of Tangun.

The Tomb of Tangun is a valuable historical site proving the 5,000-year history of our people.

The Tomb of Tangun is located on the south-eastern slope of Mt. Taebak, north-west of Kangdong-up, Kangdong County, Pyongyang. "Paksan" (bright peak) of Mt. Taebak was called "pakdal" in olden times. Its origin can be traced to Tangun, who was known as "King Pakdal" \*2 . North-east of the tomb is Adal Hill. The name Adal takes its origin from "Asadal" , which Tangun had chosen as his capital, according to *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*. There is a wide field in front of the tomb, and a chain of mountains from east to west beyond it. The Sujong River south of the field flows from east to west into the Taedong River. Rimgyongdae stands by the Sujong River, opposite the tomb; it has a cave said to bear the footmarks of

Tangun and to be associated with a legend about him.

“Tangun Lake” is west of the tomb, not far from it. The hamlet where the Tomb of Tangun is located was called “Tangun-dong” until recently, and the village east of it— “Adal-dong” .

The Tomb of Tangun is an earthen tomb with a stone chamber of the architectural style of Koguryo. It is a single-chamber tomb consisting of a semi-underground chamber for coffins and a corridor; it faces south, leaning slightly towards the west. The chamber for coffins is 273 cm from east to west and 276 cm from south to north. It is 160 cm high to the first layer of the supporting stones in the ceiling. On the floor of the chamber are coffin rests lying parallel from south to north. The wall is formed out of stones piled in an orderly fashion, and the ceiling is triangular in three tiers, with a stone covering the top. The corridor opens in the southern wall of the chamber, its entrance blocked by rocks.

The tomb, robbed by the Japanese imperialists in pre-liberation days, did not yield many relics from the excavation. What is noteworthy, though, was the discovery of the bones of two persons.

Eighty-six pieces of bones were found in the tomb, most of them arm, leg and pelvic bones. They are the bones of a man and a woman. An examination of the pelvic bones identified the sex. Sexual distinction in the growth of the pelvic bones begins to appear from the age of 10 and becomes the clearest during puberty. A pair of the pelvic bones found are characteristic of a male. No pelvic bone of the other individual was discovered, but the other bones bear the fragile features of female bones. The male bones are considered to be those of the king and the female bones of his wife, who was buried with him.

The age of the male could also be confirmed from the pelvic



bones. The ear-shaped side of the pelvic bone and the side that was linked to the pubic bone change with the person's age. It is presumed that the male was a very healthy man who lived a long life, while the female was of a relatively young age. The male bones are long and very thick: the man must have been over 170 cm tall. People were short in stature in earlier times.

In general, a man's stature is considered not to have exceeded 163 cm in the period when Tangun was alive. This proves that the male inmate of the tomb was a man of tall stature and a strong physique.

The age of the male bones unearthed from the Tomb of Tangun was measured. The electrospin resonance dating method, an advanced technique in modern physics, was applied in examining them on 24 and 30 occasions respectively at two research institutes, using modern measuring devices. Thus, it was scientifically proved that the bones date back 5,011 years (as of 1993). The bones are the remains of none other than Tangun.

The remains of Tangun were able to be preserved for such a long time without decaying completely, because they had been buried in a favourable stratum. They were interred in a limestone stratum where the soil is composed of elements that prevent the corrosion of the bones. The soil in the limestone stratum is rich in water-soluble mineral substances formed of molten limestone, which provides ample possibilities for the petrification of bones. The remains of Tangun show signs of petrification.

It is rare to find bones thousands of years old preserved in a tomb. But such cases have been revealed in other places in Korea, also. One of them is the discovery of bones at the Komungaebong archaeological layer in Namsan-ri, Hoeryong City, North Hamgyong Province. A piece of an ornamental frontal upright of a gilded crown and a fragment of its circlet have

been unearthed at the tomb besides the human bones. The frontal upright is a thickly gilded bronze plate. Its upper part is shaped like a peach seed with a hole in its centre, and the two sides of its lower part are straight. The circlet is a narrow, longish strip of bronze plate, which is also thickly gilded.

A plate from a gilded belt was also discovered in the tomb. It is a rectangular bronze plate with two small holes on one side. It was originally gold-plated, but only traces of gold plating are now visible.

Several ceramic pieces and six nails from the coffins were found in the coffin chamber.

Facilities, built in 1936 by the Association for the Repair of the Tomb of Tangun with funds collected from supporters, stand in front of the tomb.

A foundation for a tombstone also stands in front of the tomb, and before it is a large stone sacrificial table of well-polished granite weighing 2.2 tons, with stone lion figures on either side of the area in front of the tomb. There is a pavilion called Suho Pavilion eight metres away from the stone table, and a monument of Tangun to the east of it. The monument is 191 centimeters high and bears words of commendation for Tangun's feats, inscribed in Chinese characters.

The epitaph praises Tangun highly, describing him as a great, godlike person. It says that our Korean ancestors were enlightened by Tangun as a civilized people with propriety and morality; that Tangun was a sage who matched the three emperors and five sovereigns of China and that, with Tangun included, there were now four emperors and six sovereigns. On the reverse side of the monument there is a short account in Korean letters of the repairs made on the Tomb of Tangun. From it one can judge that the matter of repairing the tomb, seriously damaged in the early days of Korea's occupation

by the Japanese imperialists, was first raised in 1921 and, after repeated discussions, the Association for the Repair of the Tomb of Tangun was set up in 1932. The repairs were completed in 1936.

Ancient literature records that Tangun truly did exist and that he was the founder of ancient Korea and that our Korean ancestors performed sacrificial rites at his tomb in Kangdong in the remote past, regarding him as a person who had actually existed.

*Weishu*, a Chinese book of history judged to have been compiled in the third century A.D., states that Tangun founded ancient Korea. It says that “2,000 years previously a man named Tangun Wanggom\*<sup>3</sup> had chosen Asadal as his capital, had founded a state, and had named it Korea (Joson).”

*The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, written in the period of the Koryo dynasty, regards Tangun as the founder of ancient Korea and introduces the legend of Tangun from the *Ancient Records* and an account of him from *Weishu* under the title Korea. And *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings*, in the first part of the national history of Korea, regards Tangun as the founder of our country and tells about his founding “Korea (ancient Korea)” .

Jo Pak, Minister of Protocol, wrote in 1392 that “Tangun was the King who founded the first state in the East” , while Kwon Kun (1352-1409), a scholar, remarked that “the founding of states in the East began with Korea by Tangun” . A letter to King Thaejong from the Ministry of Protocol in 1412 said that “Tangun is the father of the East” .

*The History of Koryo* (compiled in 1451) was the first authentic source dealing with the history of Tangun’s Korea; the *Handbook of the Eastern State*, compiled in 1484, was the first to record Korean national history from Tangun’s Korea. Later, in the Ri dynasty, they wrote

about Tangun's Korea in the first part of the nation's history and included it in history textbooks for the younger generations to study.

There are many documentary records about the Tomb of Tangun. *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea*, completed in 1530, is the first book to precisely call the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong as the tomb of a king who actually existed. It noted that there were two large tombs in Kangdong Prefecture, one of which was located three *ri* (about 1.2 km) to the west of the prefectural centre, with a circumference of 410 *ja* (feet), and that it was known as the Tomb of Tangun. This was the same Tomb of Tangun that was excavated recently. The same was written in the *Records of Kangdong*, compiled in 1626.

The fact that the Tomb of Tangun is situated in Kangdong is recorded in different sections of *The Royal Chronicles of the Ri Dynasty*. *The Chronicles of King Sukjong* relates that the king, on July 14, 1697, endorsed a proposal by Ri In Yop to repair the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong and the Tomb of King Tongmyong in Pyongyang every year. *The Chronicles of King Yongjo* notes that the king had twice instructed the governor of Pyongyang, on May 23, 1739 and on April 22, 1763, to repair and take proper care of the Tomb of Tangun. *The Chronicles of King Jongjo* states that, on August 9, 1786, King Jongjo ordered the governor of Pyongyang to inspect the Tomb of Tangun and to appoint guardians for it from among the local people, and that the magistrate of Kangdong make it a rule to visit the tomb personally in spring and autumn.

This proves that the feudal government of the Ri dynasty attached great importance to the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong, protected it and showed concern for it.

The part on Geography in the *History of Koryo* has it that there was a village relating to Tangun called "Pakdalgot

Village” ; it is presumed to have been the name of a village originally sited there where the Tomb of Tangun is located and, accordingly, this proves that the Tomb of Tangun was found in Kangdong in the period of the Koryo dynasty.

In the course of the recent excavation, a fragment of a roof tile, plastered with glaze, attributable to the Koryo dynasty, was found in front of the tomb. This indicates that a shrine stood before the tomb in that period and sacrificial rites were performed there.

All the facts convincingly prove that the tomb in Kangdong is that of Tangun.

The Tomb of Tangun is a Koguryo-style tomb, having been reconstructed in the period of the Koguryo dynasty.

The Koguryo people worshipped Tangun just as they did King Tongmyong or Ko Ju Mong, the founder of their kingdom. This is illustrated by *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* calling Ko Ju Mong (King Tongmyong) “a son of Tangun” , and *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* saying that the Koguryo people, in fact, styled themselves as the successors to ancient Korea. This was why they reconstructed the Tomb of Tangun in their own style.

All the facts show that thousands of years ago our ancestors had recognized Tangun as the founder of the first state in Korea.

This traditional conception of our nation, however, was ruthlessly suppressed under the Japanese imperialists’ policy of obliterating Tangun during their occupation of Korea.

They believed that, by not ignoring the historical records on Tangun’ s Korea and eliminating them, they could not justify their doctrine of colonial domination, a doctrine that had it that the “superior” Yamato nation must assimilate and dominate the “inferior” Korean nation, because the year of Tangun’ s foundation of Korea, as noted in historical records, was nearly 1,700 years before the date

of the foundation of Japan, according to their groundless myth about national foundation (660 B.C.).

With a view to erasing Tangun from Korean history, the first Governor-General of Japanese imperialism, Terauchi, sent the police to bookshops and houses across Korea to search for, to confiscate and to burn hundreds of thousands of volumes of valuable books on the history, culture and geography of the Korean nation, particularly, the history books relating to Tangun.

In order to make the time-honoured history of the Korean nation appear shorter than their own, the Japanese imperialists, in 1915, set up an organ to compile Korean history under the Privy Council of the Government-General and forged Korean history through the Korean History Compilation Committee under the direction of their successive governors-general and political inspectors-general in Korea.

In the compilation of Korean history, the Japanese imperialists deleted the history of Tangun's Korea under the pretext that there was insufficient material on it and manipulated such master hands at the forgery of history as Imanishi to prove that Tangun was not a human being but a mythical one invented in a later age. And they asserted that Tangun could not be mentioned in Korean history because he was a mythical creature.

The Japanese imperialists withdrew any person from the Korean history compilation organ who tried to prevent the obliteration of Tangun, even if he was a Japanese. Thus, the history of Tangun's Korea was deleted from Part 1 of the *Korean History* compiled by the Japanese imperialists, and the conception that Tangun was a mythical, false being was spread all over the world.

If the Korean people had not lost their country to Japanese

imperialism, the traditional conception that Tangun was a real person and the founder of ancient Korea would have been handed down intact to this day and considerable progress would have been made in the study of the history of Tangun's Korea. The modern history of the national ruin of Korea left the gruesome lesson that a nation that loses its state also loses its ancestor.

Timed to coincide with the excavation of the Tomb of Tangun, linguistic experts proved that national letters were inherent in ancient Korea during the Tangun period. This is evidence that the Korean nation had developed its culture with comparatively refined national letters since the period of ancient Korea.

The excavation of the Tomb of Tangun and the discovery of his remains are of great historical significance.

It has been scientifically proved that Tangun, who had been considered to be a mythical and legendary being, really did exist. Accordingly, it became evident that Korea was an advanced civilized state in the East with a history of 5,000 years and a brilliant culture. It has been eloquently proved that scenic Pyongyang, where Tangun held court after founding ancient Korea, was one of the cradles of humanity where the man unearthed at the Komunmoru site, "Ryokpho man" (Palaeoanthropic man), "Mandal man" (Neanthropic man) and the ancient man\*<sup>4</sup> of Korea lived, and was the birthplace of the Korean nation and the cradle of the first state in Korea. We can say with pride that the Korean nation is a homogeneous nation with Tangun as its father.

As Tangun was established as a real person and it was confirmed that the Korean nation has lived unyieldingly, developing its culture as a homogeneous nation since Tangun's Korea, the pride and honour of the Korean nation, as the posterity of Tangun, have been exalted and the 70

million true Koreans have become able to struggle, united ever more closely, to effect the noble cause of national reunification.

All the Koreans in the north, the south and overseas, who are concerned about the destiny of the Korean nation, will be able to contribute significantly to put an end to the tragic division imposed on only the Korean nation by foreign forces, with the soul of the Korean nation and great love for the nation, transcending their differences in political views, religious beliefs and property status and attaching primary importance to the homogeneity of the nation, with Tangun as their ancestor.

The restoration of the 5,000-year history and culture of Korea, founded by Tangun, is a brilliant fruition of Comrade Kim Il Sung's wise guidance, who established Juche in the study of the national history.

He has not only restored Tangun, the father of the Korean nation and the symbol of the nation's soul, as a real person; he organized a committee for the rehabilitation of the Tomb of Tangun in order to reconstruct it, and has adopted measures to accelerate the project through nation-wide efforts.

When reconstructed, the Tomb of Tangun will be a priceless cultural asset, demonstrating the resourcefulness and pride of our homogeneous nation.

Our scholars, whose duty it is to study and exalt the history of our nation, are determined to firmly devote their loyalty, their creative wisdom to the study of Tangun and the history of ancient Korea on the basis of the Juche methodology and the orientation indicated by Comrade Kim Il Sung for the study of Korean history, in hearty response to his noble patriotic idea.

October 2, 1993



## 2. Disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun

Doctor and Associate Professor  
**Pak Jin Uk**, Researcher,  
Archaeological Institute, Academy  
of Social Sciences

Archaeologists recently dug up the Tomb of Tangun and confirmed that the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong was genuine.

The Tomb of Tangun is on the southeast slope of Mt. Taebak northwest of Kangdong township, Kangdong County, Pyongyang City. Adal Hill is northeast of it. The name of Mt. Taebak is believed to have derived from “Pakdal” which symbolizes Tangun and the name of Adal Hill is associated with “Asadal”, which Tangun made the capital, as was mentioned in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*.

The place where the tomb lies was called “Tangun-dong” before liberation.

A wide plain lies in front of the tomb and beyond it mountains rise in the east-west direction. In the southern part of the plain a small river called Sujong flows in the east-west direction and discharges into the Taedong River. The ground of the tomb is not very high and commands a view of the plain in front of the tomb.

The Tomb of Tangun is a one-chamber tomb consisting of a stone coffin chamber and aisle with an earth barrow over it.

The coffin chamber was built, after removing a one-metre high layer of earth from the surface of the land; it faces southwest.

The coffin chamber is almost square in plan and 276 centimetres long in the north-south direction and 273 centimetres in the east-west direction. The height from the floor to the bottom of the first layer of the triangular supporting stones of the ceiling is 160 centimetres.

After removing a layer of earth some 20 centimetres deep, the floor of the coffin chamber was laid with stones and earth, which was packed and plastered. Two coffin rests are laid with rubble and their upper surface plastered. They face the north-south direction.

The walls of the coffin chamber were laid with rubble or roughly faced stones. The westeastern wall consists of seven layers of rubblework and the northern wall—of nine layers. The surface of the walls was thickly plastered originally, but when the tomb was unearthed, most of the plaster was found to have peeled off and fallen to the floor.

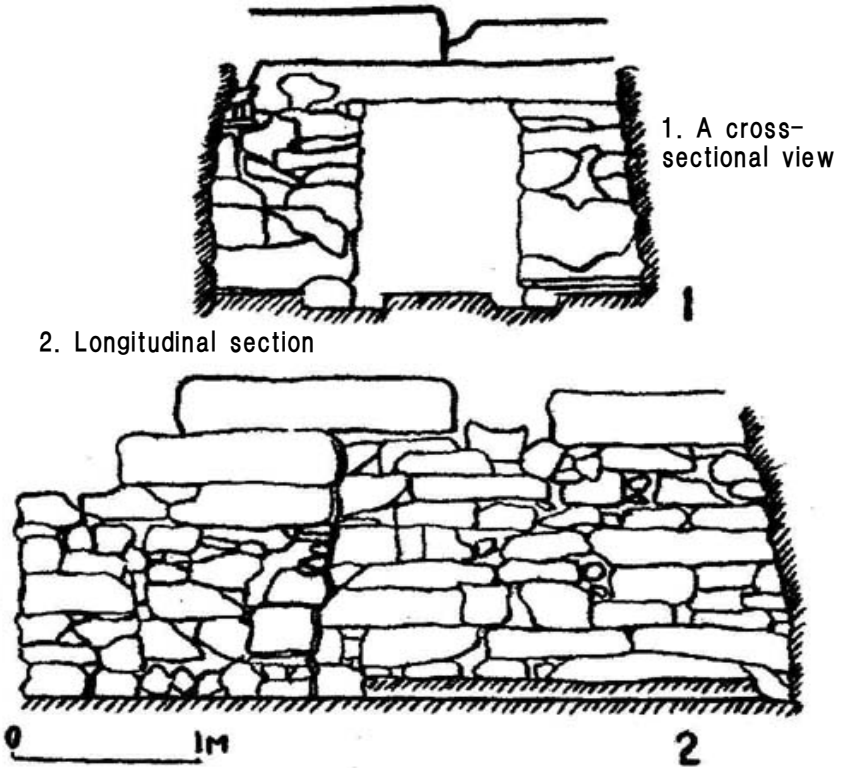
The ceiling of the chamber was made of three layers of supporting stones and covered with stone as a lid. The supporting stones are triangular flagstones about 40 centimetres thick. Two supporting stones in the southern part are laid on the ceiling stones over the aisle.

The aisle is on the south of the coffin chamber and passes through the central part of the southern wall. It is 113 centimetres wide, 125 centimetres long and the height from the floor to the ceiling is 130 centimetres. The floor of the aisle is laid with flagstones and packed with earth

and plastered over. Rubbles are piled up one metre high in a north-south direction at the approach to the aisle to block the entrance.

The ceiling stones, laid on both walls of the aisle, are 210 centimetres long, 120 centimetres wide and 35 centimetres thick (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. A cross-section of a tomb chamber



Originally there were mural paintings in the tomb.

The *Wiam's Writing* by Jang Ji Yon says:

“A big tomb lies three *ri* (about 1.2 km) to the west of

Kangdong Prefecture, Phyongan Province. It is 410 *ja* (feet) in circumference and is called the Tomb of Tangun. Several years ago Japanese archaeologists dug it up. It was built with brick-like stones and four walls bore portraits of an 'ancient sacred man' and 'mysterious general'. The portraits were vivid and had not faded."

It is not difficult to guess that the "ancient sacred man" and the "mysterious general" mentioned here was Tangun.

*The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* refers to Tangun as the "sacred man Wanggom" \*<sup>5</sup>. It stands for the "ancient sacred man". There are several tombs of Koguryo with mural paintings of sacred men and spirits. They followed the tradition of ancient Korea.

But the mural paintings in the tombs of Koguryo did not portray sacred men and spirits alone; they were all on other themes while sacred men and spirits were treated secondarily in little figures. Unlike them the "ancient sacred man" and the "mysterious general" alone were painted on the four walls of the Tomb of Tangun. It is a characteristic feature of the tomb that distinguishes it from the tombs of Koguryo with mural paintings. It is presumed that it was thus designed to show that the tomb was Tangun's.

The excavation confirmed that the tomb was later damaged and dug up several times stealthily by the Japanese imperialists. That is how the valuable mural paintings which portrayed Tangun were entirely effaced.

As a result, no traces of mural paintings were found at the time of the recent excavation. This proves, the desperate efforts the Japanese imperialists had made to obliterate Tangun and to destroy and plunder Korea's cultural heritage.

Not much was found during the excavation as the tomb had been severely destroyed and stealthily unearthed by the

Japanese imperialists. Nevertheless, several notable discoveries were made.

To begin with, the bones of two persons were found. These were mainly bones of the arm, leg and the pelvis.

Secondly, a piece of an ornamental frontal upright and a fragment of a circlet of a gilded crown were unearthed.

The ornamental upright is a thickly gilded bronze plate. Its upper part is shaped like a peach seed with a hole in the middle, and the two sides of its lower part are straight.

The ornamental upright is 6.5 centimetres high and its upper part is 4.6 centimetres wide. The fragment of the circlet is a narrow and elongated thickly gold-plated bronze plate. It is 8.7 centimetres long and one centimetre wide.

Thirdly, a plaque of a gilded band made of several plaques was found. It is a thin rectangular bronze plate which is 6.4 by 5.7 centimetres and has two small holes on one side.

Originally it was gold-plated but now most of the gold-plating had peeled off and only traces were noticeable.

Fourthly, six iron coffin nails were discovered on the coffin rests. All of them were rust-eaten and broken; none had preserved their original state but their general shape was conceivable. Their conical-shaped head is two or three centimetres across and their diameter, seven millimetres or thereabouts, and their length is about 16 centimetres. All were as rust-eaten as those often found in the tombs of Koguryo.

Fifthly, several shards of ceramic ware were found. All were of a grey colour and one was a fragment of a wide-mouthed pot. The wall of the pot is one centimetre thick. The pot seems to have been a big one judging by the fragment.

In addition, there was a shard of the belly of a jar with a handle attached, besides a fragment adorned with a netted ornament, and a cord-ornamented one. One fragment was adorned with two parallel line reliefs which were four centimetres apart.

The earthenware was very hard, being fired at a high temperature apparently.

Such, in general, are the structure of the Tomb of Tangun and the findings discovered there. They clearly show that the tomb is in the Koguryo style.

In front of the tomb there are tomb installations which in 1936 the Association for the Repair of the Tomb of Tangun had arranged with the donations from interested people. The front of the barrow is skirted by curbstones which are 52 centimetres high and 40 centimetres wide.

The curbstones on both sides and at the rear are invisible.

There is a concrete foundation in front of the tomb which is 115 centimetres long in the west-east direction, 98 centimetres wide in the north-south direction and 26 centimetres high. The pedestal for the tombstone is placed on the foundation. It is 86.5 centimetres from left to right, 68 centimetres from front to rear and 51 centimetres high. The pedestal is 41 centimetres long, 19.5 centimetres wide and 7 centimetres deep and has a hole for the body of the tombstone in the middle.

The pedestal is made of granite and is adorned with leg reliefs in the four corners; it has two triangular designs down the middle of the front, with a semicircular design on each of their sides, floral designs beneath them and a bracken design beneath each semicircular design. In the middle of the upper part of the sides there are two triangular reliefs, flanked with a semicircular design, and floral designs beneath them.

There are well polished granite flagstones 90 centimetres long and 30 centimetres wide in front of the foundation for the pedestal. In front of these are two joined flagstones, each one is 173 centimetres long, 76 centimetres wide and 20 centimetres thick. A stone sacrificial table is placed on them. The stone table is 171 centimetres from left to right, 108

centimetres from front to rear, and 43.5 centimetres thick; it weighs 2,200 kilograms.

It is supported by four stone supports shaped like a ball truncated at the top and bottom. The bellies of the balls are decorated with four strange figure reliefs.

The belly of the ball is 36 centimetres across and 30 centimetres high. An incense burner stand is in front of the stone sacrificial table. The hexagonal incense burner stand is decorated with an animal's leg relief. Its upper part is broken off and remainder is 43 centimetres high.

A monolithic curbstone 373 centimetres long and 14 centimetres thick is on each side in front of the foundation for the sacrificial table. The edge of the curbstone on the right is broken off. The lower part of an octagonal post stands at the edge of the curbstone on the left, but there are none on the right.

The figure of a crouched lion with its head turned to the south stands on each side, in front of the curbstone. Its length, from the mouth to the tip of its tail, is 70 centimetres. The pedestal and the figure of the lion were cut out of a single monolith, which is 75 centimetres high.

A pavilion, called Suho Pavilion, was in front of the stone sacrificial table at a distance of eight metres.

The monument to the Tomb of Tangun stands five metres east of the pavilion.

The monument is 191 centimetres high, 50 centimetres wide and 39 centimetres thick. It bears an inscription in Chinese characters in the front part, describing the services of Tangun. Its version is as follows:

### Biography of Tangun of Ancient Korea

A great sage appeared and edified the world immensely but a peerage was not conferred on him. His benevolence reached

heaven and earth, generation after generation. He is Tangun, founder of our country.

Tangun, an offspring of Heaven, feeling sorry for the people of this land, came down near a *pakdal* tree on Mt. Thaebaek ... in the year of *kapja* after the Creation of Heaven and Earth .... When he conveyed Heaven's instructions, people deemed him a god-man. He was acclaimed king in the year of *mujin*. He founded a country and called it Korea (Joseon).

He ordered Phaengu ... to promote forest and water conservancy, arrange a settlement for the people, establish a religion and handle 360 kinds of worldly affairs. He entered Adal Hill in the year of *kapja* ... and became a heavenly god again. He ruled for 1,017 years.

God-like Tangun, if it had not been for you, we would have suffered a hard lot.... It is entirely ascribable to Tangun that our country is called the country of propriety. Beards of the old days are irrecognizable but beads still remain unscattered. (This means that his image is irrecognizable but his services still remain—*Tr.*) Is it not etiquette to appoint an official and make him tend the tomb?

It is not that the successive dynasties, prominent figures out of office and the people did not have the time nor showed sincerity. It was because they found it difficult what to call the distinct services of the great god-man.

...

We bow deeply to him and give praise onto him, believing that the desire of the people will be realized and his benevolence be glorified. With the birth of this excellent great man a fragrant aroma is diffused. His benevolence is like heaven and earth together and its rays are like that of the sun or the moon. He founded a country, set up the capital and ruled over the East. Moran Hill rises high and the Taedong River is abundant



with water. Therefore, the country is called the country of the rising sun. He enforced discipline and laws to ensure peace for the people, high and low.

...

He was a good king. Helping and following, he rendered distinguished services.

His services were so full of merits that he matched the three emperors and five sovereigns of China; it can be said, therefore, that with Tangun included there were four emperors and six sovereigns. He is called the man with lofty virtues.

Longevity, fame and high position .... It is hard to hold the whiskers of a dragon in a lake but pearls ... in the field make a heap of their own accord. The figures of a dragon, tiger and horse, crouched and standing, are in the front and the rear, and figures of civil officials holding maces and military officers bearing swords stand guard on the right and the left. There is a high memorial gateway, and a pavilion ....

Adal Hill remains as it was before and the benevolence of the sage will shine brighter with the passage of time. Posterity bow ... let this inscription in his praise be conveyed forever.

September 1, the year of *pyongja*, the year 4269 (as of 1936) after the foundation of Korea.

The epitaph praises Tangun highly, describing him as a great, godlike man. It says that our Korean ancestors were enlightened by Tangun as a civilized people with propriety and morality. It went on to say that Tangun was a sage who matched the three emperors and five sovereigns of China and, that with Tangun included, there were four emperors and six sovereigns. On the reverse side of the monument there is a short account of the repairs made on the Tomb of Tangun, written in Korean letters. One can judge from it that the matter of repairing the tomb, which was seriously damaged in

the early days of occupation by the Japanese imperialists, was first raised in 1921 and, after repeated discussions, the Association for the Repair of the Tomb of Tangun was formed in 1932, and repairs were completed in 1936.

The tomb was regarded as Tangun's from olden times by our ancestors. It is clearly recorded as the Tomb of Tangun in *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea*, *Records of Kangdong*, and *Royal Chronicles of the Ri Dynasty*. This has been scientifically proved by the recent excavation.

It is needless to say that the remains discovered in the tomb were Tangun's. Here the problem arises about the tomb being built in the Koguryo style. Namely, the question is how the remains of Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea, came out of a Koguryo-style tomb. The structure of Tangun's tomb is in Koguryo style because the tomb was reconstructed in the Koguryo period.

The Koguryo people worshipped Tangun just as they did King Tongmyong, the founder of their kingdom. This is illustrated by *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* which describes Ko Ju Mong as "a son of Tangun" and *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* which qualifies the Koguryo people as the posterity of Tangun.

The Koguryo people, in fact, styled themselves as the successors to ancient Korea, and that was why they had reconstructed the Tomb of Tangun in their own style. It was a very big tomb. Up to the period of the Ri dynasty it was 410 *ja* in circumference, that is, one side of the tomb was over 30 metres long. Therefore, one can guess that at the time of reconstruction the tomb was a very large one.

Tangun's tomb being sited in Kangdong clearly indicated that Tangun died in Pyongyang. There is no doubt that the genuine Tomb of Tangun was near Pyongyang even though it

was reconstructed during the period of the Koguryo dynasty. *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* provides the historical proof of this. The entry concerning the 21st year of Tongmyong's reign, the part on Koguryo, *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* says, "Pyongyang is the place where St. Wanggom lived originally. The king's capital was called Wanggom." It is well known that Wanggom was referred to as Tangun. Tangun's capital was Pyongyang and he lived and died there. So, it goes without saying that the genuine tomb of Tangun was where it now is.

It is quite natural that the Tomb of Tangun is in Kangdong since he died in Pyongyang. The tomb of the founder king was always sited not far from the capital. This is well illustrated by the practices of our successive dynasties. From olden times Kangdong belonged to Pyongyang. Volume 58, Geography, *The History of Koryo* says, "Kangdong Prefecture was instituted in the 14th year of the reign of King Injong when Kyonggi was divided into six prefectures and the head of the prefecture was appointed and the prefecture was placed under the jurisdiction of Pyongyang city." This shows that Kangdong belonged to Pyongyang already in the period of the Koryo dynasty. It is quite natural that the Tomb of Tangun, who died in Pyongyang, was built in Kangdong.

The excavation of the Tomb of Tangun and the discovery of his remains are of great historical importance.

Firstly, it has been scientifically proved that Tangun, who had been considered to be a mythical and legendary being, really had existed. Accordingly, it has become evident that Korea was an advanced civilized state in the East and has a history of 5,000 years, and a brilliant culture.

Secondly, it has been scientifically proved that Pyongyang was where Tangun died and which he had founded as the capital. Previously it was believed that Tangun died in

Liaodong district and that the walled Wanggom, the capital of ancient Korea was in the Liaodong district, but it was confirmed that its capital was Pyongyang. This shows that Pyongyang, which was one of the cradles of humanity, was the birthplace of the Korean nation and the capital of ancient Korea, the first ancient state in Korea. It bespeaks of the time-honoured history of Pyongyang. This instilled in us a great national pride and self-respect and inspired us to love and glorify Pyongyang still more.

### **3. A Dating Study of the Human Bones Unearthed from the Tomb of Tangun**

Associate Doctor **Kim Kyo Gyong**,  
Department Chief, Archaeological Institute,  
Academy of Social Sciences

The Tomb of Tangun, the founder-king of ancient Korea, was recently excavated in Kangdong County, Pyongyang City.

The task of dating the human bones dug up from the Tomb of Tangun is of key importance in clarifying the historical position of the Tomb of Tangun and systematizing the 5,000-year long national history of Korea.

There are over ten dating methods studied and developed so far, including the methods of radioactive  $C^{14}$ , thermal luminescence, the uranium series, the fission track dating method, and the method of quantitative analysis of amino acid. Our research group measured the absolute date of the human bones discovered in the Tomb of Tangun by the ESR dating method. The merit of this method is that it has no restriction of measurement samples and can measure almost all archaeological samples, including clam shells, bones and earthenware, and that a few grams of a measurement sample is enough, the density of measurement is high, while that of error is small.

This method is applied widely on a worldwide scale in measuring the date of artifacts of the Bronze and Neolithic Ages, to say nothing of those of the Quaternary era in geology or archaeology.

This dating method can measure artifacts of up to two

million years of age and even some samples of several dozen million years.

The ESR dating method is a very effective method, being able to measure the dates of sedimentary rocks that are difficult to determine by any other dating methods.

Our research group has used this method to measure the absolute dates of several dozen archaeological deposits and fossil layers of Palaeolithic times, including the archaeological deposits in Komunmoru in Sangwon of the Palaeolithic period. Basing itself on the results gained from it in research and experience, the research group measured the absolute date of the human bones discovered in the Tomb of Tangun.

## 1. The Principle of the ESR Dating Method

The ESR dating method was developed in 1944 and began to be widely applied in archaeology, geology and geography in the 1980s.

Generally speaking, the radiation emanating from natural radioactive elements, including cosmic rays, constantly bombards other matters. As a result, defects occur in them. The number of defects, or unpaired electrons, caused by the ionization action of these weak natural radiations, is proportional to the irradiation dose. The defects caused by natural radiation acquire colour. This is called colour centre.

The bones of a dead animal or man are constantly bombarded by radiation emanating from the natural radioactive elements in the earth, including cosmic rays, which causes defects. The quantity of these defects, or the number of unpaired electrons, is proportional to the irradiation dose.

Electrons acquire a mono-energetic electric current through the rotation around their axes and create a magnetic field around them. The electron rotating around its own axis can,

in effect, be said to be a small magnet. When the electron is placed in an outer magnetic field and a microwave is sent to it the unpaired electron absorbs this microwave and the direction of its spin turns into the opposite one.

When  $H$  of the outer magnetic field and  $\tau$ , frequency of the microwave, satisfy the following equation:

$$h\tau = g\beta H \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

The unpaired electron absorbs the microwave and changes the direction of its spin and transfers to a higher level of energy. This is called electrospin resonance. Here  $h$ ,  $g$  and  $\beta$  are constants.

Electrons form pairs of electrons with a spin whose direction is opposite to each other. When these electrons are bombarded by radiation unpaired electrons appear. These electrons are detected by an electrospin resonance and the density of defects is determined (Fig. 2 and 3).

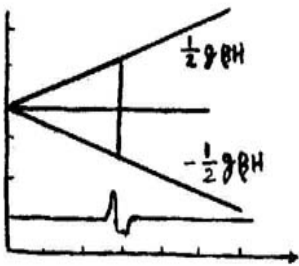


Fig.2. Emergence of an unpaired electron

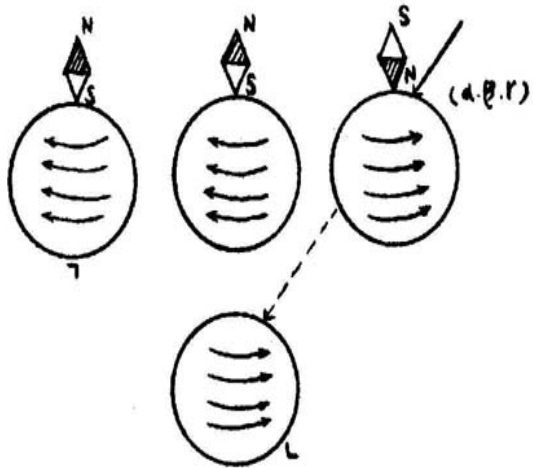


Fig.3. Energy in the magnetic field

The defects caused by natural radiation have the following characteristic features:

1. The defect is detected by an electrospin resonance.
2. The defect is unstable to heat, intense rays and pressure and can acquire a zero status.
3. The density of defects is proportional to the irradiation dose.

These characteristic features of defects are used in determining the date of archaeological deposits and geological objects.

The more the dose of irradiation that the animals, plants or minerals receive from outside, the bigger the number of defects, that is, unpaired electrons is.

Therefore, the number of unpaired electrons decides, precisely, the accumulated dose of the time incorporated in the matter, the past time.

This number of unpaired electrons, that is, the density of defects is converted into an irradiation dose which, divided by the annual irradiation dose in the place where the matter was buried, gives the date of the matter.

The formula for the measurement of the accumulation dose is as follows:

$$C(Q)/C_0=(TD+Q)/TD.....(2)$$

$$C(Q)=C_0(1+Q/TD).....(3)$$

Where  $C_0$  is density of defects before artificial irradiation,  $C(Q)$  is density of defects after irradiation by the  $Q$  dose and  $TD$  is the accumulation dose.

The accumulation dose  $TD$  is determined by applying the least square method to the above-mentioned formula.

An annual radiation dose is calculated by measuring the annual radiation dose emanating from  $U^{238}$ , its decay products,  $Th^{232}$ , its decay products and  $K^{40}$  where the matter is buried and the cosmic rays present there.

The measurement formula is as follows:



$$D=K_{\alpha}D_{\alpha}+K_{\beta}D_{\beta}+K_{\gamma}D_{\gamma}+K_cD_c.....(4)$$

Where  $K_{\alpha}$ ,  $K_{\beta}$ ,  $K_{\gamma}$  and  $K_c$  is the defect productivity by unit  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$  and cosmic ray dose respectively and the  $D_{\alpha}$ ,  $D_{\beta}$ ,  $D_{\gamma}$ ,  $D_c$  is respectively the annual dose of  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$  and cosmic rays. In this formula  $K_{\beta}$ ,  $K_{\gamma}$  and  $K_c$  are taken as one for bones.

An annual radiation dose is measured by the method of a nuclear species analysis by the multichannel analysis, an ionization dosimeter, a chemical analysis, a thermal luminescence dosimeter and other methods.

We applied the ionization dosimeter and the thermal luminescence dosimeter in measuring the annual radiation dose. The formula of measurement of the absolute date is as follows:

$$T=(K_{\alpha}TD_{\alpha}+K_{\beta}TD_{\beta}+K_{\gamma}TD_{\gamma}+K_cTD_c)/ (K_{\alpha}D_{\alpha}+K_{\beta}D_{\beta}+K_{\gamma}D_{\gamma}+K_cD_c) .....(5)$$

In order to simplify the experiment we processed samples so that the influence of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  rays among natural radiations could be ignored. We considered only the influence of  $\gamma$  and cosmic rays by removing a 2-5 mm thickness from the surface of the bones.

Therefore, the formula of measurement of the absolute date is as follows:

$$T=(TD_{\gamma}+TD_c)/(D_{\gamma}+D_c).....(6)$$

We measured the date of the human bones discovered in the Tomb of Tangun by this formula.

## 2. Selection and Preparation of Samples

A correct selection and processing of the samples are one of the important experimental processes which secures accuracy of the measurement of the date.

When processing samples it is important to shield them from the influence of a high temperature, pressure or light since a

radiation defect assumes a zero status at a high temperature and becomes unstable from a strong stimulus, that is, pressure and light.

We took several grams of the compact of bone removing a 2–5 mm thickness from its surface, ground it into powder in a ceramic mortar and passed it through a 0.1–0.2 mm sieve. We processed it under a red lamp to shield it from the influence of light. Water contained in a sample influences signal sensitivity. Water is composed of dipoles electrically and absorbs microwaves. Water molecules absorb microwaves when a moist sample is placed in a cavity resonator, making it difficult to measure the date. Therefore, we dried the samples thoroughly and measured them in a liquid nitrogen bath (77K).

The prepared sample was divided into several parts, which were irradiated with the source of  $\text{Co}^{60}$   $\gamma$  rays separately.

The irradiation dose rate was  $2.6 \cdot 10^{-2} \text{C/kg} \cdot \text{minute} \pm 1\%$  and the measurement was made by a 2570 A-type second standard dosimeter at a distance of 40 cm from the source. The error of the dosimeter is  $\pm 1\%$  and the sensor is an air-ionization chamber.

The result of the measurement of irradiation doses is as follows:

irradiation dose	irradiation time
19.2Gy	19 minutes 58 seconds
38.4 Gy	39 minutes 56 seconds
57.6 Gy	59 minutes 54 seconds
77.8 Gy	79 minutes 52 seconds
96 Gy	99 minutes 50 seconds
115.2Gy	119 minutes 48 seconds
134.4 Gy	139 minutes 46 seconds
153.6Gy	159 minutes 44 seconds
172.8 Gy	179 minutes 42 seconds

The error of an irradiation dose is  $\pm 3\%$ . This is ascribable to the thickness of the sample.

### 3. Measurement of the Accumulated Irradiation Dose Incorporated in the Bones of Tangun

The ESR dating method supposes that when bones, stalactite and other secondary products are formed, the defects caused by natural radiation were zero.

When the accumulated irradiation dose of bone samples is measured by the ESR dating method, a signal caused by dissolution of collagen is observed. It is discernible because it occurs in a position different from the signal caused by natural radiation.

The defects caused by natural radiation in the bone sample are observed where H of the outer magnetic field is  $3.360 \pm 500$  gauss or so. The g value of this signal is 2.0011.

The prepared samples were measured as follows.

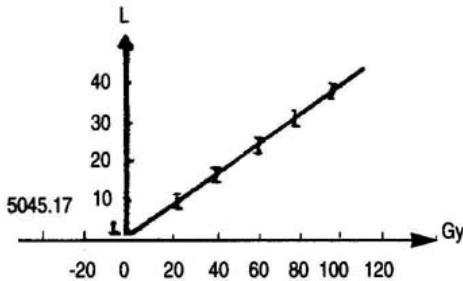
Samples were measured at 4 mv because at a too high microwave output signal intensity shows a saturation tendency. For a high efficient detection of signals a differential curve was obtained with a 100 kHz modulation of the magnetic field. Generally speaking, the spectra change with the modulation width. When the modulation width is narrow, the signal intensity is weak but separation is good. Hence, the restoration time of the magnetic field was fixed at 16 minutes and response time at one second. The amplification rate of the instrument was fixed at  $5 \times 10^3$  and 60mg of the sample was taken. Relative signal intensity was calculated, using MgO as the standard sample. Of course, the  $Mn^{2+}$  signal can be used as an internal standard signal but not suitable because the  $Mn^{2+}$  signal shows a decrease tendency when the sample is irradiated with  $\gamma$  rays. Therefore, measurement was made with MgO

placed at the bottom of the cavity resonator.

We measured the accumulated radiation dose 30 times with the electrospin resonator. Detection sensitivity was increased by connecting the measurement instrument with the control computer and the analog-digital converter. A reproduction of the experiment was secured fully. The accumulated radiation dose measured by the instrument was  $5,026.92 \pm 0.29$  mGy.

In order to verify the accuracy of the measurement value of the date we conducted the measurement 24 times with the latest-type electrospin resonator of another research institute. The accumulated radiation dose incorporated in the bone of Tangun was  $5,045.17 \pm 0.29$  mGy.

The measured spectra and the result are as follows (Fig.4 and 5).



**Fig.4. Diagram of an accumulation radiation dose**



**Fig.5. Differential curve of the electrospin**

#### 4. Measurement of the Annual Radiation Dose at the Place Where the Bones of Tangun Were Buried

It has been presumed that the natural radiation dose was constant.

Of course, in estimating the natural radiation dose it is necessary, as a rule, to measure the  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$  rays emanating from radioactive elements in a sample as well as the  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$  and cosmic rays entering from outside. The influence of cosmic rays is very small and their dose on the earth is usually  $20\text{--}25\mu\text{Gy/year}$ . In estimating the annual radiation dose, only  $\gamma$  and cosmic rays were measured and estimated, having the idea of a radioactive equilibrium of  $\text{U}^{238}$  series and  $\text{Th}^{232}$  series in the earth in the Tomb of Tangun. We ignored initial penetration, supposing that  $\text{U}^{238}$ ,  $\text{Th}^{232}$  and other radioactive nuclear species had been small in the fresh bone.

In the experiments, which formerly were conducted with an earth radioactivity dosimeter connected with counter, relative measurement error was 1%. Basing ourselves on the experience gained through these experiments, we used the earth radioactivity dosimeter connected with counter. The relative measurement error was then 1% or thereabouts.

According to the result of the measurement by the dosimeter the annual radiation dose emanating from the  $\text{U}^{238}$  series,  $\text{Th}^{232}$  series and  $\text{K}^{40}$  in the earth within the Tomb of Tangun was estimated at  $1,006.75\mu\text{Gy/Y}\gamma$ .

In order to verify the accuracy of the measured value of the annual radiation dose we measured it with the thermal luminescence dosimeter ( $\text{CaSO}_4:\text{Tm}$ ) which had been buried in the earth for three months. The value was  $1,005.98\mu\text{Gy/Y}\gamma$ .

## 5. The Absolute Date of the Bones of Tangun and Its Confidence Consideration

The absolute date of the human bones unearthed in the Tomb of Tangun is at  $5,011\pm 267$  years. The relative error is about 5.4% and confidence probability is 95%.

Our confidence in the value of this absolute date lies in that the date was measured by the latest facilities for scientific analysis. The electrospin resonator, invented and developed by science, is a highly automated instrument, for ultramicroanalysis, that has a measurement sensitivity of  $10^{-11}$  mole. The annual radiation dosimeter, which is composed of the former dosimeter and counter, is capable of precisely measuring radiation emanating from the cultural floor.

The value of the measured date of the bones of Tangun is authentic from the statistical viewpoint. The relative error in the value of the date we measured is very small, being 5.4% and the standard deviation is not large, being  $\pm 267$ . This shows that it lies within  $2\delta$  confidence interval statistically.

Lastly, confidence in the value of the date is guaranteed by the process of the scientific experiment.

The selection and processing were correct from the scientific and technical point of view because a pre-processing operation was conducted in consideration of the path length of the  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$  rays. The  $\text{Co}^{60}$   $\gamma$  ray radiation was measured by a second standard instrument and the absorbed dose rate was estimated at 3%, taking the thickness of the sample into consideration.

Therefore, confidence in the value of the absolute date of the bones of Tangun is a fully guaranteed one from the viewpoint of confidence in the experiment facilities, the statistical requirement for treatment of numerical values and of the scientific and technical process of the experiment.

With the excavation of the Tomb of Tangun it was confirmed that the absolute date of the human bones dug up there is 5,011 years. It proved that Tangun was not a mythical being but the first king of our nation, who

founded the state of ancient Korea in Pyongyang. It shed light on the criminal acts of the Japanese imperialists and the historians in their service, who tried to obliterate Tangun and slandered the history of our nation in the past. It makes the 5,000-year long history of our nation glow over the world.

## 4. Anthropological Features of the Human Bones Found in the Tomb of Tangun

Doctor and Associate Professor  
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The recent excavation of the Tomb of Tangun yielded the bones of Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea, and his wife. According to expert evidence, 86 pieces of bones, belonging to two individuals, were discovered in the coffin chamber of the tomb. Among them 42 bones which were comparatively well preserved were Tangun's, 12 bones were his wife's, and 32 bones were their common ones.

The bones were not preserved in their original state in the coffins, but were lying in disorder, to one side, and no skulls were found. This was because the Japanese aggressors had stealthily dug up the tomb several times after their occupation of Korea. This already is evidence of how viciously they tried to obliterate the history of Tangun's Korea.

Informed of the progress of the excavation of the Tomb of Tangun, the great leader pointed to the necessity for an expert-evaluation of the bones, saying that the human bones were the most important among the relics dug up from the tomb.

An anthropological study of the bones dug up from a tomb is aimed, firstly, to identify the person who was buried in the



tomb and, secondly, to clarify the anthropological features of his contemporaries through expert-evaluation of the bones.

The bones of the two individuals excavated from this tomb supply important evidence for identifying the persons buried in the tomb as Tangun and his wife.

I will first briefly dwell on the sex of the persons whose bones were found in the tomb.

The sex of these persons was judged from the expertise on the pelvis and the skeleton.

The distinction of sexes is noticeable in the pelvis at the age of ten and is decidedly clear at the stage of puberty. This is because the female pelvis performs a different function from that of the male pelvis. The female pelvis supports the fetus during pregnancy and assists delivery. Hence, the male pelvis is distinguishable from the female one formally and structurally.

The pelvis discovered in the tomb is thick, sturdy, and both high and narrow. The lower ramus of the pubis is not arched but forms an angle of less than 60 degrees and the iliac crest is thick and rough. The ilium is not far detached from the others and nearly vertical, and the obturator foramen is high and almost circular. The pubic symphysis is high, the surface articulated with the sacrum is flat and the deep sciatic notch is narrow and feebly developed. Thus, its male characters are conspicuous in every respect. Hence, there is no doubt that the bone is a male pelvis.

The sex for the female bones was judged by the limb bones as no female pelvis was found. Female bones are rather small, slender, with a smooth surface, and the tuberosity for muscular attachment is weak. Female bones are all slender because the female is weaker than the male and bears a less physical load. Therefore, the bones of a female, who has engaged in heavy labour from childhood, appear to be rough and hard like the male bones.

A weak woman's characteristic features are noticeable typically in the bones of the female buried in Tangun's tomb, who seemed to be of noble birth and have not engaged in labour. Thus, the bones of Tangun and his wife were buried in the Tomb of Tangun.

We shall now see how old the persons who were buried in the Tomb of Tangun were.

Human bones do not remain constant formally and structurally but change steadily with age. Hence, the characteristic features of the changes taking place in bones are used in judging age. The change of the bones in a growing person is particularly conspicuous. In the stage of growth an ossification center is formed and gradually changes into bone, the cartilage at the end of the bones turns into bone and the portions of the end and shaft of the bone fuse or change retrogressively, and other changes take place consecutively in an orderly manner.

Hence, the age of a person in a stage of growth can be comparatively accurately judged. But it is not so easy to determine the age of a person by his bones who is advanced in age. The age of an old person is determined by the extent of the fusion and closure of the suture of the skull.

Tangun's age was judged by the pelvis, which was well preserved. It has been discovered that the surface of the pelvis articulated with the sacrum and the pubic symphysis noticeably change with age. This phenomenon is often used as an index in determining age. For example, the age of 20 to 60 can be roughly judged at an interval of five years by the surface articulated with the sacrum, and the age of 18 to 50 can be determined by the pubic symphysis in terms of 10 stages.

According to the result of the expertise it is clear that Tangun lived long for those days. This was judged by the formal structural change of the surface of the pelvis articulated with the sacrum and the pubic symphysis.

As is known, with age the formal and structural change is conspicuous in the pubic symphysis for the age of less than 50 and on the surface articulated with the sacrum for an age of less than 60. So, only an age younger than the abovementioned can be determined by the pelvis. All the portions of the pelvis of Tangun, which was used in determining his age, clearly showed the highest indices and, at the same time, the characteristic features peculiar to old age. A large portion of the surface bone tissue of the pelvis articulated with the sacrum and the pubic symphysis disintegrated and disappeared. Hence, it can be said that Tangun lived to a ripe old age.

When judging whether Tangun lived long, the average life span of people should be taken into account. In Tangun's days, the average life span of the male did not reach 40 years on a worldwide scale.

The characteristic features of a young female were conspicuous in the bones of Tangun's wife. The head and end of many of her bones showed a tendency to division.

Next, a brief account of Tangun's physique is given below.

His stature was determined by his limb bones, because one's stature is proportional to the length of the limb bones. Here is Trotter and Glasser's standard table for the judgement of stature for 1958.

$$1.22 \times (\text{femur} + \text{fibula}) + 70.24 \pm 3.18$$

$$1.22 \times (\text{femur} + \text{tibia}) + 70.34 \pm 3.24$$

$$2.40 \times (\text{fibula}) + 80.56 \pm 3.24$$

$$2.39 \times (\text{tibia}) + 81.45 \pm 3.27$$

$$2.15 \times (\text{femur}) + 72.52 \pm 3.80$$

$$1.68 \times (\text{humerus} + \text{ulna}) + 71.18 \pm 4.14$$

$$1.67 \times (\text{humerus} + \text{radius}) + 74.83 \pm 4.16$$

$$2.68 \times (\text{humerus}) + 83.19 \pm 4.25$$

$$3.54 \times (\text{radius}) + 82.00 \pm 4.60$$

$$3.58 \times (\text{ulna}) + 77.45 \pm 4.66$$

The stature of Tangun was 171.3 cm as judged by the leg bones, and 173.2 cm as judged by the arm bones. It can be said that his stature was over 170 cm. He was of a tall stature.

The human stature gradually became taller with the passage of time. It becomes gradually shorter, viewed retrospectively. The extent of change varies with the region and time, but the direction of change is common in all regions and in all ages. The nations, whose stature increased by 10 cm or so in the past one hundred years, are not rare.

As for our nation, their stature gradually became taller with the passage of time. According to data, the stature of the Neolithic man, discovered in the archaeological layer of Sophohang in North Hamgyong Province, was 157.2 cm, while that of the man of the Bronze Age in the same archaeological layer was 164 cm. The stature of Tangun's contemporaries and the people of a later period did not exceed the middle stature and belongs to the shorter middle stature (160-164 cm). For example, the stature of the man discovered in the archaeological layer of Komungaebong in Hoeryong City, North Hamgyong Province was 163 cm, that of an inhabitant from the archaeological layer of Chodo in Rajin City, North Hamgyong Province 164.1 cm, and that of an inhabitant from the archaeological layer of Pomuigusok in Musan County, North Hamgyong Province 162.1 cm. The stature of the Koguryo people, who belonged to a by far later period, did not exceed 165-168 cm. Such are the data obtained from the tomb of King Ko Kuk Won in Anak County, South Hwanghae Province, the tomb of Ronam-ri in Sijung County, Jagang Province, the tomb in Tokhwa-ri in Taedong County, South Phyongan Province and others.

The bones of the upper and lower limbs of Tangun were long and thick. Presumably Tangun was a tall man of a robust constitution for those days.

Conflicts and wars were frequent in Tangun's lifetime. Towards the end of the ancient age he formed a federation of tribes around Pyongyang and annexed the land of neighbouring tribes or conquered them and thus founded ancient Korea, the first ancient state, in our country. Consequently, Tangun is the founder-king of our nation, who was a distinguished general and later became king. The generals of those days all had the healthy and robust constitution worthy of a warrior. The dignified appearance of a warrior depends on his healthy, sturdy constitution. Such a constitution is essential for the general who has to always stand in the van in battle.

As the result of the expertise shows, Tangun was unusually tall and of robust constitution.

According to the index of the spine, on which the corporal line is dependent, Tangun possessed a straight waist. According to three indices of the corporal line, his physique was well proportioned.

Lastly, let us consider why the bones of Tangun did not decay and were well preserved in the tomb for over 5,000 years.

In brief, the remains of Tangun were buried in a favourable stratum which prevented their decay, corrosion and weathering. Bones buried in such a favourable stratum are petrified and preserved forever instead of decaying.

The bones of Tangun are well preserved so far, primarily because they were interred in a limestone stratum.

The coffin chamber of the Tomb of Tangun was built in a deep hollow, cut out of the corroded limestone stratum. Consequently, the bones in the tomb could be infiltrated constantly by moisture or underground water, which contained

plenty of dissolved water-soluble mineral matters of the limestone stratum.

It is well known that human bones are being excavated recently from the ancient stratum. Human bones dating back two million years are preserved because they are petrified.

The organic matters in human bones are replaced by mineral matters and the empty spaces in the bones are filled with mineral matters, thus petrifying the bones. Underground water in the limestone stratum dissolves soluble minerals in the limestone or precipitates or crystallizes the dissolved mineral matters. When moisture or underground water, rich in dissolved mineral matters derived from limestone, constantly act upon the bones, mineral matters precipitate and fill the bone cells or empty spaces formed by decay. This phenomenon takes place in the limestone stratum with underground water, rich in soluble mineral matters. Therefore, human bone fossils are dug up from natural caves in the limestone region or from under limestone rock across the world. All the bone fossils of the "Ryokpho man," "Mandal man," "Sungrisan man," "Phunggok man," and "Ryonggok man" were excavated from the sedimentary stratum in limestone caves.

It can be said, therefore, that Tangun's bones are preserved so far because they were buried in the earth of the limestone stratum, rich in soluble mineral matters. The bones were being petrified. Hence, they were rather heavy and rang out metallicly when knocked on. Tangun's bones in the tomb are preserved so far, secondly, because they were buried in soil where bones do not decay.

From this it follows that there is nothing strange in the fact that the bones remained in the tomb for over 5,000 years. Of course, such instances are not frequent but not very rare, either.

In our country, too, many almost unimpaired human bones

have been disinterred from tombs dating back several thousand years. Bones of over ten bodies were excavated from the archaeological layer of Komungaebong on the slope of a hill in Namsan-ri, Hoeryong City, North Hamgyong Province. There are also data that many human bones were dug up from the archaeological layer of Xiaoyingzi, Yanji opposite it.

Bones from over one hundred human bodies were excavated from the archaeological layer of Banpo in Xian in the basin of the middle reaches of the Yellow River in China. According to result of dating by the radioactive C<sup>14</sup> isotope dating method they are attributable to 4300-3600 B.C. Near Lake Baikal in Siberia many tombs of the Serov period (3000 B.C.) and the Glazkov period (2000 B.C.) were discovered where bones from dozens of human bodies were found.

Preservation of bones in ancient tombs is generally attributable to two ways of burial.

One way is that tombs were built on a shell heap and the other—that tombs were built in sandy soil.

In the tombs built on a shell heap the bones do not decay. It is probably because, like in the limestone region, the soil there contains moisture rich in soluble mineral matters. Shells, too, contain water-soluble mineral matters. A dry climate with a good drainage of rain water is a favourable factor. These provide ample possibilities for the preservation of Tangun's bones.

It is well known that bones in tombs built in sandy soil are well preserved without decaying. Instances have been observed when the bones in the excavated tombs in clayey soil are preserved. Such cases were known from the excavation of the archaeological layer of Komungaebong. The bones in two tombs in clayey soil were fairly well preserved. In this case the preservation of the bones depends on the acidity of the burial ground.

In a case where the soil of the burial ground is acid, even when weakly acid, the bone tissue is not preserved and gradually decays, because its inorganic matters are gradually dissolved. The soil of Tangun's tomb is typical neutral soil in which bones do not decay. Tangun's bones have been preserved for over 5,000 years because Tangun's tomb is located in a limestone region and the soil is neutral.

Excavation of the bones from Tangun's tomb and the result of the expertise on the bones show that Tangun is not a legendary and mythical being but a historical figure who existed in reality.

This is, primarily, because the bones were dug up from the tomb that was described as Tangun's in ancient records. The bones were excavated from the tomb because Tangun was a historical figure who really existed. This can be illustrated by the example of Jizi's tomb. The tradition about Jizi's tomb in Pyongyang had been handed down from the time of King Sukjong of Koryo (1096-1105). But when the tomb was excavated after the war (1950-1953) there was no coffin in it, and only shards of bricks and earthenware were found because it was a false tomb. This shows that the "legend of Jizi", that is, the version of "Jizi's arrival from the East" \*<sup>6</sup> referred to in the *Book on Trade*, written towards the close of the third century B.C., was false.

A coffin and bones on a coffin rest can be excavated only from a tomb of people who really existed, like Tangun.

Tangun was a historical figure who existed in reality. This is proved by the fact that the bones had been preserved for several thousand years in a favourable burial ground, and also that they were very old bones judging by the extent of their petrification. It confirms the fact that Tangun lived for a long time and had a warrior-like physique.

Ancient records assert that Tangun lived a long life, and



the excavated bones bespeak of the fact that they were the bones of an unusually old person in those days. Tangun was not a hereditary king but the founder-king of our nation, who was the first to set up an ancient state in our country. Hence, it may be presumed that he possessed a warrior-like physique. The result of the expertise on the bones shows that he was of a robust and strong constitution.

Hence, there is no doubt that the male bones found in Tangun's tomb were his and that Tangun was a man with the above-mentioned anthropological features who really had existed.

## 5. On Historical Records about the Tomb of Tangun

Professor **Ri Jun Yong**, Researcher of  
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Many historical documents about Tangun were lost, through the Japanese imperialists' craft policy of obliterating Tangun during their occupation of Korea in the past.

From olden times our ancestors had asserted that the tomb in Kangdong was that of Tangun and many documentary records about the Tomb of Tangun confirm it.

There is one record about the ancient tombs in Kangdong Prefecture in *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea*, which was completed in 1530. It says that, "There are large tombs, one of which is located 1.2 km to the west of the prefectural centre; its circumference is 410 *ja* (feet). People call it the Tomb of Tangun."

This was the Tomb of Tangun that was recently excavated.

The Tomb of Tangun is about one kilometre from the township of Kangdong and is situated to the northwest of it. There are no ancient and particularly large tombs except these in the vicinity.

There is reference in *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea* to another large ancient tomb in Kangdong Prefecture. It says, "It is located 12 km to the north of the prefecture and people call it the tomb of an ancient king." Judging by the distance from Kangdong

Prefecture and the direction, the large tomb referred to is Tomb No.1 in Kyongsin-ri in the present Phyongsong City.

The same item appears in the *Records of Kangdong*, compiled in 1626.

The Tomb of Tangun is referred to in several places in the *Royal Chronicles of the Ri Dynasty*.

Concerning Ri In Yop' s reply to the king' s question about affairs in the western region the entry for July 19, 1697 in the *Chronicles of King Sukjong* says, "The proposal to repair the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong and the Tomb of King Tongmyong in Pyongyang every year was endorsed."

Next, there are three references to the Tomb of Tangun in the *Chronicles of King Yongjo*. The entry for May 5, 1739 in the chronicles says that King Yongjo "gave instructions to repair the Tomb of Tangun and the tombs of the kings." The entry for April 16, 1763 says that King Yongjo "ordered the old tombs of the kings of Koryo dynasty, the Tomb of Tangun and other tombs of the kings of Silla, Koguryo and Paekje to be repaired." The entry for May 10, 1774, says that King Yongjo "instructed the provincial governor to look around, and repair in due time the tombs of the kings of previous dynasties, including the Tomb of Tangun for which sacrificial rites were still to be performed according to regulations and to use all the recruits and to pay the expense, deducting it from the stored grain."

Unlike in the *Chronicles of King Sukjong*, the *Chronicles of King Yongjo* simply mentions the "Tomb of Tangun" instead of the "Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong" . This was because it was common knowledge that the Tomb of Tangun was in Kangdong. This is illustrated by the *Chronicles of King Jongjo* which were published later.

The entry for August 16, 1786 in the *Chronicles of King Jongjo* says, "The Tomb of Tangun was mended and

guardians were appointed” on the suggestion of So Hyong Su, a member of the privy council. According to the record, So Hyong Su suggested, “When I (So Hyong Su) was the magistrate of Kangdong, I saw a tomb 410 *ja* in circumference in a place some 1.2 km to the west of Kangdong. Old people called it the Tomb of Tangun.” It is referred to in the *Geography Notes* written by Ryu Hyong Won.

So Hyong Su remarked that the tomb was 1.2 km to the west of the township of Kangdong, that it measured 410 *ja* around and that the old people called it the Tomb of Tangun. His remarks completely coincide with the records in *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea*.

On the suggestion of So Hyong Su the tomb was repaired in those days and the guardians appointed, while the head of Kangdong personally inspected the tomb in spring and autumn; when the provincial governor went on a round of the place, he made it a rule to visit the tomb in person. The gathering of firewood and the grazing of cows and horses in its vicinity were strictly prohibited. This proves that it was a well-known fact then that the Tomb of Tangun was located in Kangdong.

In the light of the above-mentioned documentary evidence there is no doubt that the feudal government of the Ri dynasty, during the reign of King Sukjong in the late 17th century, saw to it that the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong was mended and taken care of properly.

But the *Chronicles of King Sejo*, which was published earlier, noted that the care of the Tomb of Tangun had been undertaken far earlier.

According to it, Ryang Song Ji, deputy director of the educational department, had made the following suggestion to the king on March 4, 1456: The governors concerned should find the tombs of the kings in Kaesong, Kanghwa, Kyongju, Pyongyang and other places which had been the capitals of

former Korea, latter Korea, the Three Kingdoms and the Koryo dynasties and appoint three guardians for the tombs of the kings who had rendered distinguished services, two guardians for the tombs of other kings and one guardian for the tombs of the queens, ease their corvee and prohibit the gathering of firewood in the vicinity and see to it that the county authorities visit royal tombs in the county in spring and autumn and perform sacrificial services. Here, former Korea means Tangun's Korea.

If Ryang Song Ji's suggestion was adopted, the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong, too, must have received proper attention.

It stands to reason that the tomb in Kangdong referred to in *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea* did not begin to be spoken about suddenly in those times as the Tomb of Tangun among the people, but that there existed a far older tradition about it.

This is evident from the record in *The History of Koryo*.

There is the following in the part on Geography in *The History of Koryo* (Volume 58): In the fourteenth year of the reign of King Injong (1136), when Kyonggi was divided into six prefectures, Kangdong was made a prefecture, into which Ingulsahyang, Pansok Village, Pakdalgot Village and Maran Village were incorporated and placed under the jurisdiction of Pyongyang Prefecture, and the head of the prefecture was appointed.

The name of the Pakdalgot Village of Kangdong Prefecture, referred to in the record, can be presumed to be associated with Tangun, as well as the names of Mt. Taebak and Mt. Adal, and others in the vicinity. Pakdalgot Village is also referred to in *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea*. Hence, there is no doubt that Pakdalgot Village is a place of historical interest associated with Tangun.

A fragment of a roof tile plastered with glaze of the time of the Koryo dynasty was found in front of the tomb during the recent excavation of the Tomb of Tangun, and the tomb itself was built in the Koguryo style. These indicate that it had been regarded as the Tomb of Tangun far earlier than the Koryo period.

The *Records of Kangdong*, compiled in 1935, and the *Records of Pyongyang*, compiled in 1936, assent that the village, where the Tomb of Tangun is situated, is Tangun-dong or Tangun-jon-dong. This is proof that the tomb had been regarded as the Tomb of Tangun and taken care of as such up to the 1930s.

The above-mentioned documentary materials prove that the tomb in Kangdong is the Tomb of Tangun. They show clearly that Tangun, who founded ancient Korea with Pyongyang as the capital, was buried in Kangdong near Pyongyang.

Tangun, who had been regarded as a mythical being regardless of evident historical materials, was restored as a person who really existed, and the tomb in Kangdong was confirmed to be that of Tangun. This is the result of the exhaustive study of documentary materials on Tangun based on the Juche-orientated outlook on history.

## 6. The Birth and Activity of Tangun

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The brilliant achievements of a person like Tangun, who made a great contribution to the nation in his lifetime, live forever in the memory of the nation, while the life of an ordinary person sinks easily into oblivion. An eloquent proof of this is the legendary tales and records relating to Tangun, being handed down to this day, even after five thousand years.

The data relating to Tangun reveal a number of facts about his birth and activity.

First of all, I should like to refer to Tangun's birth.

Long before the appearance of Tangun, a tribe of people, who worshipped the Heavenly God as their ancestral deity, their supreme God, lived in the vicinity of today's Pyongyang, forming a community by merging the tribe who deified the animal as a sacred being. The ruling position in this community was held by the tribe whose ancestral deity was the Heavenly God; hence, the leader of this tribe became the chief of the community. The last chief was Hwanung in the myth about Tangun of the *Ancient Records* quoted by the *Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and the *Notes to Poems Written on the Emperor's Order*.

The myth is about Hwanung descending from Heaven. This

derives from the fact that the tribe to which he belonged adored the Heavenly God (sun) as their ancestral deity and, therefore, they mythicized their chief as being a heaven-sent man.

Hwanung married a daughter of the chief of the tribe residing in the neighbouring village, whose ancestral deity was the animal, and Tangun was born to them. Tangun was thus born into a most authoritative and respectable family of that time.

The estimation of the age of Tangun's bones discovered in the Tomb of Tangun testifies that he was born  $5,011 \pm 267$  years ago.

Tangun's birthplace was today's Pyongyang. This is first founded on the fact that the Tomb of Tangun is located in Kangdong County, Pyongyang City. Traditionally, when one died, it was usual with our forefathers to bury the deceased in the place where one was born. Such a custom lasted until recently; in the villages of kinsfolk having the same family name, a hill was set apart as the burial ground of the ancestors, and the villagers who lived there looked after it diligently and were buried there after their death. At present, the Korean nationals living overseas, in the autumn of their lives, wish to be buried at their demise in their native places. This also proceeds from the notion of such a customary practice.

Hence, the existence of the Tomb of Tangun in Pyongyang identifies the fact of his birth in Pyongyang.

Secondly, the theory on his birth in Pyongyang is supported by many historical records which marked his birthplace as somewhere near Pyongyang. The authors of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and the *Notes to Poems Written on the Emperor's Order* identified the Thaebaek Mountains (where Tangun was born)—the place where Hwanung, Tangun's



father, was said to have first descended from the heavens—with the Myohyang Mountains. *The Survey of the History of the Eastern State*, *The General Review of Successive Dynasties of the Eastern State* and *The Notes to the Enlarged Edition of Literature* wrote that the saint Tangun alighted on the Thaebaek Mountains and *The Supplement to the History of the Eastern State* said that he was born in the Thaebaek Mountains. The authors of these books identified Mt. Thaebaek with the Myohyang Mountains. *The Reference Book of Eight Provinces* wrote that there was a cave under a *pakdal* tree in the Myohyang Mountains where Tangun was born. The *Reference Book on Nyongbyon* noted that “Tangun’s cave is on the southern hillside of the Hyangro Peak of Myohyang Mountains” ; this is considered among the people to be the birthplace of Tangun. The *History of the East State*, the *Review of the History of the East State* and the *Brief History of the Eastern States* published in modern times, too, pointed to the Myohyang Mountains as Tangun’s birthplace. The Myohyang Mountains are still rich with legends linked with his birth.

Traditionally, our forefathers used the name of the Thaebaek Mountains not only in the sense of the mountain being the highest of all mountains but at the same time, proceeding from worship of the Heavenly God, in the sense of the holy mountain where the heavenly God had descended. Therefore, these particular events, such as the birth of the founding father or the establishment of a state, were told in context with the holy Thaebaek Mountains.

Besides the legends about the descent of Hwanung and Tangun on the Thaebaek Mountains, the birth of King Tongmyong (Ko Ju Mong), the founder of Koguryo, is associated with the Thaebaek Mountains and Palhae is said in records to have been founded at the base of the Thaebaek

Mountains. Mountains bearing the name of Thaebaek were numerous everywhere; the mountain of this name appearing in the legends on the birth of King Ju Mong or the establishment of the Palhae state was present Mt. Paektu. In consideration of the fact that the birth of King Ju Mong and the founding of Palhae were associated with the Thaebaek Mountains hundreds of *ri* away from the capitals of Koguryo and Palhae, it may well be believed that the historical records or legends about the birth of Tangun in the Myohyang Mountains originated from the association of his birth in Pyongyang with the holy Thaebaek (Myohyang) Mountains not distant from there. The folk-tale about Tangun's birth in the Kuwol Mountains is a case similar to this.

Tangun's birth in Pyongyang was also identified by a record (*The Chronicles of Koguryo*, the 21st year of King Tongchon) in *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* written by Kim Pu Sik, which said: Since the Hwando Walled City was destroyed too severely by the aggressor troops led by Wu Qiujian of the Wei in 247 to remain the capital, Koguryo constructed the Walled City of Pyongyang (today's Pyongyang) and transferred the people there as well as the ancestral temples and shrines of the royal family and guardian deities of the state and "Pyongyang was originally the residential place of the Saint Wanggom."

Who is the "Saint Wanggom" mentioned by Kim Pu Sik? The epitaph to the tomb of Jo Yon Su, alias Sa Kong, written by Ri Suk Gi in 1325 said that the "Saint Wanggom" was a person who lived in the years preceding the period of Samhan (three states in ancient Korea) and was alive for over a thousand years and constructed the Walled City of Pyongyang. At times it named him as the "Prince of Pyongyang". He was the very man, Tangun, who was said to be the son of Hwanung in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and the *Notes*

to *Poems Written on the Emperor's Order* and the "Tangun Wanggom" as clearly put down in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*.

Therefore, when Kim Pu Sik said Pyongyang was "saint Wanggom's domicile", this meant that Pyongyang was Tangun's permanent domicile and the native place where he was born and bred.

Meanwhile, *The History of Koryo* and *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea* and numerous other historical records, which identified the present Pyongyang with the capital of Tangun's Korea, started from the fact that Tangun was born in Pyongyang, considering it as fait accompli. This is one more ground for the identity of Pyongyang with the birthplace of Tangun.

The Pyongyang area is noted for its picturesque mountains and crystal-clear water; endowed with low hills and plains and warm climate, it was an incomparably nice region for human habitation from time immemorial. So the primitive men who left the Komunmoru remains of Sangwon more than one million years before the Ryokpho man (Palaeoanthropic man) and Mandal man (Neanthropic man) and ancient men of Korea continued their existence there.

Tangun, the father of the nation, was also born here in Pyongyang, a land of picturesque scenery; hence, Pyongyang deserves the name of the holy land of our nation.

Now let us look into the activity of Tangun. His birth and growing up were coincident with the period of incessant intertribal hostilities. In order to become the victor in these wars and dominate other tribes, one had to attain distinction in the military arts.

Therefore, Tangun spent his childhood and youth in energetic practice to master the arts of archery, spearmanship and swordmanship. The Myohyang Mountains

convey legends about the Tangun Rock and the Chonju Rock on the Hyangro Peak—the former is said to be the site of his military training and the latter as the target of his archery practice. And the Kuwol Mountains has legends about the Tangun Rock where he was said to have had his moral education. This explains why Tangun's activities were connected with the queer rocks of the fanned mountains.

The noticeable event in Tangun's life and activity was his contribution to the cause of founding a state. This historical cause could have never been achieved in a short space of time.

Tangun had been trying since his youth to grasp the laws of natures and society, but what attracted his particular attention when still young was the number of serious social disputes existing in the community.

The members of society in his youthful days were divided as follows: the chief of the commune (Hwanung), aristocrats of the clan—Phungbaek (god of wind), Usa (god of rain) and Unsa (god of the clouds)—and the ordinary members of the commune (a crowd of some three thousand).

The chief of the community and the aristocrats of the clan were the privileged class standing over the commoners of the collective, and the communal headman presided over the ancestral memorial services and political affairs.

Since it was an agricultural society, primarily based on a settled cultivation of crops, farming occupied the main sphere of production. The gulf between the privileged class, which had fattened on the spoils of intertribal wars and amassed the greater part of the fortunes through conquest of other tribes, and the ordinary members of the commune grew wider in the possession of wealth; the intertribal confrontations became aggravated, while the prisoners of war were turned into slaves.

Consequently, the existing ties of consanguinity were gradually replaced by ever-worsening contradictions and struggles between the ruling and ruled tribes, between the rich privileged circles and the poor communal members, including the slaves, which began constituting the basic relations in society. And, as a deterrent to such contradictions, punishment, though in embryo, was introduced. Now the primitive community was on the verge of its collapse, on the last point of its existence.

While growing up as the son of the chief of the commune, Tangun became familiar with this social reality, and sought a way out. As soon as he was made the chief in succession to his father, Tangun gradually transformed and developed the political skeletons of the commune into the machinery of violence aimed at curbing the interclass and intertribal struggles.

He effected the division of important affairs hitherto undertaken by the chief, such as crops, life, diseases, punishment, virtue and vice, and instituted official posts in charge of provisions, diseases, punishments, the virtue and vice and the personnel administration of the officials.

In addition, he organized a new army to defend the interests of the ruling classes with the force under the direct command of the chief of the commune as the backbone, and established the official post in charge of military affairs.

If the religious rituals, including the services for worship of the heavens, were formerly officiated by the chief of the community, in those days a man like Chon Kun took charge of these exclusively, and the religious services, too, were utilized in favour of the administration of the ruling class.

Based on these social transformations, Tangun chose the Walled City of Pyongyang as the capital after he had founded the first state at the beginning of the third millennium B.C.

According to ancient records, this state was called Korea (Joson) and its founder the “King Pakdal (Paedal)” which was changed into Tangun afterwards when it was transcribed in Chinese characters.

Originally “Pakdal” was the name adopted long before by the tribe to which his father belonged. The forebears of this tribe, who believed the sun in the sky to be a mass of burning fire, called themselves the tribe of “pul (pal, pak)” (fire—*Ed.*).

Later they suffixed it with “tal”, the ancient Korean noun of the mountain pointing to the place of their domicile; hence, they passed as the “pakdal” tribe at times. At present the words “pul (pal, pak)” and “pakdal” are taken very simply as meaning “brightness (light)” and the “bright mountain” from where the sun rises. But the original meaning of this tribal name was very strong with a sense of pride, that is, our forebear is the sun (fire) and we (our tribe) are the posterity of the sun and, therefore, we are the most distinguished tribe in the world. Considering this, it can be said that the name of Tangun bears a still deeper meaning in that the founding father of our country was the king sent by the heavens. Thereafter “pul (pal, pak)” or “pakdal (paedal)” became the pronoun of our nation. “Puru, pul, pal or pak”, referred to in the history books of China, such as *Shiji*, *Yizhoushu*, *Hanshu* and *Zuozhuan*, were pronouns indicating our forebears, and the mention of Pal-Korea in Qingzhongjia of *Guanzi* is an undeniable evidence that “Korea (ancient Korea)” was built by the people of “pal (pakdal)”.

After the foundation of the state, Tangun allowed the people to engage in such occupations as farming, weaving of cloth and the breeding of domestic animals which brought them to leading a new, civilized mode of life, after doing away with the former outdated way of living. For example, old records

say that Tangun taught the people how to braid their hair and educated them in the etiquette to be observed between the king and his subjects, between men and women, in partaking of a meal, in wearing clothes and living in a house.

Tangun, who had strengthened the country's economic potential, developed culture and increased the national power, extended the territory by merging the neighbouring tribes. The old records such as *The History of Koryo* and *A New Enlarged Edition of Brief Sketches of Scenic Spots in Korea* carry legends about the Chamsong flat stone on the Mari (Mani) Mountains where Tangun conducted the service for worship of the heavens and the Samrang Fort, built by Tangun's three sons; these are based on the fact that the territory of ancient Korea was extended under his rule. Ancient Korea was originally a small state which had not so wide a territory around Pyongyang, but began growing into a state with a vast territory, thanks to Tangun's positive activity.

Tangun, a long-lived man, died and was buried in Pyongyang, his birthplace.

His lifespan is no more than a dot in the entire history of our nation. However, he was the one to set up a state for the first time in the East and this marked an end to the long primitive age in our country, and its entry into the age of statehood, the age of civilization. This is Tangun's greatest feat for our nation and an event of epochal importance in our nation's history.

## 7. The Question concerning the Foundation of Ancient Korea and Its Capital

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Ancient Korea was the first ancient state of our nation, built by Tangun five thousand years ago.

*The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* and the Part on Geography of the *Chronicles of King Sejong*, national classics of our country that are famed throughout the world, note that a man named Tangun founded a state for the first time in our country called Korea, quoting the contents of old records such as *Ancient Records*, *Ancient Records on Tangun* and *Major Records on Tangun*.

Particularly, the *Ancient Records*, cited in the Part on Korea of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, have it that the conditions for the setting up of ancient Korea were firmly laid in the era of Hwanung, who is described as Tangun's father. The tale about Hwanung says that the Heavenly God Hwanung, who had descended on the human world, leading a crowd of three thousand, accompanied by Phungbaek or God in charge of the wind, Usa or God in charge of the rain, and Unsa or God in charge of the clouds, presided over various occupations of human society, including agricultural production, the life and fate of humans, diseases, punishment, virtue and



vice. The tale about Hwanung is in the form of a myth. If the veil of mystic description were to be lifted, a vivid picture appears of the social aspects at the end of primitive society, and on the eve of the emergence of a state. The Heavenly God (Hwanung), appearing in the tale of Hwanung, was the supreme head of the society then existing, the chief of the primitive community in the closing days, namely, the man likened to the Heavenly God; Phungbaek, Usa and Unsa as the gods of the wind, rain and clouds, denote the entourage assisting the supreme head; a crowd of three thousand implies the popular masses, who had to live under their control and oppression. This shows that the existing society was in polarization with the people of the upper echelon represented by the supreme head, who had a unified command over the whole of society, and the people of the lower echelon, commanded and controlled by the former.

Meanwhile, the study of the five basic affairs, which were formerly conducted by the supreme head of the society in existence and his entourage, proves that, although the ancient method of social administration, namely, to judge the "virtue and vice" (the good and the bad) in the social lives by means of ethical reformation, was still effective, the ruling method based on power, such as the trials of "crimes" and the application of punishment, posed a matter of primary importance. This means that in the conversion of the upper echelon of the then existing society into the privileged ruling class, having power in their hands, and the lower echelon into the ruled class, the former began ruling society through power in parallel with the primitive moral standards. These were the aspects of the social evolution at the end of primitive society, at the eve of the appearance of the state. Tangun, who was presented as the son of Hwanung in the *Ancient Records*, *Ancient Records on Tangun* and *Major Records on Tangun*

carried in *The Annals of the Threes Kingdoms*, the *Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* and the Part on Geography of *Chronicles of King Sejong*, is the person who cut a figure in the history of our nation following the era of Hwanung, his father, on the eve of the foundation of a state.

As the process of class polarization in society became accelerated and social life presented further complications with the entry into the age of Tangun's reign, it posed the urgent question for the privileged ruling circles to establish a unitary ruling apparatus of power to intensify domination over the people of the lower echelon through a unified command over the whole of society. In response to such mature demands, Tangun had thus converted the primitive social organization into a state, a machinery of unitary power. The country was then given the name of Korea. Thus, Korea appeared for the first time in the history of our nation; later the states of successive dynasties, which had come and gone in our history took their origin from this root. It is not surprising, therefore, that afterwards Tangun, the founder of Korea, became the father of our consanguineous nation, an idol of worship.

A scientific confirmation was given by our scholars by means of the latest measurements of the bones found in the Tomb of Tangun that Tangun was born 5,011 years ago.

If Tangun was born 5,011 years ago, then when did he found Korea (ancient Korea)? That is how the question stands.

As for the year of the foundation of a state by Tangun, the theory that it was founded in 2333 B.C. was publicly accepted until recently. However, the said theory now became meaningless when the year of his birth had been confirmed in a scientific manner. If the formation of ancient Korea is set at the year 2333 B.C. it dates back to only 4,326 years. This would mean that Tangun had founded the country when he was hundreds of

years old. But that is unthinkable in the life of a human being.

The theory on 2333 B.C., the year of the foundation of a state by Tangun, originated from the *Rhymed Chronicles of Kings*, written by Ri Sung Hyu of Koryo toward the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> century: in his book the author reasoned that both the year of the birth of Korea by Tangun, the father of our nation, and the year of the foundation of a state by Emperor Yao of China fell alike on the same year *mujin* (the 5th binary term of the sexagenary cycle) and, proceeding from this, he recorded the years of existence of the following successive dynasties. In addition to this, the *Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* give the years of the existence of the successive dynasties that followed Emperor Yao of China. The calculation of the years of Korea and China testifies that the year *mujin* in question corresponds to the *mujin* which falls on the preceding 4,326 years. Ri Sung Hyu had no concrete data to insist on the coincidence of the year of birth of Tangun's Korea and the appearance of Emperor Yao in China. Such an argument was based on his logic that just as Tangun was the father of our nation, who had built the first state in Korea, so Emperor Yao was the ancestor of the Han race, the founder of the first state in China. Although he displayed profound attention towards our national history, unlike other conservative scholars of Chinese classics, Ri Sung Hyu had not completely freed himself from the Chinese-emperor-prejudiced view of history which prevailed in the then existing society and, hence, he failed to note that the founder of China was preceded by the father of Korea.

As can be seen in the *Chronicles of the Five Emperors of Shiji* by Shi Maqian, some historians of China were of the opinion that Emperor Xuan Yuan—who ruled 257 years earlier than Emperor Yao—was the founder of their country. But Ri Sung Hyu—regarding *Shangshu* (*Shujing*), compiled by

Confucius hundreds of years earlier than Shiji by Shi Maqian, to be a more authentic history book—specified Emperor Yao, instead of Emperor Xuan Yuan, to be the ancestral father of the Han race of China.

Meanwhile, in reference to the definition of the year *mujin* as the founding year of the first state by Emperor Yao of China, this view prevailed in Koryo when Ri Sung Hyu was alive. But in China the theory on the year *kapjin* (the 41 st binary term of the sexagenary cycle)—which was 24 years earlier than the year *mujin*—was accepted from the past. The theory on the year *kapjin* was first adopted in our country from the beginning of the Ri dynasty; thereafter, the year of state formation by Emperor Yao was fixed at the year *kapjin*, instead of the year *mujin*. Nevertheless, the bureaucratic scholars and literary men of the Ri dynasty, obsessed by flunkeyist ideas, stubbornly stuck to the established view of the year *mujin* as the year of the foundation of a state by Tangun, and finalized the date as *mujin*, or the 25th year of Emperor Yao' s reign in China. Consequently, while the year of the state foundation by Emperor Yao of China was accepted to be 2357 B.C., that is, 2333 B.C. plus 24 years, the founding year of Tangun' s Korea was fixed as before, the year 2333 B.C. in internal and external academic circles. This is the background of the definition of 2333 B.C. as the founding year of Tangun' s Korea.

Like this, the 2333 B.C. theory on the founding year of Tangun' s Korea, which had been effective until lately, completely ignored the actual historical facts; they viewed it in conjunction with Emperor Yao, the so-called ancestor of the Han race of China, from the beginning, when they determined it. Therefore, this definition is of no value at present, let alone the mistakes in its application.

Now that the absolute year of the birth of Tangun was

confirmed in a scientific manner by his bones, we must rearrange his founding year of a state on this basis. Of course, it is difficult to pin down the absolute year of the founding, but most probably the founding year of Korea by Tangun must be fixed at the beginning of the third millennium B.C., seeing that he was born at the end of the 31<sup>st</sup> century B.C., namely, 5,011 years before.

This freed our nation, as an advanced nation which has traversed the path of evolution to civilization, from its primitive stage since the establishment of a state at the beginning of the third millennium B.C., a nation which boasts a five-thousand-year long history.

Pyongyang was chosen by Tangun as the capital of ancient Korea.

In the study of Tangun and ancient Korea, the question of the capital—where did Tangun set up his capital when founding a state—needs to be clarified, in addition to the question regarding the formation of the state and the year of its birth. The results of the recent excavation of the Tomb of Tangun demand a new angle on this question.

In preceding societies a royal tomb was customarily built in the vicinity of the capital. When we think of this, we may assert that Tangun's capital, too, must be Pyongyang where his tomb is, instead of searching for it in the distant Liaodong area, since the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong has been identified as being his.

It was clearly pointed out in old documentary records that Pyongyang was Tangun's capital, the capital of ancient Korea. The *Ancient Records* quoted in the Part on Korea of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* clearly expressed that, when founding the state called Korea, Tangun chose Pyongyang as its capital. This must be the oldest historical record that mentioned the site of the capital chosen by

Tangun. Il Yon, the author of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* confirmed that the Pyongyang mentioned in the *Ancient Records* was precisely Sogyong—the name of Pyongyang used in the lifetime of the author. Considering the contents of the documentary records in connection with the data on the Tomb of Tangun, we can be assured that the capital of ancient Korea was undoubtedly Pyongyang of the present day.

The fact that today's Pyongyang was the capital and the centre of Tangun's Korea can be attested by an account on the transfer of the capital in 247 under the rule of King Tongchon of Koguryo. The records of the 21st year of King Tongchon in the Part on Koguryo of *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* added that "Pyongyang was the original domicile of Saint Wanggom", giving an account on the transfer of the people as well as the ancestral temples of the royal family and the deities-guardians of the state to Pyongyang. This is an account that in 247 Koguryo moved its capital to Pyongyang pro tempore. What attracts our attention here is the concurrent retrospection about Pyongyang. The mention of the saint Wanggom is, as is widely known, Tangun Wanggom, the founder of Tangun's Korea. The passage that Pyongyang was the original domicile of Tangun Wanggom means, in other words, that it was his old capital. This indicates that until thousands of years had elapsed after Tangun's rule was over, and a thousand and several hundred years passed after the fall of ancient Korea, it was ever present in the memory of the Korean people that Pyongyang was the old capital of Tangun. The documentary records that prove Pyongyang was Tangun's capital are too numerous to cite.

Generally, a state appears first in regions favourable to production and defence, and in the cradle of cultural

development following the primitive age.

Pyongyang and its peripheries were one of the cradles of mankind, a land explored by our ancestors from time immemorial. A long time ago *Homo erectus* occurred in the vicinity of Komunmoru, Sangwon County, and afterwards the “Ryokpho man” (Palaeoanthropic man) and the “Ryonggok man”, the “Mandal man” and the “Sungrisan man” (Neanthropic man) and the ancient men of Korea, their descendants—they were the forefathers of our people—lived in the wide areas around Pyongyang. They laid the foundation for life in these regions and steadily developed the economy and culture through the conquest of Nature. Pyongyang and its neighbouring areas, replete with the Taedong River and its numerous tributaries, were advantageous for agricultural production and transport; it was also very good for defence since it was walled in by high and low mountains and encircled by rivers.

These physiographic features and the accumulation of socio-historical factors from the preceding ages provided the possibility for the appearance of a state in this zone earlier than in other parts. Tangun, who was born in Pyongyang, so beautiful with its picturesque mountains and rivers, built the capital there, taking advantage to the maximum of its favourable conditions following the formation of the state with the appellation of Korea.

One of the cradles of mankind, Pyongyang is the birthplace of our nation which has inherited the spirit of Tangun, the primogenitor of our nation, and the capital of ancient Korea, the first state that appeared in our country. Our national history of five thousand years began from Pyongyang, the capital of ancient Korea, and registered the glowing progress based on it. It is by no means accidental that Pyongyang has long been glorified by our ancestors.

Our forefathers, in all eras, sanctified Pyongyang as the capital of ancient Korea where Tangun was born, regarding it as the native place of the Korean nation and set great store by its traditional status and advancing the national tradition depending on it.

Such a trend in our national history was particularly conspicuous in the age of Koguryo. Koguryo, which had risen as a powerful state in the east in succession to ancient Korea, made itself known as the successor to ancient Korea adoring and glorifying Pyongyang, the erstwhile capital of Tangun.

Already in 247, Koguryo set Pyongyang as its second capital and transferred the ancestral temples of royal family there, besides the deities-guardians of the state, and in 427 moved its capital as a whole from Kuknaesong (Jian) to Pyongyang. Previously, many scholars had explained the transfer of Koguryo's capital to Pyongyang basically from the aspect of the unification of the Three Kingdoms. This view is not incorrect, of course. However, it is difficult to say that it was founded on the general explicitness of the question on the transfer of the capital to Pyongyang.

Why had the Koguryo people moved their capital to Pyongyang? This can never be explained, apart from the fact that it was the birthplace of our nation, proud of its long history and developed culture. The transfer of the capital to Pyongyang by the Koguryo people could be explained by an intention to complete the union of the Three Kingdoms for converting our country into a homogeneous national state by virtue of the traditional status of Pyongyang, the site of Tangun's capital, following the capital's transfer there. A good example here is in the records about King Tongchon in the Part on Koguryo of *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* which emphasized Pyongyang as the site of the capital built



by the forebear Wanggom, namely Tangun, giving an account of the temporary transfer of Koguryo' s capital to Pyongyang in 247.

Koryo, succeeding Koguryo, pursued the policy of an emphasis on Pyongyang, worshipping it, having attempted to transfer its capital there on several occasions.

The great emphasis laid on Pyongyang by the rulers of Koryo can be easily imagined through the facts that, after its birth in 918, Koryo first took up the rehabilitation of Pyongyang as one of its biggest undertakings, and that, in the initial period following its birth, Wang Kon, the founder king, toured the Pyongyang (Sogyong) areas for local inspections almost every year, although the southern situation was extremely complex.

The fact that Koryo attached importance to Pyongyang and concentrated on its construction is linked with its traditional status as the capital of Koguryo, a great power in the East and, furthermore, the birthplace of our nation. Koryo sought to transfer its capital to Pyongyang and, on this basis, to achieve territorial integrity and become as powerful and strong as ancient Korea and Koguryo were. In 932 Wang Kon said that "lately Sogyong had been reconstructed and people were being transferred for its consolidation, aiming to conquer the Samhan and build the capital there". He greatly/ regretted that diverse conditions at the time prevented him from forthwith putting his plan into reality.

This transfer plan of the Koryo people entered a full-fledged preparation stage in the 940s. These preparations were suspended by the death of Jong Jong and Wang Sik Ryom, advocates of this transfer, but the desires and practical activities of the Koryo people did not cease in the latter period. The move to transfer the capital to Pyongyang that was made by Myo Chong and his group in the middle of the 1130s, under

the reign of King Injong, is an instance of this.

Our national history shows that the unification movement was energetically pushed ahead by Koguryo, Koryo, etc., which pursued the policy of emphasis on Pyongyang and, in this course, the unified state of the Korean nation, with Tangun as its father, came into existence and its national prestige flourished far and wide.

It has been clarified that Tangun really did exist and was the founder of ancient Korea and that Pyongyang was the capital of ancient Korea, the site of the capital itself having been chosen by Tangun. This marks an epochal event in the study of the ancient history of our country.

## 8. The *Weishu* Which Referred to the Foundation of a State by Tangun

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*The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, the first to take up the myth about Tangun among the history books of our country opened its first page with an account on the formation of a state by Tangun, taken from the book entitled *Weishu*, which reads:

“The *Weishu* pointed out that in the past, two thousand years ago, there lived a man called Tangun Wanggom and he chose Asadal as his capital and founded a state and called it Korea (Joseon).

“This coincides with the age of Emperor Yao’ s reign.”

Brief as it is, account given in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* conveys the important facts regarding the foundation of ancient Korea such as the founder, the appellation of the state he set up, the capital and the period of its foundation.

As Il Yon, the author of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, had taken this passage from the *Weishu*, it is obvious that the *Weishu* had offered the tale of Tangun to *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*.

As for the books of the same title only two have survived: The *Weishu* of *Shanguozhi* written by Chen Shou, a scholar of the Jin in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century being one of them, and the other is the *Weishu* compiled by Wei Shou of Beiqi in the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

These two books, however, made no mention of the tale about Tangun given in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* as an excerpt from the *Weishu*. In the past Imanishi and other government-paid Japanese historians ascribed the tale about Tangun in the *Weishu* as Il Yon's fabrication on this plea, and went to the length of negating the myth about Tangun in the *Ancient Records*.

This is an unjustified view, since the missing books are incomparably greater than the survived ones of the *Weishu*.

Among the history books of China there are plenty of books that are entitled *Weishu* as well as history books of the same title.

The *Weishu* meant books on the history of the Wei, and Chinese history offers many a state having the same appellation. The Wei which was a feudal marquessate of the Zhou in the age of civil wars and later became one of the "Seven Heroes of the Warring States", the Wei sandwiched between the Qin and the Chu toward the close of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C., the Wei in the era of the Three States, and the Wei in the era of the Nanbeichao are some of them. Only to cite the authentic history books, which dealt with the Wei in the era of the Three States, and the Wei in the era of the Nanbeichao, they amount to nearly twenty in all.

Besides the *Weishu* of the *Shanguozhi* by Chen Shou which is still kept as the history book of the Wei (Chaowei) in the era of the Three States, there are the *Weishu* by Wang Chen which Pei Songzhi, scholar of the Nansong, quoted while annotating the *Shanguozhi*, the *Weishu* by Xia Houzhan, the *Short History of Wei* by Yu Huan, the *Weiji* by Yin Dan, *Weishi Chunqiu* and *Weishiji* by Sun Sheng, the *Weidianlun* by Wei Wendi, the anon. *Weiwugushi*, *Weimingchenzhou*, *Weiship* and *Weimodian*. If the *Weishu* by Yuan Xinzong of the Tang and the *Weiyangqiuyitong* by Sun Shou—compiled a little later than

the former ones—were added to them, they would number over 14 different kinds.

In addition, there is the *Weishu* by Wei Shou which is renowned as the history book of the Wei (Tuo Bo) in the era of the Nanbeichao, and this was preceded by the publication of the history books arranged by Deng Yuan, Cui Hao and Gao Yun in chronological order, and the history books compiled by Li Bao and Cui Guang in the biographical style; these were followed by the publication of the *Houweishu* by Wei Dan and the book of the same title by Zhang Dasu, and the *Yuanweishu* by Pei Anshi in the age of the Sui.

As adduced, there was a variety of history books entitled *Weishu*. Hence, it is quite an absurd allegation that the excerpt from the *Weishu* given in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* lacks credibility since no tale of Tangun is found in the *Weishu* of the *Shanguozhi* or in the *Weishu* by Wei Shou which are obtainable now.

In the case of the existing *Weishu*, the contents are not the same as at the time of publication. When correcting the *Weishu* by Wei Shou, for instance, Liu Shu and his collaborators of the Sung, crossed out 29 parts in the book.

Consequently, it is not reasonable to argue about this according to the existing *Weishu*.

And it is difficult to think that, writing the history of ancient Korea, Il Yon began his book with an excerpt from a bogus *Weishu*.

Taking all these facts into account, there are no grounds to reject the Tangun legend in the *Weishu*. No doubt Il Yon must have borrowed the Tangun legend from a definite *Weishu* ready to hand, though it does not exist at the present, when he wrote *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*.

How come the Tangun tale was taken up then by the *Weishu*, a Chinese literature?

One cannot imagine that the author of the *Weishu* had concocted the facts concerning the foundation of a foreign state as he pleased, for there was no need for him to do so. Accordingly, it is plain that he wrote it on the basis of data he had obtained from the history books of our country or through conversations with people of our country. We can easily imagine, by the narrative style of the Tangun tale quoted from the *Weishu*, that it was not written by the Chinese author of the *Weishu* but that he had merely copied what was originally written by our forefathers. It says, "in the past, two thousand years ago" he founded a state in the "age coincidental with the reign of Emperor Yao". Like this, the period of state building in our country was explained as being the same as at the dawn of civilization in China. This sort of a boastful record could have been left only by our ancestors, who had a strong sense of pride over the long history of their country.

In consideration of these facts, we can guess that the Tangun tale became known to China at some time and came to be published in the *Weishu*.

The actual historical relations with China provided ample room for such a possibility. The Wei in the epoch of the Three States and the Wei in the era of the Nanbeichao were in conditions more favourable than other dynasties of China for easy acquisition of ancient historical data of our country. In 246 the Wei commanded by Wu Qinjian, forcefully invaded Koguryo. At the time the aggressor troops occupied the capital of Koguryo for a time and pillaged extensively when fleeing, repulsed by the army and people of Koguryo. It can be easily imagined that, among others, they had looted the cultural wealth, such as the books published until then, including the *Ryugi* put out in the initial period of Koguryo. This was mentioned by Chen Shou, the author of *Shanguozhi*,

in the preface to *Dongyiliezhuan* of the *Weishu*. In fact, the *Shanguozhi* is richer with ancient data about our country than any other book. The same must be true of other *Weishu*, as in the case of *Shanguozhi*.

After its bordering on Koguryo in 436, the Latter Wei, too, maintained amicable relations, and envoys came and went between them almost every year, therefore, they had many chances of becoming familiar with our history. In short, it was easy for the author of any *Weishu* to acquire ancient historical data of our country.

Meanwhile, Il Yon was provided with all conditions to quote the Tangun tale from the *Weishu*.

The Koryo dynasties had a large stock of Chinese classics as well as rare books to be found in China, in the Suso Institution at the time and in other academic organs. Consequently, in 1091 (the ninth year of King Sonjong) the Sung government went to the lengths of requesting the books to be forwarded to it through the medium of Ri Ja Ui, a people of Koryo living there. In the list of the books requested by the Sung were many types of the *Weishu*, including the *Weishichunqiu* by Sun Sheng and the *Short History of Wei* by Yu Huan.

Il Yon was one of the highest ranks of priests of Koryo and was immersed in all the cultural activities of the dynasty, so that he was able to refer to these history books without restrictions. Thus, he cited the tale about Tangun from the *Weishu* for the verification of the Tangun myth given in the *Ancient Records*.

Which *Weishu* was it concretely that carried the Tangun legend?

In his book *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, Il Yon noted the *Weishu* of the *Shanguozhi* as *Weiji* and Wei Shou's *Weishu* as *Houweishu*. But these books have no records about

the Tangun legend. This means that the *Weishu* in question must be one of the missing *Weishu*.

However, the books on the history of the Wei, written by Tuo Bo of the era of the Nanbeichao, dealt with the historical years later than the period covered by the *Weishu* of the Wei in the era of the Three States. So it was wide of the mark to argue about these books.

On the contrary, among the *Weishu* by Chao Wei, as in the *Short History of Wei* by Yu Huan, a scholar of the Wei in the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century, there were history books containing comparatively detailed accounts on the ancient history of our country and even legends about the foundation of Puyo. All this leaves no room for doubt that the history book *Weishu*, which introduced the nation building by Tangun, must have been one of the *Weishu* written by Chao Wei.

The above facts assert that the Japanese imperialist-patronized historians' ascription of the *Weishu* carrying the record about Tangun to Il Yon's invention was a sophism aimed at crossing out the Tangun myth.

Therefore, the records of the *Weishu* about Tangun and ancient Korea are precious data, which had given information about the historical foundation of Korea (ancient Korea ) by Tangun.

The publication of the record about the foundation of ancient Korea by Tangun in the Chinese history book *Weishu* means that the Tangun tale popular in our country was made known to China earlier than the publication of the *Weishu* and hence was fixed as a record in the *Weishu*.

Since the rise of ancient Korea, our people have promoted the achievements made by Tangun, the primogenitor, with a high sense of pride worthy of the nation which has come through the long years of history, regarding him as their father.



The question of how to define the year of the birth of ancient Korea, related in the *Weishu*, awaits its solution.

It is written in the *Weishu* that ancient Korea was built “in the past, two thousand years ago,” that it is “coincidental with the era of Emperor Yao’s reign”. This does not accord with the year of the birth of ancient Korea.

If the *Weishu*, which carried the record about the Tangun tale, is considered as one belonging to the *Weishu* that dealt with the history of the Wei in the era of Chao Wei, then they were compiled in the period of Qin or East Qin which corresponds to the period from the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century to the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. If the two thousand years are counted backward from that time, the year, that is, “the past, two thousand years ago” mentioned in the record of the *Weishu* quoted in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms*, falls between 3,500 and 3,700 years before this date. That is 1,300 to 1,500 years less than the  $5,011 \pm 267$  years, given by the measurement of the years of the bones of Tangun discovered in his tomb.

Where has this disparity come from? It has already been pointed out that the author of the *Weishu* wrote about the Tangun tale based on materials supplied by our forefathers.

Our ancestors, as the source of the data given to the *Weishu*, were those who lived in the latter period after the lapse of a considerably long period from the age of Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea, and, consequently, they had no clear idea about the year he had founded the state; their knowledge was so ambiguous that they thought it had been in a very old time that he had founded the state. For this reason, they compared the founding year of ancient Korea to the emperor of the remotest past they knew of and asserted that Tangun founded a state in the period coinciding with that of Emperor Yao of China, and used expressions such as “the

past, two thousand years ago” and the “period coincidental with the rule of Emperor Yao” . Such was the record of the *Weishu*; wherefore, it is difficult to trust the years mentioned there. Accordingly, the year should be changed, based on the dating of Tangun’ s bones.

As seen above, the record of the *Weishu* was not correct in the definition of the year of the founding of the state, although it had given us data on the foundation of a state by Tangun.

## 9. Important Features of the “Tangun Myth”

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The “Tangun myth”, a narrative on the formation of the first state in our country, is one of the precious cultural riches that was created and handed down to posterity by the people who lived in the remote past of our history.

The “Tangun myth” serves as priceless historical data in the study of the birth and growth of the ancient state in our country, the people’s lives and their way of thinking about the world surrounding them, culture, etc., in the ancient, primitive age.

Although this myth is a simple record contained in many classics, yet it is a priceless narrative belonging to folklore—though it was referred to in many literary works, Korean and foreign, it had been handed down by word of mouth through a long historical period of time.

Therefore, to clarify the special features of the “Tangun myth”—the legend about the formation of the first state in our country—from the angle of literature is one of the requisites for the assurance and elucidation of the historical facts, swathed in the veil of literary fantasy.

The primary basic feature of the “Tangun myth”, viewed from the angle of literature, is that it is deep-rooted in the

5,000-year long life of our nation; that it has been polished and enriched by different classes and circles in the course of its inheritance as a legend about the birth of the first state, giving a comprehensive picture of Tangun, the father of our nation and the symbol of the national spirit, and of his activities, in the form of mythology.

As is known, the "Tangun myth" deals with Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea, as its central character and is woven primarily with tales about his birth.

His birth, as told in the legend, reflects ancestral worship aimed at deification of the character of Tangun, the founder of the first state.

Although Tangun's legend takes the form of a myth, it is true as confirmed through the excavation of his tomb, that Tangun, its central character, really existed in history and was the founder of ancient Korea.

If one insists that since his legend was in the form of mythology, its hero was also a fictitious character and his feats were a fabrication as well, that person's view totally contradicts the historical truth. At the same time, this is an extremely mistaken opinion from the viewpoint of the growth of social consciousness and the historical process of the creation of artistic representation.

On the contrary, the mystification of the tale about Tangun attests to the fact that this story was first created by the primitive ancients of the very remote past; it had been enriched by historical facts and, combined with ancestral adoration, striking roots deep in the lives of our nation through the long years of its inheritance.

In this light, we must have a correct conception about what a mythical illusion is.

A mythical illusion is an outcome of the primitive outlook on and conception of the surrounding world among the people at

the dawn of human society, when their creative forces were very weak as yet and their ideological and cultural standards extremely low.

Our country abounds in a legacy of legends about the foundation of the state, such as the "Tangun myth". Legendary tales about the foundation of the state, like the "myth about Haemosu", the "Tale about Ju Mong" and the "Tale of Hyokgose", are all in the form of myths or legends, and the merits of the founders of states are related in this descriptive manner. The Tangun myth is not an exception, either.

The truth that the "Tangun myth" is the first tale on state building which dealt with the historical achievements of Tangun, the founder of the first state in our country, through the medium of mythical fantasy, manifests in the fact that while the myth had been handed down from the remote past in the *Major Records* and *Ancient Records*, Hwanin was sometimes called Jesok (harvest god) or Sangje (god) and Hwanung as Heaven-King Hwanung or Heaven-King Tanung, but Tangun alone was invariably depicted with due respect as "Tangun Korea" or "Tangun Wanggom".

This testifies that though a mythical illusion was adopted for the description of Tangun, he was a real historical being and was hallowed as the founder of the first state, the father of our nation and the symbol of our national spirit.

Secondly, the important characteristic of the "Tangun myth", seen from a literary viewpoint, is that it was the first narrative on state building which had generalized the national lives of the primitive ancients of our country within the framework of mythology mainly through a portrayal of Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea. The existence of different countries and nations and the differences in people's lives and their way of thinking naturally mark national boundary in the world of legendary tales.

Accordingly, there are boundaries between the legendary tales of different countries while a “pan-world legend”, independent of any country or nation is unthinkable.

The “Tangun myth”, the legendary tale on the establishment of the first state in our country, is evidence of this.

When we say that there are boundaries between the legendary tales of different countries and nations, it means that they are characterized by national peculiarities.

The legends of a country and nation reflect the lives, emotional desires and national tastes of a given nation.

This can be seen through the comparison of the “Tangun myth” and the “Xuanzu myth”, the legend about the foundation of the Yin, China.

The “Tangun myth” generalizes the age-long lives and thoughts of the primitive ancients of our country, and retains the traces of their national lives and zests of national flavor. These are eloquent in the images of Tangun, the central figure of the myth, and his father, Hwanung, and mother.

What was conspicuous in the portrayal of his father, Hwanung, and his mother is that firstly, they had generous and gentle characters, and secondly, they had a strong desire for independent living, and they were diligent, enterprising, optimistic and had romantic dispositions. Tangun’s image shows that he had inherited these virtues and dispositions from his parents.

What we must not miss, in the representation of Tangun, is that he was always full of inexhaustible and pulsating vigour and spirit as the founder of a state and a hero of olden times.

This can be seen by the legend that he ruled the state for 1,500 years and lived for 1,908 years, moving his place of residence from Asadal to Tangjanggyong and back again. This reflects the historical truth that he had founded a state in

today's Pyongyang through his energetic activities, and afterwards had merged the adjoining tribes, gradually extending his territory. Thus, ancient Korea, built by Tangun, existed nearly 3,000 years and, as can be seen from the divination sign inscribed on the back of turtle in the eras of the Yin and the Shang, and the copperware inscriptions of Xizhou, the oldest, reliable monumental inscriptions of China, had extended its territory as far as the Great Wall of China, overpowering the incessantly aggressive schemes of the Yin and the Zhou, and flourished as the strongest and largest ancient state in the East of olden times.

Tangun was portrayed as having a generous, gentle, industrious, progressive and optimistic disposition; this reflects the national characteristics which formed in the long years of the life of our people. This reassures us of the importance of the "Tangun myth" as a precious treasure of our nation.

Thus, the "Tangun myth", the legendary tale about the foundation of ancient Korea, added to illustrating the precious gains attained from the excavation of the Tomb of Tangun, under the wise guidance of the Party and the leader, from the aspect of literature.

## 10. Pyongyang—Epicentre of Ancient Civilization

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With the excavation of the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong County, Pyongyang, our country became famous as the first advanced and civilized state in the East, a country proud of an age-long history and a brilliant culture of 5,000 years.

The historical remains and relics are evidence, showing bygone history through existing materials.

A lot of archaeological discoveries were made in and around Pyongyang, introducing the culture created by ancient Korea and the process of its development.

The question of the centre of ancient civilization is directly connected with the capital of ancient Korea, the first state in our country. This is because ancient Korea is the oldest state, for its year of foundation among the other ancient states of our country, and because it distinguished itself in its territorial area and its culture.

The dolmens \*<sup>7</sup> and the remnants of dwellings—where the toy top-shaped earthenware were discovered—in Pyongyang and in parts of northwestern Korea are typical of the remains and relics of ancient Korea.

A dolmen is a sort of ancient tomb: a large flat stone is



laid horizontally on two upright stones which are flanked by large stones on both sides. This serves as a burial chamber. This can be said to be an above-ground or semisubterranean large stone structure, which is the oldest in our country.

These dolmens and the remains of the dwellings testify to the fact that this region was the centre and cradle of ancient Korean culture.

The first grounds that we have in noting Pyongyang as the heart of ancient civilization lie in the fact that the dolmens, representative remains of ancient Korea, are most abundant in Pyongyang and its vicinity.

Dolmens are dispersed widely throughout the whole territory of our country and the northeastern areas of China, excluding the reaches of the Tuman River to the north of North Hamgyong Province. This is a form of tomb found in the eastern region of Asia inhabited by our forefathers in the ancient period; it is not found in Siberia, Inner Mongolia or China proper lying adjacent to the ancient states of our nation.

A survey of the dolmens discovered hitherto in all parts of the country shows that the Pyongyang area is in first place for their abundance.

According to preliminary figures, thousands of dolmens have been found in Phyongwon, Sukchon and Sunchon Counties to the north of Pyongyang, in Onchon County to the west, Hwangju, Yonthan, Unchon, Anak and Unryul Counties to the south and in Kangdong and Songchon Counties to the east.

The number of the dolmens in the river basin of Hwangju Stream, inclusive of the parts of Hwangju and Yonthan Counties, alone surpasses 1,100. This fantastic figure is in striking contrast to the figures of dolmens found in other areas: less than 100 in North and South Hamgyong Provinces, only 20 or so in Ryanggang Province, about 90 in Kanghwa Island and 108 in the Liaodong area of China.

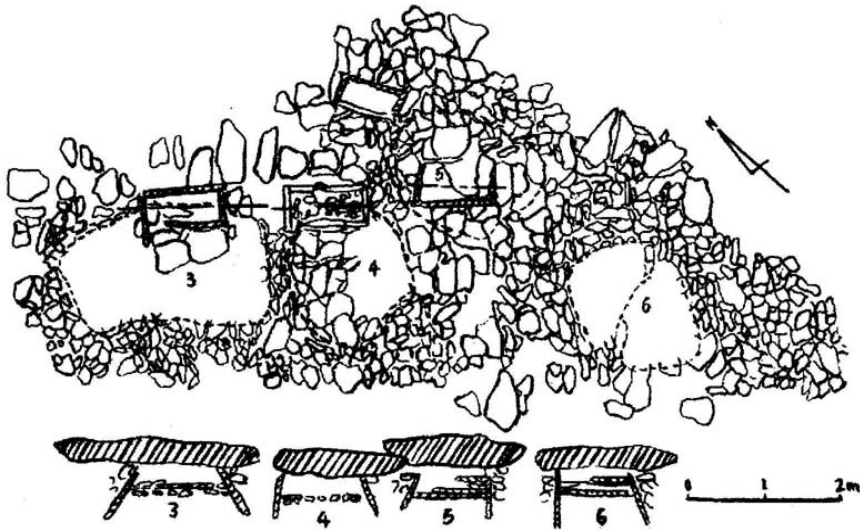


Fig. 6. A *Chimchon*-type dolmen

In the distribution of dolmens in and around Pyongyang, we should note the fact that they exist in dense clusters, each embracing scores or hundreds in all. There are many clusters of 100 or 200 dolmens crowded in one area. Those in the vicinity of Mt. Sokchon in Ryonggang County, number 250, including the ones inundated in Thaesong Reservoir.

There are over 360 dolmens in Chimchon-ri of Hwangju County, Kwangsok-ri of Sariwon City and at the base of Mt. Jongbang. About 150 are clustered in Tumu-ri, 230 in Odok-ri, Yonhan County, and 200 in Jongdong-ri, Unchon County, North Hwanghae Province. In the northwestern areas of Korea there are six or seven areas, each clustered with more than 100 dolmens, most of them close to the Pyongyang area.

Dolmens have been discovered in North and South Hamgyong and Ryanggang Provinces and the Liaodong area, but none of them has yet been known to be so densely clustered as Pyongyang.

Since dolmens were burial chambers of the people in those days, we can conclude that the capital of Pyongyang and the areas adjacent to it were densely populated. Accordingly, this is clear evidence that the Pyongyang area was the centre of ancient culture and the heart of ancient Korea.

Secondly, the grounds to regard Pyongyang as the centre of ancient culture is that varied forms of dolmens, ranging from the sort of the initial period—which proves Pyongyang to be the cradle and origin of the dolmens—to those belonging to the middle and closing years of its existence, are all found in the Pyongyang area.

Since dolmens are above-ground or semisubterranean structures built with large stones, the transformation of their shapes presupposes an increase in the experience of the dolmen builders, progress of architectural dynamics and techniques, the change of burial manners and, furthermore, the growth of the productive forces. Actually, dolmens went through gradual transformations in structure with the changes in the times. Generally, the dolmens were above-ground burial chambers assembled with stone slabs supporting a heavy flat stone as a roof. This required a balance between the heavy roof stone and the stone slabs propping it. However, the dolmens in Kindong and Chonjindong village, Chimchon-ri, Hwangju County, are the kind of the initial period; whereas its roof stones weigh about 7 to 10 tons each, the stone slabs forming the burial case resembled a stone casket built with stone slabs about 3 to 4 centimetres thick.

The dolmens belonging to this category are not balanced on the whole. Instead, in order to protect the stone burial chamber from the pressure of the roof stone, the stones are piled up in a definite breadth around the burial case as reinforcements to it. Further, the roof stone and propping stone slabs were small in size and rough-hewed, while being shabby in appearance.

There were five or six dolmens of this type altogether in one sepulchral zone. These are called dolmens of the Chimchon type; this is considered the initial form of the earliest period in dolmens appearing in our country (Fig.6).

This initial type was replaced by a sort of the middle stage, when the propping stone slabs, which formed the burial case, were reinforced with thick stone slabs. Further, they were evolved into the Odok type, which was taller than the previous ones and the Mukbang type, when, instead of propping stone slabs, small stones were piled up to form a burial chamber, roofed with a large flat stone. Thus, of the territory of the ancient states of our nation, only the Pyongyang area had such a wide variety of dolmens as evidence of a continued evolution from the Chimchon type, the earliest of this kind in size, structure and shape to the large and developed Odok and Mukbang types. Although tens of thousands of dolmens have ever been discovered up to this day in our country, this sort of initial period exists only in the Pyongyang area; not a single dolmen belonging to this category was found in other regions.

It is only the Odok type and the Chimchon and the Mukbang types of the individual burial ground in the later period that were found in North and South Hamgyong, Ryanggang and Kangwon Provinces and in the southern parts of Korea, and in the northeastern area of China. This speaks of the fact that Pyongyang and its vicinity were the birthplace of the dolmens of our country and that this locality was the centre of ancient civilization.

Thirdly, the grounds to note Pyongyang as the centre of ancient civilization lie in the fact that there are many particularly large dolmens among the clusters of dolmens that occupied definite zones in and near Pyongyang.

Some have a roof stone which is as wide as 50 and more

square metres and weighs 40 to 70 tons.

The dolmens in the Kangdong and Sangwon Counties and those famed as the three huge ones of Korea in Odok-ri of Yonshan County, Kwansan-ri of Unryul County and Roam-ri of Anak County and those in the area of Ryonggang County are representative ones. In the distribution of dolmens in our country, the huge ones are concentrated in the Pyongyang area, while there is only one in the Phangyo County of Kangwon Province, one in Hamju County of South Hamgyong Province, one in Hochon County of South Hamgyong Province, one in Paechon County, a typical one in the Yonbaek area, South Hwanghae Province, and two to three in Mt. Shipeng, Gai County of the Liaodong area.

There are 15 at least in Pyongyang and its vicinity and the dolmen of Roam-ri, Anak County, is praised as a rare masterpiece. The roof stone of the dolmen in Roam-ri is estimated to be 40 tons in weight and it is evident that it weighed much more before it was broken: originally it was believed to be 910 centimetres long, 640 centimetres wide and 70 centimetres thick. The stone props are 270 centimetres tall from the surface of the ground (Fig. 7).

This is the largest dolmen ever known in our country. If the stone supports and side stone slabs are added to this, all together they are estimated to weigh about 70 tons. This type of a huge dolmen is built with exquisiteness in the structure of the groundwork, the reinforcements of the burial ground, and in the combination of propping, wall and roof stones.

The propping, wall and roof stones are firmly joined to make it a strong structure, and the supporting stones are inclined five to six degrees inwardly to prop the weight of the roof stone. The roof stone of the dolmen in Kwansan-ri of Unryul County was chipped evenly into a 31-centimetres thickness. The propping and wall stones were well trimmed in trapezoid.

The exquisite art of trimming stones and the refined technique and the high level of architecture reflected in the structure of the huge dolmens graphically show the progress of culture in the Pyongyang area.

Consequently, what sort of people were buried in these dolmens?

Topographically, the sizable dolmens are located in prominent places, including ridges and hills; therefore, they attract public attention. For example, the dolmen in Kwansan-ri, Unryul County, is located on the top of the Hwasan peak, with an elevation of over 80 metres on a branch of Mt. Kuwol. Its roof stone alone weighs 40 tons; such a heavy stone had to be cut out of the rock and brought up to the high peak where it was placed on propping stones, far surpassing two metres in height. Undoubtedly, all this required a work force of thousands of young and middle-aged men for the erection of a non-productive burial chamber. But the bones of only one man were found in such a large dolmen. The remains of the remote past help us to picture the activities of the people of that time. In short, the roof stones of these particularly conspicuous dolmens represent the collective labour and wisdom of the people of ancient Korea and, at the same time, give an insight into the social relations when people had to exert their physical and mental skills to that one person who lay in the burial chamber. The items found in the huge dolmens include bronze and stone arrowheads or daggers, bronze *pipha*-shaped spearheads and trinkets, such as bronze buttons, hollow Amazonite beads, bone beads, star-shaped and moon-shaped axes as the commander's baton. Like this, the structure and the shape and size of the large burial chamber, and the discovery of a lot of arms as tools of violence in it, help to conclude that the masters of these large dolmens were the men in power, the slaveowners who had taken possession of wealth and power.

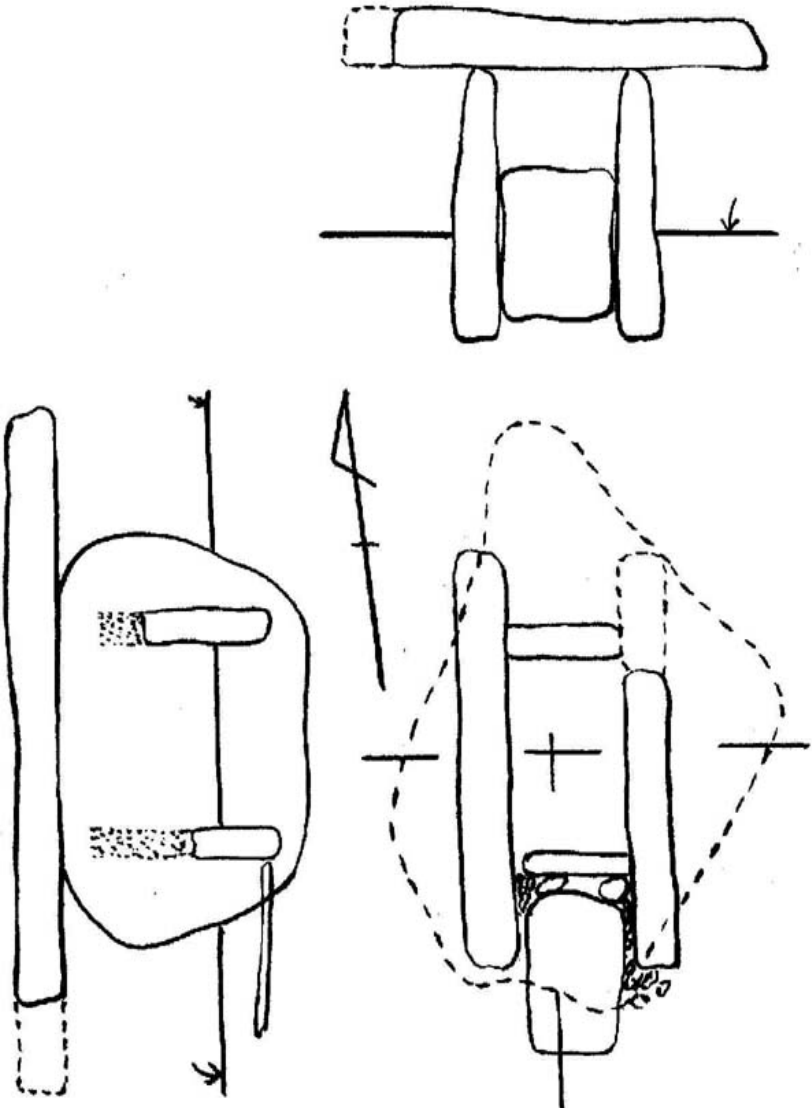


Fig. 7 Dolmen in Roam-ri, Anak County

It was the same with the historical facts of the Middle Ages that the slave owner, the ruler, was buried near the capital. Taking into consideration the fact that the kings of Koguryo whose capital was Pyongyang, were buried at their death in the scenic suburbs of Pyongyang, such as Ryongsan-ri of Ryokpho District as well as Kangso, Ryonggang and Anak Counties, we can say that the masters of the large dolmens, so plentiful in the Pyongyang area, were the slave owners of ancient Korea residing in the capital, and it is only natural that these people of power, the rulers, gathered in the capital, the home of civilization.

Fourthly, the remains of the village sites discovered in Pyongyang and its suburbs and the relics unearthed there are further evidence of the fact that this area was the heart of ancient culture.

Hundreds of ancient village sites have been discovered in Pyongyang and its neighbourhood, including the river basins of Taedong and Hwangju. Particularly, the Namgyong remains of Samsok District, Pyongyang, disclosed 22 dwelling sites where people had lived for a long period, from the third to the mid-first millennium B.C. This figure comes to 40 to 50, if the dwelling sites confirmed by unearthing were added to it. Besides, burnt unhulled rice, foxtail millet, soybeans, millet and kaoliang were also unearthed there, and from this it became clear that five cereals had been under cultivation already three thousand years ago. World archaeology rarely knows of a case when five cereals, including rice, which demand similar growing conditions, were harvested at the same time. Village sites were also discovered in the Kumthan-ri remains of Sadong District and the Taephyong-ri remains of Pukchang County. Especially the Sokthan-ri remains of Songrim City, where more than 150 dwelling sites similar to a township were dug up; this provides the grounds to say that a large population had lived in the



Pyongyang area, being crowded there, and developing their culture. The remains of hundreds of dwelling sites in this region reveal that a huge crowd of people lived collectively in the Pyongyang area, advantageous to them and engaged in various occupations, growing crops in the main.

The status that is of historical importance of the culture in the Pyongyang area, as the home of ancient civilization, finds manifestation in the influence the culture of this region had on the ancient culture of neighbouring states.

Only the dolmens of the latter period exist in southern Korea, the former territory of Jinglyk, beyond the boundary of Pyongyang and its neighbourhood, the cradle of the people of ancient Korea; the discoveries from this area retain the characteristics of the remains and relics of ancient Korea, including the toy top-shaped earthenware and narrow brass dagger.

The Sodansanja-type earthenware peculiar to Puyo and the *pipha*-shaped dagger\*<sup>8</sup>, found in the Jilin and Changchun areas, are a later variation of the Misong-ri type pot and the *pipha*-shaped dagger of ancient Korea.

Over 100 dolmens were dug up in the Liaodong area, once the borderland of ancient Korea, which had adopted the shape of the dolmen in the Pyongyang area.

The discovery of the fossilized archaeopteryx, iguanodon and dinosaur in our country and the abundance of the bones of Paleoanthropic man, Neanthropic man and the ancient man of Korea and antique remains, including the Komunmoru remains left by the *Homo erectus* in Pyongyang, prove that the picturesque land of Pyongyang had the favourable natural environment needed for the cradle of mankind. It is quite natural, therefore, that amid such advantageous surroundings the people of ancient Korea had built so many dolmens and had developed their ancient culture through the long years of their lives.

## 11. The Japanese Imperialists' Moves to Obliterate Tangun

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As shown by the results of the study of Tangun, which became further augmented with the recent disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun, it was established that Tangun had actually existed among our ancestors and was the founder of ancient Korea and that this traditional conception had come down to us over thousands of years.

However, such a traditional conception of our nation was downtrodden by the artful and sinister schemes of the Japanese imperialists after their occupation of Korea.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

“The Japanese imperialists tried to destroy our national culture with its 5,000-year old history, and imposed upon our nation the Japanese language, Japanese customs, Japanese culture and the Japanese religion called ‘Shintoism’, for the purpose of paralysing the national consciousness of the Korean people.” (Kim Il Sung, *Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. 4, p. 225.)

In pursuance of their aim to wipe out the independent national consciousness of the Korean people and to justify their aggression and domination of Korea, the Japanese imperialists made a vicious attempt, from the first days of their occupation of Korea, to consign to oblivion the historical

truth of Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea so brilliantly adorning the first page of our nation's history. On occupying Korea, they set the important aim in their colonial policy against Korea to obliterate the history of Tangun's Korea, and to distort and repaint all the historical facts of the following period to their own advantage.

Saito, the third governor-general of the Japanese imperialists in Korea, advocating the so-called "civil rule", did not conceal their basic Korean policy, that is, to rid the Koreans of their national spirit and culture by destroying their history and traditions and, on the other hand, to force them to worship Japan through an embellishment of her history.

Their attempts to make Tangun nonexistent and to distort Korean history continued for the entire period of their colonial rule in our country.

The Japanese aggressors, who sought to obliterate Tangun and the ancient history of Korea as a link of their colonial policy against Korea, aimed, primarily, to stamp out the national pride and honour of our people as a homogeneous nation, whose father was Tangun, and thus smoothly realize their colonial domination of our country. One of the biggest barriers for the Japanese aggressors in the execution of their policy of colonial reign over Korea was the strong independent national consciousness of our people based on their true national pride and honor; since the establishment of the first state by Tangun in Asia, our people, as a homogeneous nation, had lived a steadfast life writing their 5,000-year long history, and creating and developing their brilliant culture.

The Japanese imperialists soon found out that they could not dominate Korea easily if they did not wipe out our people's strong independent national spirit. To this end, they began rewriting and erasing our nation's long history and its progressive nature as the historical resources of our

people's independent national consciousness. Thus, they chose to delete the opening pages of Korean history, namely, the history of Tangun's Korea.

Another dirty target of the Japanese aggressors to strike out the pages of Tangun and Tangun's Korea, in line with their colonial policy against Korea, was to justify their aggression of and rule over Korea by preaching and emphasizing the "inferiority" of the Korean nation and the "superiority" of the Yamato race of Japan.

The year of the foundation of Tangun's Korea written in ancient records, which falls on 2333 B.C., is nearly 1,700 years earlier than the date of Japan's birth, which is 660 B.C., as mentioned in the fabulous myth about its founding. Consequently, unless they deny the historical record about Tangun's Korea and efface it, they found it difficult to justify their brigandish theory on colonial domination; in other words, that the "superior" Yamato race should rule the "inferior" Korean nation.

Proceeding from such a sinister target, the Japanese imperialists resorted to every conceivable way and means to strike out Tangun and Tangun's Korea.

In pursuance of their aim, they plundered and burned all the history books everywhere in Korea relating to Tangun.

Terauchi, the first governor-general in Korea, sent out Japanese police to ransack bookstores, schools, village schoolhouses and the people's homes in all parts of the country and seized hundreds of thousands of precious books forcibly on the history, culture and geography of our country, including books relating to Tangun which they thought harmful to their colonial rule in Korea. In 1915, in order to make the time-honored history of our nation shorter than theirs, the Japanese imperialists established the "Korean History Compilation Department" in the Privy Council of the

Government-General in Korea, and in 1922 reorganized it into the "Korean History Compilation Committee" and later into the "Korean History Compilation Association" in 1925. Thus, they began to revise Korean history in an organized way, under the direction of their successive governors-general and political inspectors-general in Korea.

How blatantly had the "Korean History Compilation Association" distorted the history of our country, as the Japanese imperialist-patronized organ, can be imagined only by the list of names of its members. The Japanese imperialists nominated traitors Ri Wan Yong, Kwon Jung Hyon and Pak Yong Hyo as "advisors" and placed Kuroida, Miura, Imanishi and other Japanese ill-famed masters in the fabrication of history, in the top posts and selected 20 bourgeois reactionary historians of Japan as well as 6 Korean historians, as specialists.

The reactionary bourgeois historians employed in the "Korean History Compilation Association" devoted all their energies to distorting and rewriting Tangun and the ancient history of Korea. In the compilation of Korean history they laid down as the "basic principle" the exclusion of historical data or myths which were "incorrect" in the year of occurrence, and compiling in chronological order only the "correct" historical data, which could answer what was done by whom, and when and where.

Thus, in the compilation of "Korean history" the wicked Japanese imperialists deleted the history of "Tangun's Korea" under the pretext that it lacked exact materials; Imanishi and other writers of false history tried to prove that Tangun did not live in reality, that he was no more than a mythical being invented by the people in the latter days, therefore, he should never be included in Korean history.

The Japanese imperialists mercilessly removed anyone who

was opposed to the deletion of Tangun, even if a Japanese, from the “Korean History Compilation Association” .

The “Korean History Compilation Association,” the Japanese imperialists’ aggressive organ for the compilation of falsified history, published the voluminous Korean history 30-odd volumes in Japanese, during a period of ten or more years. But there was not a word about the history of ancient Korea, which had thrived for nearly 3,000 years.

Meanwhile, they spread a deceptive theory on the “Tangun myth” , telling the lie that Tangun was not a real being but a fictitious myth. Many Japanese “authorities on history” were involved in this plot in different ages; their so-called theory was that the “Tangun myth” did not originate from the ancient period but first appeared in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* by Il Yon, a Buddhist monk, and *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* by Ri Sung Hyu at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Afterwards, while this mythical tale of the above two books was being quoted by many other history books, its content was further enriched. They also asserted that the *Weishu*, from which Tangun’ s legend was borrowed, and the *Ancient Records*, that dealt with the “Tangun myth” , could not be found at the present moment and were, therefore, unbelievable.

The advocates of this theory alleged that the contents of the Tangun legends strongly savoured of Buddhism and Taoism; this is further evidence that the Buddhist monk Il Yon had made up a fantastic legend with phrases borrowed from Buddhist and Taoist scriptures.

It is true that, regarding the historical records about Tangun’ s Korea, a series of history books differ slightly in some details. But the main plot is consistent. This reflects that this myth was not an invention made in the latter years but dated far back into the past in its origin. And their

assertion that there is no *Weishu* or *Ancient Records* mentioned in *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* only exposes their poor knowledge of archival literature. *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* precisely cited from the *Ancient Records* and the *Ancient Records on Tangun* did not name the nonexistent literature.

In fact, the first history book of the ones that had survived, carrying records about Tangun, was not *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* published late in the 13<sup>th</sup> century but *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*, which preceded the former by one and a half century. *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* noted that, "Originally, Pyongyang is the site of the capital of Saint Wanggom." This proves that Pyongyang is the place where Tangun had built his capital in the past. This gives the lie to the so-called theory of the Japanese reactionary historians that the "Tangun myth" was made up at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Varied groundless explanations were given about Tangun by Japanese reactionary historians. Eventually they went to the length of confining the "Tangun myth" to the territorial regions of Koguryo: they said, the myth belongs to the Tungus tribe of Koguryo, hence, it has nothing to do with the people of Samhan in the south who were the ancestors of the present Korean nation. And the mode of life of the tribes of Samhan was the same with that of the Japanese race.

Their aim was to cross out Tangun's Korea and, simultaneously they had another aim more sinister than the former one.

Though thoroughly ridiculous, they tried to sever Koguryo, a powerful state, from the history of our nation and annex it to the history of the Tungus and link the history of Samhan with the Japanese race to preach the "singleness of Japan and Korea".

To provide legal grounds for their absurd allegations, they

had recourse to historical science, archaeology, mythology, ethnology, anthropology, linguistics, etc. Sober-minded people, without any detailed accounts, will be able to discern what a foolish attempt this was.

Our nation is not a conglomeration of immigrants, as they depicted, but a homogeneous nation of one and the same blood, who had originated from one primogenitor, Tangun, and has created and developed the same history and culture within the boundary of the same territory, using the same language.

In order to obliterate Tangun from the minds of our people, the Japanese imperialists prevented our students from studying Tangun and prohibited our people's worship of him.

How ruthlessly had the Japanese aggressors prohibited teaching our

Korean students about Tangun can be seen through an occurrence at the village schoolhouse where I studied in the 1910s.

One day two Japanese MPs showed up at our village schoolhouse.

At the moment the old teacher, as though forewarned, suddenly hid about two of the books the children were reading, and then kept his countenance.

The Japanese MPs, who rushed into the classroom, examined the books there, hurling them up into the air, one after another. It seemed that those were not the ones they were looking for. They behaved rudely in front of the old teacher, then barked at him, asking why he hadn't other kinds of books, and left.

The children were very angry and gave vent to it. After that occasion, the teacher said that the Japanese had been looking for the *Tongmongsonsup*, and he had hid that book.

This book had been written by a Korean scholar in the old times; after finishing the course of *Chonja* (the *Thousand*



*Character Text*), the children had to study this book. It was a short history of Korea which began with the following words:

“In the initial period no king existed in our country. A God-man descended from the heavens onto the Thaebaek Mountains, and the people of the country held him in esteem as the king. That time coincided with the rule of Emperor Yao of China in the west, and the country was called Korea (Joson), and he was Tangun himself.”

At the time the book *Somithonggam*, which gave a short survey of the history of a foreign country, was also among the readers used at the village schoolhouse but it was not listed as a banned book by the Japanese imperialists.

In short, the Japanese imperialists intended to extinguish all books of Korean history, which began from Tangun, and at the same time to wipe out even the conception of Tangun from the memory of Korean children.

In October 1916 the Japanese imperialists forcibly prohibited the head and the believers of the Taejong Religion from holding an ancestor-memorial service to worship Tangun at the Samsong Temple, the temple of Tangunism in Mt. Kuwol, and closed the Samsong Temple. Thus, they brutally banned our people from holding various events in honour of Tangun.

Owing to these manoeuvres of the Japanese imperialists to obliterate Tangun, the traditional conception of Tangun as a real person and the father of our nation, gradually diminished among our people and the view that he was a mythical and a fictitious being began to prevail in the world.

This is our bitter lesson—that if the country is ruined, the nation will even lose its ancestor.

However, thanks to the wise leadership of our great leader, a scientific elucidation was lately given to the fact that Tangun really existed in our history and was the founder of ancient Korea. As a result, our country's boast was

demonstrated far and wide in the world, as a state of advanced civilization in the East, a country with a long history and brilliant culture of five thousand years and as a homogeneous nation which had originated from Tangun. This further enhanced the national pride and honour of our people as the posterity of Tangun.

## 12. Ours Is a Sagacious Nation Having Its Own National Characters from the Period of Ancient Korea

Candidate Academician, Professor &  
Doctor **Ryu Ryol**, Researcher,  
Institute of Linguistics, Academy  
of Social Sciences

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

“The Korean people is a talented, sagacious and civilized people who also developed brilliant traditions in science and culture.

“Our forefathers in ancient times created a resplendent culture which contributed to the flowering of the civilization of the East.” (Kim Il Sung, *Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. 1, p. 209.)

Our people have developed science and culture through their own language, both oral and written, from the period of ancient Korea.

The *Hunminjongum*, that splendid alphabet of our people, has its origin in our characters which were used from the days of ancient Korea that was founded by Tangun.

Many ancient records of our country refer to the fact that some sort of Korean letters had existed before the invention of the *Hunminjongum*.

Sin Kyong Jun of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a descendant of Sin Suk

Ju, who played a leading role in the creation of the *Hunminjongum*, wrote in the *Rhymed Annotation* of *Hunminjongum* that from olden times letters were used among our people but they were not many in number and no set rule existed in writing them, so that it was impossible to record the oral words of our people on the whole. But they were used freely among people of a limited circle.

An old record says that some kind of letters, which differed from Chinese characters, were used in Koryo and Thamra (Jeju Island).

There is a story in the *Comments on Poems*, written by the noted Silhak scholar Ri Tok Mu, that early in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when Jang Yu, the government official in charge of land management, visited Changjiang or the southern area of China, he discovered that the Chinese found it hard to understand the letters inscribed at the bottom of the *sul*, a musical instrument, which had somehow come there from Koryo. He, therefore, translated the letters into the Chinese. This proves that Korean letters had existed in the period of Koryo, too.

*The Works of Yon Am* by Pak Ji Won, the *History of the State in the East* by Han Chi Yun, and *Mengxibitan* by Shen Kuo, the ancient book of China, have records about the use of unique Korean letters, unlike the Chinese characters, in Thamra. This is an indication that our Korean letters were used in the Jeju Island. What attracts our particular attention here is the expressions Choe Man Ri, assistant director of the Jiphyonjon when the *Hunminjongum* was in the making, used in his appeal to King Sejong against the creation of the *Hunminjongum*: "Some insist that 'the Korean scripts' are characters which were in use previously, they are not newly devised scripts..." or "Although 'Korean scripts existed in the preceding dynasty (Koryo)' ... should we use them as they did?" This proves that the Korean alphabets, the *Hunminjongum*, were invented on the basis of former Korean letters, they were not

devised from the air, and that such Korean scripts existed in the period of Koryo before the appearance of the *Hunminjongum*.

These historical records note that the *Hunminjongum* was preceded in our country by the use of our unique scripts, differing from the Chinese characters.

Then, what kind of scripts were in use before the invention of the *Hunminjongum* in our country?

The *Records of the Three Saints*, the banned book from the latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, wrote: "In the period of Tangun's reign the scripts called *Sinjon* (*Sinjionja* or *Sinji*) had existed." And the *History of Thaebaek* or *Annals of Thaebaek*, written by Ri Maek, a scholar active in the early period of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, pointed to the "existence of scripts called *Sinjionso* (*Sinjionja* or *Sinji* letters) in the years of Tangun", and to their wide use in the areas of Mt. Thaebaek, Heilong River, Chonggu (Korea) and Kuryo.

According to the *Records of Pyongyang*, which were compiled at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an old stele stood at the Pomsu Bridge of Pyongyang and the inscription there was neither the Korean (*Hunminjongum*) nor the Sanscrit of India nor the seal-type Chinese characters. Some said that it was written by Sin Ji in the period of Tangun, but that it had disappeared after a lapse of some years.

In his book *Kyuwonsahwa*, Puk Ae of the 17<sup>th</sup> century wrote that in the period of Tangun, Sin Ji first created the letters patterned after the deer's footprints he had found while hunting. It was by hearsay that rocks inscribed with letters in the years that preceded the Jin were discovered in the areas of Six Jins, but people failed to catch their meaning since they were neither Sanscrit nor seal-type Chinese characters. The question arises whether they were the old book scripts invented by Sin Ji.

The explanatory notes of the *Taebyonsol* quoted in the

*History of Thaebaek*, written by Ri Maek, said: “A rock inscribed with *Sinsi* characters in the past lies in the valley of Ryangha-ri, Namhae Prefecture and it claimed that while out hunting Hwanung had performed a sacrificial rite for three gods. The inscription of the rock is known as the ‘scripts of Sobul’ which originally denotes the letters of ancient Korea.”

The above-mentioned records say that ancient Korea already had *Sinji* scripts and that they were used across the territory of ancient Korea, including the areas from Six Jins in the northern tip to the southern end of the Korean peninsula and the vast land north of the Amnok and Tuman Rivers.

As for *Sinji*, sometimes *Sinsi*, its original meaning was “giant man”. At first it was the name for the king and afterwards for a high official position and the dominator or the ruler. So the *Sinji* scripts can be construed as the “letters of the king, dominator or ruler” .

What do the *Sinji* scripts look like? Given below are the 16 *Sinji* scripts recorded in the *Reference Book on Nyongbyon* (Fig. 8.).

Judging from the small number of 16 scripts, it can be surmised that they were not the complete alphabet of the *Sinji* letters.

They were not ideographic but phonogrammic and syllabic letters from the viewpoint of morphological construction.

As for the shape of the *Sinji* letters, some are formed out of two letters. This represents certain features of morphological construction.

However, the only 16 letters given in the *Reference Book on Nyongbyon* do not give a clear idea about the *Sinji* letters—how many alphabets there were in all, their system and order, the sound value of each letter and the rules in its use, etc. This requires acquisition of more materials and a comprehensive in-depth study of them.

What is clear, however, is that the *Sinji* letters were the scripts used by our nation from the period of Tangun' s Korea.

First, as introduced above, the *Records of the Three Saints, History of Thaebaek, Kyuwonsahwa, Records of Pyongyang, Reference Book on Nyongbyon,* and other ancient documents, were unanimous on the point that the *Sinji* letters existed in Tangun' s Korea—ancient Korea.

The earthenware discovered in the remains of ancient Korea bore the same or similar scripts as the *Sinji* letters.

The earthenware that appeared in Sinam-ri, Ryongchon County, North Phyongan Province, had two letters similar to the *Sinji* letters (Fig. 9) and the earthenware found

in an old tomb of ancient Korea, situated in Beilanzi, Luda City, Liaoning Province, China, had two letters similar to this (Fig. 10.).



Fig. 8. *Sinji* letters

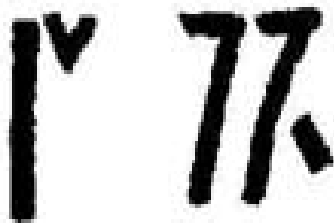


Fig. 9. Letters on a fragment of earthenware discovered in Sinam-ri



Fig. 10. Letters on a fragment of earthenware discovered in Paekramja

The fact that the symbols that resemble the *Sinji* scripts in the *Reference Book on Nyongbyon* are marked on the earthenware of ancient Korea is clear evidence that *Sinji* letters were in use in ancient Korean society; this is of particular significance since it attests to the fact that more *Sinji* alphabets existed besides the 16 scripts given in the *Reference Book on Nyongbyon*.

Secondly, they were unique in shape, quite different from the letters of neighbouring countries; for example, the ideographic Chinese characters, the Sanscrit of India, Mongolic letters or syllabic *kana* of Japan.

On the other hand, from the beginning the *Sinji* letters appeared as our native letters. We can be assured of this by the fact that the original, essential words connected with the writing practice of our people, such as “*kul* (letter)”, “*put* (brush)” and “*ssuda* (write)” are all purely native words.

Another important question which we should clarify in the study of the purely native *Sinji* letters of ancient Korea is: what are the *Wangmun* (king's letters) and the *Samhwangnaemun* scripts which were placed for discussion piecemeal and how were they related with *Sinji* letters?

As for the “*Wangmun* scripts”, the *Ryumunhwabo* (the genealogical table of a clan with the family name of Ryu) put it as follows: “*Wangmun* wrote letters and they resembled square seal-type characters or *Pujok* (a superstitious amulet of a strange-shaped symbol, written with red ink, that is said to expel the demon and ward off disasters)”. Here *Wangmun* is described as a person of the Puyo state in the period of ancient Korea. Actually, however, *Wangmun* is not the name of any individual person; it has the meaning of the “king's letters”, “the letters of dominator and ruler”, namely, the “*Sinji* letters”. The expression that “they looked like square seal-type characters or *Pujok* in shape” meant that *Sinji*



scripts had nothing to do with Chinese seal-type characters nor the Sanscrit of India. This is worthy of greater attention since the *Ryumunhwabo* was a time-worn genealogical table book of the clan with the family name of “Ryu” in the former Munhwa Prefecture, the birthplace of the first ancestor of the clan, in the vicinity of Mt. Kuwol of South Hwanghae Province which had close connections with Tangun.

*Samhwangnaemun* has derived from the *Bopuzi*, the collection of essays by Ge Hong of Jin, China. It is said in the book: The Emperor Huang (China’s legendary emperor) went East and reached Tongu (Korea) and when travelling past Mt. Phung (Mt. Taephung)—which meant Mt. Paeksan or Mt. Thaebaek—met the Master Jabu and received the *Samhwangnaemun* from him. Here *Samhwangnaemun*, like the *Wangmun* letters, meant “the letters of the king, ruler or dominator”, namely the *Sinji* letters.

These records are of great importance as evidence of the fact that the *Sinji* letters were used in the period of ancient Korea as the native letters of the homogeneous nation and were widely known abroad.

What connections exist between the *Sinju* letters and the *Hunminjongum*, the Korean alphabets invented in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century?

In the provision about December of the 25<sup>th</sup> year of the *Chronicles of King Sejoin*, it is pointed out: “This month the king invented 28 Korean letters, and they are patterned after the square seal-type letters of the past.” In the introduction given to the explanatory notes of *Hunminjongum*, Jong Rin Ji, the then head of the Jiphyonjon, wrote that the “Letters were shaped like the square characters of the past”. Here the “square letters of the past” are nothing but the “*Sinju* letters” because the above old records named the “*Sinji* letters” as “square *Sinji* scripts” or “*Sinji* seal-type

characters” , and a version of *Sinji* letters was in use until the *Hunminjongum* came into being.

From the passage that they were “patterned after the square seal-type characters of the past” , some may doubt that perhaps they meant Chinese seal-type characters. The makers of the *Hunminjongum* said: “The sound of the Korean words differs from the Chinese, so it is impossible to convey it by means of any Chinese characters. “Jong Rin Ji remarked that writing Korean words with Chinese characters was the same as if trying to drive “square handle into a round hole” . This suffices to negate the view on any adoption from the Chinese seal-type characters.

Data exist on the evolution and succession of the *Sinji* letter to the *Hunminjongum*.

Here the records on the “*Karimdo* letter” carried in the *Old History of Tangun* by Tae Ya Bal of Palhae in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the *Reign of Tangun* of Ri Am of the 14<sup>th</sup> century are typical examples.

It was noted in these books that at the time of Karuk, the third king of ancient Korea 38 Korean scripts were created, and they were named *Karimdo*.

To everyone’ s surprise, they greatly resembled the *Hunminjongum*.

The 38 *Karimbo* letters are as follows: (Fig. 11.)



Fig. 11. *Karimdo* letters

All this is convincing proof that the *Sinji* letters of the initial stage were evolved into the *Hunminjongum* by way of the *Karimdo* scripts, polished in the course of their development.

In shedding light on the genealogy of succession from the *Sinji* to the *Karimdo* letters and to the *Hunminjongum*, it is important to clarify the connections between the *Karimdo* letters and the “*Jindai (Abiru)* letters” of Japan.

The “*Abiru* letter”—which is said to have been used in the Tswushima Island from the remote past—was a derivative from the *Karimdo* letters.

In an old Japanese book *Explanatory Notes on Korean Scripts*, Gyochi, its author, wrote about the *Hunminjongum* (Korean scripts): “There were two styles, antique and modern. The former was used in the early years of Samhan (in the last years of ancient Korea) and the latter appeared at the time of King Sejong of the Ri dynasty as a revised version of the antique-style letter” (Fig. 12). At present the letters of the antique style do not exist and only the letters of the modern style are in use in the country. The antique letters are the *Hijin* style now in use in Japan. The *Hijin* letter means the scripts of the Koreans; sometimes they are called *Jindai* scripts in Japan.

Here the letters of ancient shape refer to the *Karimdo*

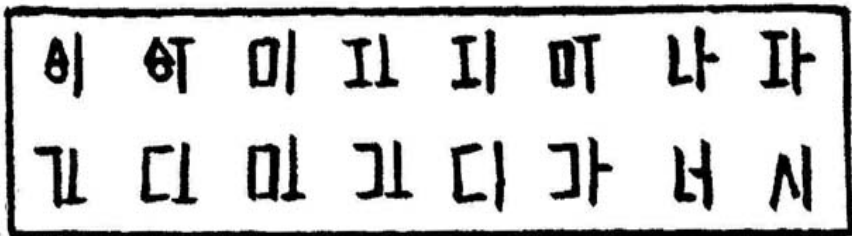


Fig. 12. *Abiru* letters

scripts, that is, the *Hijin* letters, *Abiru* scripts or *Jindai* letters.

The above records note that at the beginning of ancient Korea *Sinji* scripts were evolved into *Karimdo* letters through diverse courses which changed into the “antique style (*Hijin* style)” of the *Hunminjongum* early in the age of the Samhan consonant with the closing years of ancient Korea and saw further perfection and succession into the *Hunminjongum* (modern style), via ceaseless changes and improvement.

The fact that our ancestors used their purely native scripts from the period of ancient Korea is of great pride to our nation and has important meaning in the making of a profound study of the history of ancient Korea, to say nothing of the history of the Korean letters and their development.

## 13. Tangun and the Taejong Religion

Doctor and Professor **Choe Thae Jin**,  
Councilor, Institute for the Reunification  
of the Fatherland

Our ancestors worshipped Tangun and held memorial services everywhere in his honor, regarding him as the founder of Korea, the first state in the history of our nation, and as the saint who taught the people how to engage in such occupations as procuring food, clothing and housing, and educated them in morality and etiquette.

However, the Japanese imperialists, who occupied Korea, pursued their colonial policy of curbing the national pride and self-respect and the growth of an anti-Japanese nationalist idea among the Korean people, while infusing them with national inferiority and nihilism. To this end, they rewrote the 5,000-year long history of our country, shortening its length by half in an attempt to make it equal with the birth of their own country, Japan, which was 2,500 years old at most, and negated the very existence of Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea. This gave rise to the question among some people of whether Tangun really existed or if he was just a fictitious figure.

Recently, scholars of the Academy of Social Sciences excavated the Tomb of Tangun and found his bones as well as valuable relics, thus establishing the fact that Tangun was a real person.

Our ancestors' worship of Tangun is proved by the existence of the Taejong Religion (Tangunism).

The specific feature of the Taejong Religion is its local character, a religion born of our nation, not an alien religion; a religion worshipping Tangun, the founder of our nation, while other religions adored the gods of other countries. This is a religion full of love for our nation, which found the origin of our nation and its homogeneity in the existence of Tangun.

The Taejong Religion (Tangunism) appeared in 1909 as an eruption of the spirit of our people's national independence against the aggression of Japanese imperialism.

The founder of the Taejong Religion was Ra Chol; he was an indomitable nationalist and anti-Japanese patriot.

Ra Chol was born into a family of a Confucian scholar in Posong County, South Jolla Province, in 1863. He had studied the Chinese classics from childhood, and passed the state examinations at the age of 29, and served as an official in the government of the Ri dynasty. In those days the Japanese imperialists, who provoked the Russo-Japanese War, ran wild to occupy Korea, while forcing the Korean government to sign the "Korea-Japan protocol".

Unable to endure the aggressive manoeuvrings of Japanese imperialism and the subservience and servility of the pro-Japanese traitors to the nation, Ra Chol resigned his official post in May 1905 and organized the "Yusin Association" with patriots opposing the Japanese, and led the anti-Japanese national salvation movement.

When Russia and Japan were carrying on peace negotiations in Portsmouth to end the Russo-Japanese War, Ra Chol went to Japan to find out what the fate of the Korean issue at the negotiations was. During his stay in Tokyo he addressed a letter to Katsura, the Prime Minister of Japan, demanding that he guarantee the independence of Korea.

Around this time it was reported by Tokyo dailies that Ito Hirobumi would be dispatched to Korea to deprive Korea of the right to diplomatic activity. Upset and resentful at this news, Ra Chol demanded in his letter to Ito Hirobumi that he make Korea independent, after giving up their reckless scheme of aggression. Receiving no response from Ito Hirobumi, he lodged the same protest to Mutsuhito, the Japanese Emperor. Mutsuhito, too, was silent. Burning with patriotic sentiment and indignation, he sat in front of the Imperial Palace for three days on a hunger strike.

On the other hand, Ra Chol cabled to Pak Je Sun, the Foreign Minister of the Korean Government, to the effect that "You must not agree to the treaty, even if you are beheaded" hoping in advance to check the country-selling acts of the pro-Japanese traitors.

Nevertheless, Ito Hirobumi forged the "Ulsa (1905) Treaty" in conspiracy with the Ulsa five traitors. Ra Chol thought this an intolerable disgrace to our nation and initiated the struggle to kill the Ulsa five traitors with the weapons he had procured secretly in Japan. He organized this struggle three times but all ended in failure, owing to a series of reasons. In July 1907, together with 27 colleagues, he was exiled to a distant island, Ji Island, on the charge that he had fought against the Japanese imperialists and traitors to the nation.

Back from exile, Ra Chol reasoned that one of the major causes of national ruin lay in the fact that our people, obsessed by flunkeyism, had forgotten their father and worshipped the idols of other people, such as Confucius and Mencius; in other words, they failed to fight in unity against outside forces, and were forgetting the founder and father of the nation and not holding him in high esteem. He concluded that it was necessary to found a new religion dedicated to Tangun in order to mend matters.

Initiating the Taejong Religion he paid attention to the fact that the Tangun religion had previously existed as the national religion in our country. Formerly, the Tangun religion was called the “Hanol (one-spirit) religion” . The “Hanol religion” was called the “Taechon religion” in Puyo, the “Jinjong religion” in Koguryo, the “Wanggom religion” in Koryo and “Tangun religion” in the Ri dynasty and the “Jusin” or “Chonsin” religion in the Jiandao area of China. The Tangun religion varied in name but differed little in the minds and religion of the people worshipping Tangun.

Attaching importance to such a traditional worship for Tangun, Ra Chol and dozens of his colleagues, who were out in the movement for founding the Taejong Religion, proclaimed the origin of the Taejong Religion in the Chiun Pavilion in Jedong, Seoul on January 15 (in the lunar calendar), 1909. They named the birthday of the Taejong Religion as the “Day of Junggwang” in honour of the baptism of the Tangun religion as the Taejong Religion. The Taejong Religion implied a religion worshipping Tangun, a great saint.

Ra Chol, the Father of the Taejong Religion, revisited Tokyo in June 1910, braving many difficulties. At the time the Japanese imperialists were trying hard to fabricate the “Korea-Japan annexation treaty” . There he met Toyama Mitsuru and Okamoto Ryunosuke, men in opposition, and bitterly condemned the Japanese imperialists in their plot to hammer out the “Korea-Japan annexation” . But they did not listen to his appeal, while stage-managing the “Korea-Japan annexation” behind the scenes.

In 1916 Ra Chol, who was subjected to surveillance and persecution by Japanese imperialism, went to the Samsong Temple, a religious temple built in honour of Tangun in Mt. Kuwol, and committed suicide there, leaving a will in which he deeply lamented and denounced the cruel tyrannical rule of the



Japanese imperialists. He appealed to his disciples to strive for further propagation of the Taejong Religion and to worship Tangun unwaveringly, and to unite their strength in the unyielding struggle against the Japanese imperialists.

The Taejong Religion revered Tangun, hailing him as a person who really existed, since the believers of the Taejong Religion recognized Tangun as the founder of the first state in our country in accordance with the traditional view handed down from our forefathers.

Our ancestors, who had a strong consciousness of national independence from the past, glorified and idolized Tangun, the founder of our country, from the period of ancient Korea. This is proved by the fact that the ancient Korean people had splendidly built, and carefully conserved, the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong, Pyongyang. Following the ancient Korean people's example, the people of Koguryo took good care of the Tomb of Tangun as well as the Tomb of King Tongmyong, the founder of Koguryo, and admired Tangun. The Koryo people maintained this tradition and hailed Tangun as the founder of Korea. In the period of the Ri dynasty our ancestors continued their worship for Tangun as the first king of the national state. But some influential officials, deeply immersed in Confucianism and flunkeyism, created the practice of respecting other people's ancestors, while despising our own forefathers. This led to impairing Tangun's prestige to some extent.

Ra Chol, the Father of the Taejong Religion, described the situation in the closing days of the Ri dynasty in the following words: "The collapse of the country and the ruin of the nation." And he attributed this to a neglect of Tangun.

He said: "The Confucian scholars of the Ri dynasty, while recording the sacred historical feats of Tangun, did not study his noble instructions, but delved in reciting the words of

Confucius, Mencius, Changtseu and Zhutseu... Far from respecting Tangun, who defended their home, they looked up to other people's ancestors, paid homage to other people's god and followed other people's religion. Isn't this an act that conflicts with reason and violates the universal law?"

Scathingly deploring the mania of flunkeyism and the bad things rising from it, he emphasized the need to defend and inherit the soul of the Korean nation and the traditional love for the country and nation, and thereby achieve national independence. To this end the restoration of Tangun was inevitable, he added.

After the foundation of the Taejong Religion, he acquired the book *Samilsingo*, a record of instructions given by Tangun, and made it the main sutra of the Taejong Religion.

The *Samilsingo* consists of five parts: "Instructions of Heaven", "Instructions of God", "Instructions of the Heaven Palace", "Instructions of the World" and "Instructions of the Truth".

This is a collection of Tangun's teachings for the people. His instructions are summarized as follows: "One should be at home with the truth and strive for merits and then he or she would enjoy everlasting happiness in the embrace of the Hanol (one-soul)."

A deep study of *Samilsingo* was made by Ulji Mun Dok and Yon Kae So Mun, the patriotic generals of Koguryo at the time when the consciousness of national independence was high in the history of our nation, and continued in the days of Palhae and Koryo.

In the period of the Ri dynasty, although the Confucian flunkeyists paid no heed to it, it was constantly studied by ordinary scholars of national conscience and was finally restored to life as the main scriptures of the Taejong Religion.

Ra Chol attached great importance to the scriptures in the

foundation of the Taejong Religion, to the *Eight Principles of the Tangun Religion*, which had been handed down in our country from the past, and added them to the doctrine of the Taejong Religion. It is said that the *Eight Principles of the Tangun Religion* are the scriptures which had existed from the days of ancient Korea as the first sutra of the Tangun religion, and which in the period of Koguryo the renowned Premier Ul Pha So obtained after giving prayers in Mt. Paeun. Ul Pha So is said to have striven to embody the *Eight Principles of the Tangun Religion* in politics, regarding it as his political ideal.

The basic contents of the *Eight Principles of the Tangun Religion* are comprised of sincerity, trust, love, salvation, misfortune, happiness, reward and action. This is one of the scriptures that gave detailed accounts of Tangun's political ideal and instructive ideas in the division of the eight principles.

After the proclamation of the birth of the Taejong Religion, Ra Chol recited the following verse:

*Dear, glorious Hangom,  
You've reigned this world for 4,000 years.  
The descendants of this country uphold you, Hangom,  
Your great enlightenment is so bright that  
It will never fade.  
Every home respects you,  
Happiness and comfort will be everlasting.*

This indicates that the believers of the Taejong Religion considered Tangun a person who existed in reality and respected him as the founder of our country.

Secondly, that the believers in religion revered Tangun, regarding him as a person who really existed finds expression

in the fact that they had faith in the idea of the “man useful to society”, Tangun’s principle of administration and enlightenment.

In the Part on Korea of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* it is pointed out that in order to provide the people with great interests, Tangun had presided over 360 kinds of occupations in human life through the administration of politics and their enlightenment. *The Ancient Records on Tangun* wrote that “Tangun Wanggom proclaimed the *Samilsingo* across the world and bade the people to be simple and pure-hearted through the holy administration of 366 days; his virtue was like the heaven and the earth and his brilliance was like the sun and the moon”. This is an instance which manifests that our forefathers believed in Tangun’s politics of the “man useful to society”.

Thus, admitting Tangun as a real person, who founded a state in our country, the Taejong Religion advocated in the political and moral ideals of Tangun and popularized them widely.

Immediately after the birth of the Taejong Religion, Ra Choi wrote the “Song of Tangun”, which went:

*Tangun, our heaven-sent ancestor,  
Descended on Thaebaek Mountains,  
Built a state and home  
For us, his posterity.  
Holy is the benevolence of the great founder,  
Mighty is the benevolence of the great king.*

*Overcoming all difficulties,  
They’ve reclaimed the wastelands  
Into good fields and beautiful housing sites,  
Where our descendants have grown.*

*We mustn' t forget,  
We mustn' t forget the mighty benevolence of  
the great king.*

*Brothers, sisters,  
The entire people of the Paedal nation,  
Our brothers and sisters,  
With sincerity and one mind,  
We will glorify,  
We will glorify the religion initiated by the great king.*

The contents of the “Song of Tangun” are an indication that the followers of the Tangun religion trusted his political ideas.

We can say that the idea of the “man useful to society” initiated by Tangun embodies love for man, the idea of mutual benefit and assistance, humanitarianism and love for peace—an idea more profound than the Confucian doctrine of loyalty and filial piety and human love, the Buddhist doctrine of mercy, or the Taoist doctrine of “disinterested man” .

This is an idea of our nation which has been constantly carried ahead among our nation from the period of ancient Korea.

Many believers of the Taejong Religion in south Korea today, advocating Tangun' s idea of the “man useful to society” , call for the reunification of our nation, the posterity of Tangun.

## 14. Old Ceremonies and Customs Connected with the Worship of Tangun

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Through clarifying that Tangun, the father of our nation, is not a mythical being but a person who existed in reality, the long history of our nation and its specific features as a progressive and civilized nation were brought to light. This has made it possible to systematize the 5,000-year long history of our nation in a Juche-orientated manner.

The Korean people, a homogeneous nation, who have lived on this land from the dawn of civilization, have established unique manners and customs throughout their lives.

There are many ceremonial conventions in the old customs created by our forefathers that are linked with Tangun, the founding father of our nation. In other words, a wide range of religious services and customs associated with Tangun had been established and widely propagated over a long period—from the primitive and the Middle Ages.

As for the person, the real man, who has accomplished such outstanding feats or contributions in the history of a nation, as well as ideological and cultural activities, there naturally will appear legendary tales of a mystic vein about him, and social functions to look back upon, to revere him.

The rituals and customs dedicated to the fathers of a religion or the founders of states, such as Sakyamuni of Buddhism, Muhammad of Mohammedanism, and Menes of ancient Egypt, lasted throughout the whole of the Middle Ages and continue to be held up to the present day, being deep-rooted in man's life. The continuation of these ceremonial functions for those with such great vitality can be explained by the fact that they were not fictitious persons, but people who existed in history and had once, in a definite historical moment, registered remarkable exploits or left indelible traces in the mental lives of their posterity or in the development of a nation or state.

The conventional ceremonials for Tangun, effective in the remote and Middle Ages, are a concrete example, showing his historical achievements and his actual existence as the founder of our first state, ancient Korea.

Firstly, it is a specific feature of the ceremonials for Tangun that they date back to the remote past of our history and were established as conventions through their wide propagation in varied forms. Secondly, they adopt a religious appearance superficially, mirroring the historical conditions of class society and the political and cultural level of the people at the time. Thirdly, they constitute the main contents of our nation's unique ceremonies and customs in the past.

What sort of ceremonials existed in connection with the worship of Tangun then?

Primarily, there is the tradition of holding memorial services in honour of Tangun.

Memorial services to worship Tangun were held in a grand manner by the feudal government of the Ri dynasty and amidst the social strata. There are accounts about Tangun's memorial services, in the historical records, including the *Royal Chronicles of the Ri Dynasty*, held in the Court, the Tangun

Temple of Pyongyang, the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong, the Samsong Temple in Mt. Kuwol and the Chamsong Altar of Mt. Mani of Kanghwa Island with an attendance of officials and the populace in the capital and provinces. In 1412 a memorial service was held in Pyongyang in Tangun's honour on the order of King Thaejong, and in 1429 the Temple of Tangun was erected in Pyongyang—it was renamed the Sungryong Hall in 1725—where regular ceremonials were conducted in memory of Tangun.

In 1460 King Sejo attended the memorial service to Tangun at the royal palace. At the Samsong Temple (Temple of Three Saints—Tanin, Tanung and Tangun), built in Mt. Kuwol during the Koryo dynasty's reign, grand full-dress memorial services were held, with nourishment, practically every spring and autumn or when drought had set in; this practice was continued up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of the memorial functions at the Samsong Temple, the incense and the written prayers were sent by the king, and the county magistrate or his proxy officiated on the occasion. Sometimes the king would dispatch his confidential subject for the duration of the functions. Meanwhile, solemn services to the memory of Tangun were held at the Tomb of Tangun, with a large attendance of people from all parts of the country in defiance of the vicious obstructive manoeuvres of the Japanese imperialists. All this demonstrates that the rituals for the worship of Tangun were held with all seriousness and the active participation of all the Koreans, from the king down to the commoners.

It is not difficult to guess that the memorial services for the worship of Tangun were in greater prevalence in the ancient period and in the years of the Three Kingdoms and Koryo, and that they began to decline from the period of the Ri dynasty.



The *Kyuwonsahwa*, published in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, wrote that generally speaking, such good manners as the one of holding services for Heaven to repay one's obligations, not forgetting that one's inception originated from Tangun and that Tangun held services for Heaven in October, by the lunar calendar, in subsequence to his tour of the country, and later this was fixed as a usage to be observed down through the generations.

Such expressions as services for Heaven can be interpreted as meaning that they held memorial functions in honor of ancestors of their tribes.

Essentially, the memorial services for Tangun had started as the worship for the father of the nation. The conception and act of worship for the nation's father, as well as the Nature cult, composed the basic substance of the ancient Korean people's religion and religious rituals. Since they highly eulogized and mythologized about Tangun, regarding him as the founder king who had built ancient Korea, the first civilized state, and had occupied a vast stretch of land for its territory, and had attained great results in its political, economic, military and cultural development, there appeared various ceremonial practices for the adoration of Tangun.

The Tangun ancestor-memorial services began with his death; this practice has been passed on to modern times. Therefore, the memorial services for Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea, were a ceremonial practice held in the earliest period of class society in our country.

Memorial services for Tangun were held not only as state or social events but also in the homes of individual families.

The old usage existed that in October every year—following the completion of the harvest in autumn—the people prepared Korean cakes with rice from the year's harvest and held memorial services for the soul of Tangun who, they believed,

was in Heaven. In Phyongan and other provinces the people prepared Korean cakes and brewed wine early in October, with the cereals they had reaped in the new year, and the people of whole families or whole villages held memorial services for Tangun with great ceremony. In some areas the people made the Korean cake with rice of the year's harvest and put it on the Tangun altar, which was made of straw or pine tree, put up in a corner of the courtyard for the consolation of Tangun's soul and for the celebration of the bumper crops. In some areas the inhabitants did not butcher any domestic animals except the one to be offered for memorial services, nor pressed anyone for the payment of a debt during the period before and after them.

Although a certain difference existed in the customs and the scope of memorial services according to a locality, the site of the memorial service was chosen inside or outside the house or at a definite spot of the village, which they thought to be a holy and clean spot, and the table of the memorial service was covered with clean paper, or its substitute, on which were placed fruit, meat, vegetables and wine. It was customary that only the rice of the year's harvest was used to make the Korean cake and only the domestic animal the master had bred from its birth was killed as an offering for the memorial services.

The memorial services were, primarily, a course of ablutions and devotions; the former meant that from the time two or three days prior to the holding of the services one purifies oneself and does not mix with negative things and stays away from a stranger or any ailing person; the latter meant that one prays to Tangun for the attainment of one's desire, bowing low, time and again, with one's heart full of consolation and respect for him.

If you were to discard these memorial functions of their

religious and mystical veil as well as the formalities and ostentations, then you would notice our people who are polite, their virtues and desires respecting Tangun, the father of our nation, not forgetting him, and who strive for the realization of the ideal of the "man useful to society", an ideal greatly beneficial to human beings, and a pride worthy of the posterity of Tangun.

These services varied in form: the memorial service of the village, the memorial service held in the mountains with juniper trees, the memorial service for Tangun, the memorial service in which the table was laden with food, etc. Such a practice was widespread also in Seoul and all the parts of the country.

The people prayed for many things during these popular worship services for Tangun.

As for the contents of the prayers—they prayed to Tangun for good crops and a rich harvest, for happiness for the home, the family, the children, the liquidation of all evils and disasters, and for the smooth progress of all affairs in the village and for their happy satisfactory conclusion. Such prayers are not an offspring of class society in a stage of its development, but a reflection of the vital questions that had risen in their lives already at the beginning of class society. This indicates that not only the forms but also the contents of the prayers date back to the very remote past.

The memorial services for Tangun were conducted from an early period not only at home but also among the Koreans who were forced to live in a foreign land for different reasons. One instance of this is the memorial services for Tangun that were held by Korean ceramists, taken to Japan by the Japanese aggressors during the Imjin Patriotic War (1592-1598), and their descendants.

During the Imjin Patriotic War the Japanese *samurais*, such as Nabeshima, Shimazu, Mori, Kurota, Hosokawa, Matsura

and Kato, who invaded our country, forcibly dragged away a large number of Korean ceramists to their fiefs for the manufacture of ceramics. Today the world has widely recognized Japanese ceramics, such as the Arita, Satsuma, Hagi, Takatori, Akano and Migawachi ware which are a product of these people's painstaking efforts and the blood-stained experience of ceramic engineering.

The Koreans, who were taken to Japan in those days, maintained the soul of our nation in their lives, worshipping Tangun.

A village shrine called Kyokusanku, or Oksangung (Gem Mountain Palace), stands in Hioki District, Kagoshima Prefecture, Kyushu, Japan. This shrine was built by about 80 male and female Korean ceramists of 22 different family names whom Satsuma Lord Shimazu had taken away from the Namwon, Ungchon, Changwon, Kimhae and other areas of Korea. In order to keep their native homes and Tangun alive in their minds, they erected the shrine amidst their strivings to manufacture the excellent earthenware which became the ancestor of the Satsuma ware, a special product of Japan. In Kyokusanku they revered Tangun and held the ceremony as they had done in their native home, though suffering from ill treatment and discrimination for nearly 400 years.

Around 1905 the Japanese imperialists intensified their colonial policy towards Korea and, on the pretext that there must be only one shrine in a village, prohibited the Koreans from adoring Tangun, the Korean god-man, and forcing the enactment of memorial services for the Japanese god upon them. Hence, a formal ceremony was conducted for the Japanese god in the daytime, while the heartfelt one for "Tangun, the founder of the state, Korea", was held in the evening. *The History of Kyokusanku*, written in 1867, pointed out that the Kyokusanku was a shrine built in memory of

Tangun, the founder of Korea, and that the Korean ceramists erected a shrine in Mt. Ok, Pyongyang, and paid homage to it.

Food and drink, such as wine, Korean rice-cake, wild greens, rice, salt were used for the memorial services and the rice cake was the Koryo (Korean) rice-cake-steamed rice cake—this practice is carried out to this day. The memorial services were held on September 15, previously on the harvest moon festival on the 15th of August, by the lunar calendar. In the memorial ceremony for Tangun, held in the Kyokusanku, Korean-made swords and bells, big and small tabors and other musical instruments, were used. These functions were held solemnly upto about 1903, with the attendants wearing the Korean robes made for the occasion. The memorial services for Tangun in the Kyokusanku was a continuation of the conventional ceremony they had performed in their native parts to revere Tangun as the father of our nation.

Particularly noteworthy in the conventional rituals for Tangun was the active participation in the incense burning ceremony at the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong of the members of the Korean National Association under the guidance of Kim Hyong Jik, the outstanding leader of the anti-Japanese national-liberation struggle in our country. This was a link in the work of further intensifying the anti-Japanese struggle by promoting the patriotic consciousness of the people to protect the father of Korea against the Japanese imperialists' plot for obliteration of Tangun.

Such things as wood spirit, the *puru* jar and the *samsin* bag were the religious practices linked with the worship of Tangun.

Previously, the religious practice of tree worship had existed. This totem existed before the appearance of Tangun, but became more popular in relation to him and was fixed into a religious custom. To be more concrete, Hwanung had

descended on the place under the holy *sindan* tree and Tangun's mother prayed for a son under the *pakdal* tree; this was a furtherance of the religious practice of the Koreans linked with wood spirit.

It was an old religion in our country that the god stays with large and old trees and queer-looking trees; they were named the Songhwang, Sansin, Tangsan, Pugun, Taegam or Tongsin tree. The women hung copper or cloth and paper ribbons on its trunk or branches and prayed for a son or daughter. The village people considered the tree holy and felling it would cause disease or death, bring about the collapse of houses or invite disaster upon the village. As of 1918 1,108 trees of this sort existed. People prayed to the holy trees for a cure of sickness, for an easy delivery, a son, a bumper harvest, and for bliss. Such religious practices, further enriched by worship for the holy *sindan* and *pakdal* trees mentioned in the Tangun legend, merged into a folk custom with the appearance of Tangun.

In addition to the tree worship, the religious practices about the *puru* jar and the *samsin* bag were passed on among the people.

The people observed the religious practice of an earthen floor being laid down in a clear place by a fence and a clay jar full of rice being put on it, covered with straw. The earthen floor with the clay jar filled with rice was called *puru*, which was the name of the person who is said to be Tangun's eldest son. This is also an old usage that sprang up out of the worship for Tangun. Every house had a "samsin bag"; this was a paper bag that people filled with rice and hung on a peg made out of a *pakdal* tree which was nailed onto the wall of the main building of a house. In October every year women cleansed their hands and steamed and pounded the rice of the New Year's harvest into the

Korean rice-cake and offered it to Tangun. The old records of the 17<sup>th</sup> century *Kyuwonsahwa*, described the *puru* jar and the *samsin* bag as an old convention that had started from the period of Tangun. We can presume from this that these practices have a very long history and that the worship for Tangun was diverse in form and was popularized widely among our people.

Besides, other varied practices were conducted for Tangun.

The truth that Tangun existed in our history is proved by the fact that colorful functions and practices associated with Tangun were our nation's embryonic forms of ceremony. The practices for the worship of Heaven and Tangun, religious functions for the soul of Tangun, the tree worship, the *puru* jar and the *samsin* bag were closely associated with the adoration for the founder of the first state in their appearance and evolution throughout history. In dealing with the practices and customs linked with Tangun, correct conceptions should be made about the following two questions.

One point is that a ceremonial practice for a "person" not existing in reality does exist. In This case it was a practice, which took place among limited circles of people for a definite period of history, a practice basically for the fantastic "person" in the world of shamanism, such as exorcism and witchery.

The ceremonial practices for Tangun have nothing to do with the practice for such illusory and fictitious persons. That is why the memorial services for Tangun lasted for thousands of years.

Secondly, we should pay attention to the possibility that these religious functions and practices for a particular person could be mixed with the ceremonial usages of the years when the contents of his legendary tales or myths were replenished, omitted or embellished. Such elements can be observed in Tangun's legends,

too; for instance, in the contents linked with Buddhism.

However, the unique ceremonies and customs regarding Tangun have been handed down from the dawn of our nation's history; it was not the Koryo or Ri dynasty that appeared first.



## 15. The Korean Nation—A Homogeneous Nation Whose Founding Father Is Tangun

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The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

“The Koreans are a single nation of the same blood who have lived on the same land, sharing the same culture and using the same language for several thousand years.” (*On the Building of the Workers’ Party of Korea*, Eng. ed., Vol. 4, p. 267.)

Since ancient Korea was founded by Tangun, the Korean people have created a glorious history and culture in the vast tract of its territory, centred around today’s Korean peninsula.

The reason Tangun is the primogenitor of the Korean nation is, first of all, that he was a distinguished person who, as the founder of ancient Korea, the first state of our nation, provided our people with advanced civilization and added glory to our nation, and that the history and culture of ancient Korea were steadily inherited by the successive states and dynasties, and the people of our country.

Already five thousand years ago, when almost all the regions of the world were still in an underdeveloped primitive category, Tangun developed ancient Korea into a progressive state of civilization, thus distinguishing himself as a man of

historical importance representing our nation.

Tangun set up the ruling system of ancient Korea and effected economic and cultural development and thus laid the solid foundation of ancient Korea. With the growth of its national power, Tangun's Korea expanded its territory to the Liaodong and Liaoxi areas and exerted a powerful political, economic and cultural influence on their brethren in the neighbouring areas and gave impetus to their social advancement.

Consequently, Puyo, Kuryo, Jinguk and other ancient states came into existence, one after the other, under the impact of progressive ancient Korea. Its mighty influence on these states can be explained by the single fact that the culture of the *pipha*-shaped dagger and the narrow brass dagger of ancient Korea was widespread in all places inhabited by the forefathers of our nation.

Furthermore, ancient Korea at the head of other ancient states of Korea demonstrated the great power of our nation externally and was a bulwark in defending our nation and territory from foreign aggressors.

It was precisely for this reason that our ancestors, no matter where they lived, esteemed and worshipped Tangun as the founder of the first state and the founder king of our nation.

King Tongmyong founded Koguryo in 277 B.C., the first feudal state, and laid the groundwork for a 1,000-year long great power through the increment of its national strength. Thus, he became the restorer-founder of our nation. Koguryo waged a century-long struggle against powerful foreign aggressive forces and restored the territory and people of ancient Korea, and became an orthodox state, inheriting the historical status and role of ancient Korea.

Paekje, Silla and Kaya, too, derived their economy and

culture from that of ancient Korea. Although Paekje was a state built by King Onjo, the son of King Tongmyong, King Jun and many ancient Korean people immigrated to the land of Mahan in the preceding years of the Jinglyk reign. That is how Paekje was placed under the mighty influence of ancient Korea and Koguryo.

The fact that the forces which built the feudal states of Silla and Kaya were the “former people of ancient Korea” or the “hanul”, the migrants from the north, emphasizes the influence ancient Korea and Koguryo had in the foundation and progress of these states.

After the fall of Koguryo, Palhae came into existence late in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, consisting of its former territory and almost all its population. Thus Palhae, too, became a state representing our nation, a state which inherited ancient Korea and Koguryo.

At the dawn of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Koryo, the first unified state, was founded, by merging the southern part of the Palhae territory and the enormous number of the Palhae people. From that time on, our nation lived under the reign of a unified sovereign state for the first time in its history.

The historical progress mentioned above clearly manifests that the tradition of the nation’s history, which originated from ancient Korea passed on to the periods of the Three Kingdoms, including Koguryo, Palhae and Koryo.

This was because the successive dynasties of Koguryo, Paekje, Silla, Palhae and Koryo glorified and revered Tangun as their founding father and held memorial services in his honor. And the people adored him as the first founder king who led our nation to enlightenment and civilization.

Many remains and relics, associated with Tangun, are found everywhere across the country, including Kangdong, the Myohyang, Kuwol, Kumgang and many other renowned

mountains and the Kanghwa Island and Thosan County of North Hwanghae Province. This demonstrates that our forefathers revered Tangun as the primogenitor of Korea.

In the period of the Three Kingdoms one can scan the worship of Tangun through the reconstruction of the Tomb of Tangun in the period of Koguryo and in the drawing of a bear and tiger—which is related in the “Tangun myth” —on either side of the base of a large tree in the mural depicting the *Ssirum* (Korean wrestling). This is evidence that it was not around the middle of the Koryo dynasty, as argued by the Japanese imperialist-patronized historians, that Tangun’s myth first appeared; it was already a long time before that his legend was popular among the people; it had been handed down from the remote past.

The adoration for Tangun in the years of the Palhae state can be seen by the fact that a book on the history of the Tangun dynasty had existed already then.

From the beginning of the Koryo dynasty, shrines, such as the Tangun and Samsong Temples, where memorial services were held in honor of Tangun on the Sawang Peak, the highest in the Kuwol Mountains, had existed. In the middle of the Koryo dynasty they were removed to a place below the Tangun Rock to the west of the Phaeyop Temple, and in the latter period they were shifted to Mt. Sojung, 2.4 km away to the east; thus, they served as the sanctuaries for the government-sponsored memorial services for Tangun.

The Ri dynasty, too, had highlighted Tangun Korea since it had taken over the name of “Korea” (Joseon). During this dynasty the Tangun Shrine was built in Pyongyang, the former capital of Tangun, in 1429 in addition to the Samsong Temple in Mt. Kuwol, and memorial services were held continually by the state or by the commoners at these shrines up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Respect for Tangun, the founder of the first state in our country, gained greater momentum occasioned by the Japanese imperialists' occupation of Korea, and this gave birth to the Taejong Religion which deified Tangun as a "myth". Although the Japanese imperialists resorted to heinous machinations to obliterate Tangun from Korean history during the whole period of their rule, the legends about Tangun and the history of Tangun's Korea saw wide dissemination among the Korean people and added much toward inspiring their patriotic ideas, their love for the country and the nation. Following the formation of the "Association for the Repair of the Tomb of Tangun", the reconstruction project of the Tomb of Tangun was completed in 1936, backed by people all over the country. This was a concentric expression of the consciousness of national independence, the country- and nation-loving ideas of the Korean people in those days.

The reason why Tangun becomes the father of our nation can be explained by the fact that Tangun's Korea provided the practical grounds for the development of our people as a homogeneous nation.

It is widely recognized that the ancient Koreans, the ancestors of the Korean nation, lived on our territory in the Neolithic era, and that they used similar languages and had a similar culture and customs. But they were still in the stage of the clan or tribe, and far from forming a single nation.

At the beginning of the third millennium B.C. Tangun established the first ancient state in Pyongyang, a state which was most advanced in all spheres and occupied a vast area including the northwestern areas of the Korean peninsula as the territory of ancient Korea. This had enabled the people in these regions to live, maintaining close ties with each other, under the rule of a unitary power; this further strengthened their lineal, language and cultural commonness and made it

possible for them to grow into a nation as a sound social community. Afterwards, the scope of territory of Tangun's Korea was further extended, engulfing the adjoining areas, and ancient states made their appearance under the direct impact of Tangun's Korea and economic and cultural ties were consolidated between them. Thus, the awareness that they are fellowmen and of the same brethren was further enhanced among the inhabitants of the ancient states. Then, with the passage of time, they were merged into a homogeneous nation.

The increase in the close political, economic and cultural relations between Tangun's Korea and other ancient states gave rise to the legends that the founders of these ancient states and the feudal kingdoms were all descendants of Tangun. The authors of *The Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and the *Records of Tangun* depicted King Hae Pu Ru of Puyo and King Ko Ju Mong of Koguryo (King Tongmyong) as the sons of Hae Mo Su, the direct descendants of Tangun, and the *Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* described the rulers of Puyo, Piryu, Sira, Korye, North and South Okjo and Yemaek as Tangun's posterity. This is a reflection of historical truth. Our people were able to develop as a homogeneous nation in the past from the time of Tangun's Korea. This is attributable to the fact that Tangun was born in Pyongyang and founded ancient Korea, the earliest state in the world, with Pyongyang as its capital, and fortified and developed it, overpowered the primitive tribes in surrounding areas and firmly defended our territory from the incursions of neighbouring countries and did not allow any alien tribes or nations to invade our country or settle down in our country or conquer our nation.

Numerous races live on the globe, they have gone through both a rise and a fall in history. Yet none but the Korean

nation has come through the course of steady growth as a single nation, maintaining their lineal oneness from the dawn of history.

A historical survey of a number of North African, Middle and Near East, south and east Asian, European and Latin American states offers the elucidation that racial formation underwent a very complicated process in the majority of these countries; in other words, they were formed by a merger and mixture of more than two clans or races at least. The founder of a country, for instance, was the foreign conquerer of a vanquished nation; some country was dominated and reigned over by foreign invaders many a time, who were repulsed or assimilated in the long course of historical progress. Accordingly, the racial formation in these countries retarded relatively and it took a long course in some states to merge multiracial communities into a nation through mixed living in society.

Previously the Japanese and other imperialist historians, flunkeyists and bourgeois historians advocated the so-called polygenism to the effect that the Korean race was formed by a conglomeration of immigrants from the north and the south. And some scholars argued that the Mt. Samwi, that appears in Tangun legends, was located on the northwestern frontier of China and the people who lived around the Altai and Tianshan Mountains had moved east to become the father of the Korean people.

But now, however, the bones of Tangun had been discovered in the Tomb of Tangun and it was confirmed that they were 5,011 years old, and an anthropological study had made it clear that Tangun was a native Korean; this gives the lie to the theory that Tangun had come from some distant place, and proved this to be a completely groundless theory. Since Tangun, the founder of ancient Korea, was not a

foreign conqueror but a native Korean who had lived in the land of Korea from his birth, so the Korean people were single blood and, therefore, they were able to grow into a homogeneous nation earlier than any other race throughout the world.

And Korean history shows that since Tangun's Korea, no alien force of aggression had invaded our country on a large scale or had lived there for any long space of time, mixing with the Koreans.

Under the wise guidance of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung and the dear leader Comrade Kim Jong Il, the historical truth has been revealed that Tangun founded ancient Korea in the capital of Pyongyang at the beginning of the third millennium B.C. This is a matter of great pride and honor for the Korean people. This has further boosted the national dignity and prestige of the Korean people and convinced us that the Korean people, who have been living on one and the same territory for thousands of years as an independent homogeneous nation, cannot and should never be split into two, and that they should return to the former state by achieving national reunification at an early date; this is the supreme task facing the 70 million Korean people at the present time. So at the same time it kindles the aspiration of the people for reunification.

One bloodline, a common language and culture, the common national temperament, sentiment and emotion of our people, a homogeneous nation, which took shape through thousands of years, are immeasurably stronger than any difference caused by the territorial division in the past decades, and such a potential community of our nation brings together and unites its members by unbreakable bonds.

The Korean people in the north and the south and overseas, highly conscious of the national pride and honor worthy of



members of an age-long homogeneous nation, should unite as one under the banner of the Ten-Point Programme for the great unity of the entire nation indicated by the great leader, disregarding differences in ideology, political views and religious beliefs and property status. By so doing they should dedicate all their energy and wisdom to driving out the alien forces and achieving the independent peaceful reunification of the country at an early date.

## **16. The Historical Value of Tangun' s Portraits Drawn in Different Ages**

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Our ancestors painted icons of Tangun and developed them on the basis of the undisputed historical facts that he had founded the first civilized state and that the homogeneity of our nation was formed in Korea.

Those works, produced endlessly in the past, reflect the glorious history of our people, who traditionally revered Tangun as the founder of Korea, a person who truly existed in history. Therefore, they are of enormous importance in the study of Tangun.

When did the works of art portraying Tangun begin to be painted?

A correct answer to this question needs a primary study of the historical premises on the creation of Tangun' s pictures.

What is most important here is the worship of Tangun in the people' s minds. Historically, the people' s veneration for Tangun grew stronger after he ascended the throne, following the establishment of a state. Accordingly, there is no denying that this occasioned the birth of the fine arts for adoring him. These must have included such pursuits as handicrafts, sculptures, paintings and architecture, of course. The Tomb of

Tangun, as an architectural relic, is one of the oldest productions of the formative arts relating to Tangun. The present Tomb of Tangun is the one re-built in the days of Koguryo. This reminds us of the existence of the old Tomb of Tangun built by the people of ancient Korea. The bones of Tangun that were found there verify this fact.

In ancient Korea the tombs of rulers were traditionally built on a large scale. Let us take, as an example, the dolmen in Roam-ri, Anak County, erected by the ancient Korean people; it is 270 centimetres high and its roof stone weighs over 40 tons. The magnificent, impressive appearance of the dolmen, which consists of wall and roof stones, gives an idea of the high position of the deceased.

The old Tomb of Tangun in the period of ancient Korea, too, must have been built reflecting the thoughts and sentiments of the ancient Korean people who paid a high tribute to his exploits and authority by building it in such a unique form. The ardent veneration for the father of our nation shown in the architectural structures of ancient Korea exerted a great influence on the paintings, sculptures and other works of art.

Another important point in the creation of the works of art dedicated to Tangun is the foundation and experience that are so indispensable for drawing the figures.

The fine arts—sculptures or portraits depicting a definite person—leave profound impressions on people because of the vivid portrayal of either man or woman.

Therefore, our ancestors right from the primitive age began to engrave or draw an important person or an object with unflinching interest and thus acquired the experience needed in figure representation.

The sculptured figures unearthed in the remains of the Neolithic era in our country are good examples. The carved figures were so sketchy that it was difficult to distinguish the sex, but thereafter

they served as precious assets for figure representation.

These assets and experience became the mother of engravings and linear art works of men and women that were numerous found in many remains of the ancient ages.

The sculptured figures of the primitive age were related to the religious deities of clans and tribes. Consequently, primary concern in the ancient representation of characters was naturally directed at portraying the father of our nation, hence the fine arts produced in this line. Archaeological and ethnographical data tell us that the people of the primitive age regarded the image of their chief-father as amulets whom they worshipped as God, and placed them in the halls like shrines they had built to hold memorial services for their ancestors.

In the ancient era the formative arts appeared, which portrayed the father of our nation, inheriting this tradition.

Meanwhile, sizable technological and cultural developments in those days provided a possibility for the production of many excellent objects of the formative arts.

Numerous *pipha*-shaped daggers, girdles, bronze mirrors, horse frontlets and bells, and even the molds for some of them were discovered in ancient Korean tombs. This is potent proof that these metalwares were not "imported" but manufactured by our ancient people.

As aforesaid, the socio-historic conditions for the creation of art works of Tangun existed in the ancient era.

Then, is it true that works of the fine arts were created in ancient Korea to worship Tangun?

There is a strong possibility that it is true. An answer is given by the discoveries made from the remains of the latter period of ancient Korea or from the people of ancient Korea themselves.

The probability of artistic portrayals of Tangun in the

ancient age can be found in the “serpent-designed girdle” of Tomb No. 37 in Jongbaek-dong and the “beast-designed girdle” of Tomb No. 92 in Jongbaek-dong, relics left by the people of ancient Korea.

They are considered to be items of the plastic arts for the reveration of the father of our nation.

The tiger, in the myth of Tangun, fails to transform into a human being because of his “short temper”. What underlies this story is that when Tangun was born the clan whose totem was a bear overmatched the other clan with the totem of a tiger. This is also referred to in an old Chinese book *Shanhaijing* (Vol. 10, *Huiwaidongjing*). It wrote:

“The people of Kunjaguk (the country of the people of virtue) wear clothes, horsehair-hats on their heads and a sword at their sides, raise domestic animals and keep two striped tigers beside them.” Here Kunjaguk indicates ancient Korea.

The tale that the ancient Korean people kept two tigers beside them is an artistic delineation of the truth that in ancient Korea the clan who idolized the tiger were subordinated to the clan idolizing the heaven-god.

This hints that a person from the ruling clan took several servants selected from the ruled clan with him when he went out.

Another possibility of the artistic creation of Tangun’s figure can be attested to by a carved ornament having a human face, found in the stone-chamber tomb at Shiertaiyingzi that is believed to belong to the 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

The human face is engraved in the centre of the loop frame with six lines emanating from him like sun-rays. It is difficult to say whether it portrayed Tangun or the ancestor of some tribe or clan, but its existence itself suggests the probability of creating art objects describing the father of our nation.

All these ancient relics offer important grounds for insisting on the possibility of the production of the fine arts depicting Tangun.

Based on such a rich experience and tradition of the fine arts, new progress was made in the creation of the plastic arts about Tangun in the period of the Three Kingdoms.

Koguryo was very advanced in this respect.

As seen in the murals of the Koguryo tombs, portraits of kings and aristocrats were drawn extensively at the time.

And the statue of King Tongmyong (the god of Kodung), the founder of a state, was erected in major fortresses (towns).

Koguryo, as a successor to ancient Korea, registered fresh progress in the drawing of portraits, based on the high development of the formative arts. Material evidence of this are the mural paintings of Tangun's tomb which belong to the age of Koguryo.

The *Wiam's Writing*, published in the 1910s, wrote that a few years ago Japanese archaeologists had unearthed this tomb and that "Old Saint" and "Mysterious General" were painted on the four walls of its chamber.

As Tangun was lauded as "Saint Wanggom" in *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*, he was adored as the "saint" in Koguryo.

In those days the people adored Tangun as the "saint" ; this can be guessed at by the facts that the people of neighbouring states looked up to ancient Korea, believing it to be a "country of saints" who are said to live long and that King Songyang was professed as an "offspring of the saint" .

Therefore, it can be said that the "Old Saint" drawn on the wall of the Tomb of Tangun is a "portrait of Saint Tangun" painted to worship him as "Saint Wanggom" . To presume by the traditional general layout of mural paintings of Koguryo tombs, the Tomb of Tangun, too, must have generals

as bodyguards on both walls of its southern entrance, the portraits of Tangun, his father Tanung (Hwanung), and his grandfather Tanin (Hwanin) drawn like the saint, on the remaining three walls, each filling the entire wall space.

The portrait of the saint in full size on a wall is also found in Tomb No. 4 in Ryongsan-ri (the Tombs of the Princess of King Phyonggang and General Ondal) in the vicinity of the Tomb of King Tongmyong.

\* The valuable mural painting "Portrait of the Saint Tangun" of the Tomb of Tangun had totally faded, owing to the Japanese imperialist tomb stealers' illegal digging.

The development in the portraiture of Tangun in Koguryo influenced the Silla people, of like kin, so that it made further progress in Silla.

The widely renowned talented painter, Solgo, was active in the mid-8<sup>th</sup> century in Latter Silla. He painted an old pine tree on the wall of the Hwangryong Temple; the rough barks of its trunk and the needle-shaped leaves of the branches were so lifelike that even flying birds mistook it for a real pine tree.

Besides, he produced a number of masterpieces, such as Avalokitesvala of the Punhwang Temple in Kyongju, Vimalakirti of the Tansok Temple in Jinju and many other Buddhist images; this earned him high praise as "the painter with supernatural skill" (*The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*, Vol. 48, Solgo).

His best masterpiece, however, was the portrait of Tangun, the father of our nation.

In this regard, the *Commentary on Things Eastern* had the following excerpt from the *Notes on Korean Pictures*: Solgo, a painter of Silla, was the son of a peasant. From his tender age he dreamed of becoming a painter. Gathering firewood in the mountains, he would draw a picture on a rock with an arrowroot.

At intervals of weeding he would draw on the ground with his hoe. His native home was in a deep recess of the mountains, therefore, he was not able to study with a teacher. He had no hopes of success in drawing. Therefore, he prayed to God in heaven day and night for instruction. He prayed thus for several years. One day in a dream he met an old man who appeared before him and said: "I'm Tangun, the god-man. I am moved by your devotion, hence I give you a divine brush." On awakening, he felt as if it had happened in reality. Afterwards, he became a famous painter.

To repay the blessing of the Saint Tangun, Solgo drew over 1,000 portraits of Tangun who he had seen in his dream.

In the period of Koryo, Ri Kyu Bo (1168-1241) wrote the following words on Tangun's portrait, painted by Solgo:

*Every home beyond the pass\*  
Has a portrait of Saint Tangun on the wall.  
Solgo must have drawn  
Half of them that year.  
(Commentary on Things Eastern, Solgo)*

As can be seen above, two questions have sprung up: what was the motive that made Solgo draw Tangun's portrait, and why did Ri Kyu Bo comment on his paintings?

Here the notes made by Ri Kyu Bo attract our attention. He was a prominent scholar, a progressive poet and an aesthetic critic.

He detested hypocrisy and pursued truthfulness in his writings as well as in his everyday life. His realistic view is keenly felt in everyone of his writings, particularly in his comments on paintings.

Some of his poems that appreciated realistic pictures highly are: "On the Picture 'Fish' ", "Will You Please Draw My



Portrait” , “Thinking about the Picture ‘Fir Tree’ ” , and so on. He appreciated a true-to-life depiction of things and phenomena in drawings.

He spoke deferentially of Solgo’ s paintings. His description that the people in the area beyond the pass keep Tangun’ s portraits in their houses to worship him is a reflection of a historical fact that prevailed at the time.

\*The expression “beyond the pass” is believed to denote the areas south of Jo and Juk Passes.

What is the value of the historical records on the portrayal of Tangun published in the *Notes on Korean Pictures?*

Firstly, it lies in the fact that in the days of Latter Silla every family adored Tangun keeping his portrait in their homes. This proves that the portraits of Tangun were widely propagated in the preceding Three Kingdoms, too.

In the period of the Three Kingdoms Tangun’ s portraits were drawn and disseminated in Silla, too, because the people of Silla venerated him as their father. This proves that at that time Tangun was widely idolized as the national father.

The history of our country shows that although the division of our nation into several states induced a temporary separation, it could not break the homogeneity of our nation.

In Silla there was the tomb of its first King Pak Hyokgose. It was built to hold a memorial service in his honor. However, the Silla people kept Tangun’ s portrait in their homes to idolize him. This proves that they revered him as the father of the nation.

Secondly, the value of the historical records about the creation of Tangun’ s icon lies in the fact that in Silla the drawing of his portraits started in the period preceding the appearance of Solgo.

As Ri Kyu Bo noted, Solgo painted many portraits of Tangun but they were about half of the total number. The rest were drawn by other artists in different periods—before and after Solgo's appearance and his contemporaries. It is impossible to believe that Solgo suddenly became a noted painter at Tangun's instruction and produced and propagated so many portraits so rapidly. The large production of Tangun's portraits by Solgo proceeds from the established knowledge that Tangun's portraits were handed down from the past and that there was a great social demand for them.

Thirdly, its importance lies in the fact that Solgo and his contemporaries revered Tangun with greater respect than they did Buddha.

Solgo lived in the heyday of Buddhism in Silla. He himself dedicated his immense energy to painting Buddhist images. But he thought he owed his success in art to Tangun, not to Buddha, and this feeling of adoration is the answer to his producing so many of Tangun's portraits.

This is strong evidence that the worship of Tangun was not a question that concerned Solgo alone but that it prevailed in all families.

In addition, the historical records on Tangun's portraits cast a revealing light on a number of problems, including the fact that the people considered his portrait to be the "portrait of Tangun", the king of ancient Korea who had existed in history.

A lot of the portraits of Tangun that Solgo painted, preserved until the latter period of Koryo, were of great help in the painting of his portraits in the ensuing period.

We should not miss the detail, however, that Pyongyang, the birthplace and burial-place of Tangun, and also his capital, was the centre for the adoration of Tangun and for the creation of Tangun's portraits after Koryo's fall. An

instance of this is that in 1412 King Thaejong issued an order to hold a sacrificial rite in memory of Tangun, and the Tangun Shrine was built in Pyongyang in 1429 as a hall to hold memorial services for him. (It was renamed the Sungryong Hall in 1725.)

With the government's encouragement and patronage in the reverence of Tangun, it became more popular to paint his portraits. Tangun's portraits underwent further improvement with their broader dissemination among our people before and after the occupation of Korea by Japanese imperialism.

Tangun's portraits were hung out for prayers at the "Tangun Temple", "Tangun Hall" and other buildings which were erected to worship Tangun. They were also printed in books, such as *Eight Principles of the Tangun Religion*, and *Scriptures for Revitalization of the Tangun Religion*. The portraits hung out for prayers alone numbered several dozen. The "Portrait of Tangun, Sacred Founder King", "Portrait of Tangun, Heavenly God", "Image of Tangun", "Picture of Hwangom (Tangom)" and "Portrait of Tangun" are some of them.

Among the portraits dedicated to the worship of Tangun is one which portrayed Hwanung and Hwanin in the same picture.

Of the existing ones, the "Portrait of Tangun, Sacred Founder King" implies that Tangun was revered as the holy founder king.

Such a viewpoint of our ancestors, who deemed Tangun to be their sacred father existing in reality in the past, is expressed in the composition of the portraits.

The existing portraits are not alike in Tangun's pose; we see him seated or standing; the figure of Tangun is without any background or is standing against the scenery of a *pakdal* tree. Yet his face was the same as it had been drawn in the remote past.

The characteristic features in the portrayal of Tangun lie, first of all, in the fact that Tangun was painted as an actually existing person in a realistic way.

Nothing mysterious is felt in the figure of Tangun, praying at an old tree, with palms together. His is the typical face of the Korean. Eyebrows, eyes, nose and beard were depicted without any exaggeration; they are just like what we see in everyday life. The ears are a bit larger, but are quite different from the large lop ears of Buddha.

All this illustrates that our ancestors revered Tangun as a typical Korean, a person who existed in our history, not as a fictitious figure.

Another important point to note in his representation is that Tangun was drawn as an old man of about 60, neither too old nor too young. This means that our forefathers had not quite believed the fantastic tale that his lifespan was as long as 1,908 years.

It is also important that he was depicted as a person of simple character. His face manifests his character as that of an ordinary person, and he is dressed like the common man. Particularly, he is dressed in a narrow-sleeved coat, though the noblemen wore broad-sleeved coats in those days; and he was in straw-sandals in the picture.

\*Some portraits of Tangun drawn in the Middle Ages show him having leaves of grass on his shoulders and oak leaves around his waist. Such representation does not negate the actual existence of Tangun in our history. Rather it reflects the people's religious belief that after his death he became the god of Mt. Adal, the "immortal guardian-god" of our country. It is not a rare case in our native religion that the saints who existed in our history were turned into mountain gods after death and became guardian-gods protecting the country. Previously memorial rites were held continually, and that is

why they thought of Tangun as an “eternal ancestral god” . But this belief does not become grounds for asserting that he was a fictitious person who had not existed in reality.

As aforesaid, Tangun’ s portraits have come through the centuries as an “offspring” of the unique adoration of the founder of our country among the Korean people, and as creative works of art of the whole nation.

Herein lies the important historical value of Tangun’ s portraits. Indeed, the fine arts dedicated to the portrayal of Tangun were widely spread among the Korean people in the centuries gone by, instilling national consciousness and pride in their minds.

## 17. The Korean Nation Is a Homogeneous Nation with a 5,000-Year Long History

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On September 27, 1993 the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung visited the Tomb of Tangun, looking around it and inspecting the bones and other relics excavated from the tomb. During the visit he remarked that it was of immense significance in the history of our nation that Tangun, who had been known as a legendary figure, was now ascertained as an actual being. And he gave important instructions which would serve as a guide to the study of Tangun and the history of ancient Korea.

Our homogeneous nation, which had been known as the “*pakdal* nation” or “*paedal* nation” with Tangun as the founder king, has waged a vigorous struggle to remould Nature and society for 5,000 years, ever since the foundation of ancient Korea.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung said:

“Ours is a single nation with 5,000 years of history; it is a valorous, ambitious nation that has been vigorously fighting against foreign invaders and successive reactionary rulers from olden times; and it is a talented nation that has contributed greatly to mankind’s development of science and

culture.” (Kim Il Sung, *Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. 1, p. 211.)

The recent disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun and the expertise on his remains by the Archaeological Institute proved that Tangun was not a legendary person but had really existed. The bones taken out of the tomb were dated with the latest dating devices by two institutes, 24 and 30 times respectively, which yielded almost the same figures of 5,011 years. This clearly proves that the remains are Tangun's and that the history of Tangun's Korea had begun 5,000 years ago.

According to documentary records Tangun had really existed a long time ago and the history of the Korean nation started five thousand years ago.

The *Annals of the Three Kingdoms* quoted the following passage from the Chinese history book *Weishu*: “... There lived a man called Tangun Wanggom 2,000 years ago. He established a country with its capital in Asadal and called it Korea.” Our history books, *Ancient Records*, the *Annals of the Three Kingdoms* and the *Rhymed Chronicles of Kings*, presented Tangun as a legendary man and described the course of building the state mythically, but, in essence, it depicted human activity. Almost all the historical records in any country the world over deified its founder-king and described the foundation of the first state like a myth.

Nevertheless, Tangun had been regarded as a legendary existence in the past, and the history of Tangun's Korea as a concoction. Consequently, the history of ancient Korea had been wrongly treated.

This is mainly due to the Japanese imperialists and their reptile historians, who had distorted and obliterated Tangun and the history of Tangun's Korea.

It is a known fact that the Japanese aggressors made frantic efforts to obliterate Tangun and the history of

Tangun' s Korea with the aim of brainwashing the Korean nation and assimilating them into the "Yamato" nation. They burned hundreds of thousands of history books for this purpose that wrote about Tangun and the ancient history of Korea.

The burning of books by the Japanese imperialists was a barbarity surpassing that committed by Chinese Emperor Qin Shihuang and the Hitlerite fascists.

Japanese Governor-General Saito Makoto, who advocated the "civilian" rule, said, referring to the educational policy for the Korean youth: "First of all, it is necessary to make the Koreans abandon their national spirit and culture... and to hate and despise their ancestors by not allowing them access to a knowledge of their affairs, history and traditions and to impart to the Korean youth negative information about all their national figures and historical achievements in order that they fall into despair and nihilism. Then, acquainting them with Japanese achievements, our well-known figures and culture will be most effective for their assimilation."

This was the aim of the "Book-Burning Incident" to blot out the history of Tangun' s Korea.

Owing to this barbaric act of the Japanese imperialists, almost all the books on Tangun had been destroyed and the possibility of forming a whole picture of Tangun' s Korea was eliminated, while a version of Tangun as a legendary figure was spread widely. Now, as in the past ages, a legend or a myth is liable to be woven about prominent figures. As Tangun was a great man he was made a legendary figure.

The great leader was much concerned about the distortion of Tangun and the history of Tangun' s Korea and saw to it that the Tomb of Tangun was disinterred. He gave very important instructions to our historians to make a deep study of Tangun in an independent manner.



The result of the disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun put an end to the distorted view of Tangun in the past and helped to restore the history of Tangun's Korea, the 5,000-year long Korean history, and provided a solid foundation for a scientific and systematic treatment of our ancient history as a whole.

As it was confirmed that Tangun really existed and that the history of Tangun's Korea was not a mythical or legendary one, we have come to have a great national pride and self-respect in the fact that our nation is one of the nations that proceeded to civilized society in the earliest period in the world.

There are many nations and countries in the world. But few nations founded a state and went over to the state of civilization as early as we did.

Ancient Korea was founded early in the 3,000 years B.C. when vast areas of continents were still being haunted by beasts of prey and groups of primitive men were leading a primitive life in the stage of savagery. Ancient Rome, a developed slave-owning state, entered the "legendary period of imperial rule" as late as the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

Even if the mythical age in the history of Japan is made up to the state age, it would be two thousand and several hundred years later than ours.

The disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun shows that Pyongyang was not only one of the cradles of mankind but also the cradle of our nation and that Pyongyang was the capital of the first state the founder-king had set up.

As was confirmed, Homo erectus lived in Komunmoru in Sangwon near Pyongyang. Palaeoanthropic man, "Ryokpho man", and Neanthropic man,— "Ryonggok man", "Mandal man" and "Sungrisan man"—and the ancient Koreans who were their descendants and the primitive ancestors of our

nation inhabited Pyongyang and the vast area around it. Of course, Hwanung and the woman "Bear", the parents of Tangun, were inhabitants of this land.

A great man like Tangun is usually born in a place with beautiful mountains and clear streams and a state is set up in a fertile land which is good for the people to live in and in a place favourable for defence.

Tangun, who was born in Pyongyang with favorable physical features, founded a state there and strengthened state power and expanded its territory to the vast northern area. He returned to his birthplace and ended his life full of vicissitudes.

It was recorded in Kim Pu Sik's *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* that Pyongyang was the birthplace of Tangun Wanggom and the capital of ancient Korea. Later Pyongyang was a political, economic, military and cultural centre of successive feudal dynasties and was of great importance as such.

Pyongyang and the areas around it are truly the cradle of our nation which thrived early.

Nevertheless, people in the past tried to find the place of origin of ancient Korea in the Liaodong region. It was probably because they were swayed by the conventional view that culture had developed earlier in the continent. Now that Tangun has been restored as a real existing person, the Liaodong centre version has been disproved and the Pyongyang centre version has been established. This is a good realization of the Juche-orientated view on history, free from the flunkeyist way of thinking.

The result of the disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun emphatically demonstrated that our people are the descendants of Tangun, the primitive ancestor, and that ours is a homogeneous nation that has lived without yielding for 5,000 years since the time of Tangun

Wanggom, and conscious of their being his descendants.

The Korean nation was well aware of its homogeneity through the generations. The idea that was prevalent among the people of the other ancient states Koryo, Puyo and Jinglyk, including ancient Korea and those of their successive feudal states, was that they came of the same stock with Tangun as their primitive ancestor and they took pride in it. For example, *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* wrote that the peoples of Sira, Korye, Puyo, Yemaek and Okjo were all offsprings of Tangun.

Quoting data from the *Commentary on Things Eastern, Notes on Korean Pictures* said that Solgo, a famous painter of Silla, painted about a thousand portraits of Tangun. This is very meaningful.

It is well known that King Tongmyong, the founder of Koguryo and his son King Onjo, the founder of Paekje, professed themselves to be descendants of Tangun.

But it is not so widely known that the people of Silla took Tangun as their primitive ancestor. When the fact is taken into consideration that people of ancient Korea were the main force founding the Silla dynasty, then the fact that Solgo painted so many portraits of Tangun clearly bespeaks whom the Silla people had acknowledged as their primitive ancestor. This shows that in the period of the Three Kingdoms, Palhae and Latter Silla, too, Tangun was held in high esteem as the primitive ancestor of the entire Korean nation transcending regional boundaries, as the founder-king of the first state in our history.

Poet Ri Kyu Bo wrote that the people of areas beyond the pass (Samnam region) had Tangun's portrait hanging in their houses. This is evidence that in the era of Koryo the consciousness of their being a homogeneous nation with Tangun as the primitive ancestor was invariably held by the

people in the southern regions belonging to Silla and Paekje, as well as by the inhabitants in the northern areas that had been the territory of Koguryo.

Ancestral shrines of Tangun were erected in every famous mountain and our people, attired in white, held memorial services there on Tangun's birthday (October 3, by the lunar calendar). This fact indicates that Tangun was worshipped as the primitive ancestor of the whole nation.

Our people are an intelligent and brave nation who spoke the same language and created a single culture. From olden times they lived harmoniously and possessed a strong sense of unity.

Since it was ascertained that Tangun was the founder-king of ancient Korea and that Tangun's Korea was the first state in the history of our nation, it was clearly proved that our nation, the descendants of Tangun, formed a solid community of a nation and that they have firmly retained their nationality, inheriting their national traditions through ancient Korea, Koguryo, Palhae and Koryo.

The view that in modern society a nation is formed with the formation of a national market is a dogmatic version of the European pattern. The formation of a nation varies from country to country. The process of the formation of a nation shows a marked difference in Europe where the composition of the population was very complicated and there was a great migration of races, and in some parts of Asia where matters stood otherwise.

Today's Korean nation came of the same blood, the ancient Koreans, being a homogeneous race on its own territory.

According to ancient records the Yemaek, Okjo and Han races came of the ancient Koreans and were descendants of Tangun and fused into one nation already in ancient times.

There were no allied nations in our history that conquered or assimilated our nation or mixed their blood with others. The expanse of its territory, covering the Korean peninsula with Pyongyang as its centre and the Liaodong area, did not change markedly between the era of the Three Kingdoms and that of ancient Korea.

It is evident that the Korean nation, which is homogeneous and had possessed a common territory since ages ago, cannot be treated like the Italian nation, which is composed of the Roman, Germanic, Greek, Arabian and other races, or the French nation made up of Celts, Romans, Britains, Germans and the like. They had gathered from different parts and had fused into a bourgeois nation as a commonness of language, territory and culture had been established with the foundation of the modern bourgeois civilization. But the Korean nation took a different course in its formation.

The foundation of the first state in our country marked a signal turn in and served as a guarantee for the formation of our nation. It is because the state makes certain efforts to unite the homogeneous race depending on the central power, enlists them to realizing the intention of the ruling classes, enhances their sense of nationality to repulse foreign aggression and to defend its independence and create their culture. As a consequence, with the formation of the state, the commonness of language and bloodline became consolidated, and cultural and mental community and other characteristic features of a nation came to be rapidly formed.

The Korean nation created and used their own letters already in the period of ancient Korea. The *Sinji* letters our linguists discovered in ancient documents and those on the fragments of earthenware belonging to the ancient Korea era were phonetic symbols written in a vertical line.

The discovery of the *Sinji* letters is of great significance

for the history of the Korean nation and the history of its culture, and adorns the history of the letters of mankind. This is eloquent proof that our nation has spoken one language from ancient times.

Our people have fine traditions in relation to food, clothing, housing, family life and labour habits, which differ from those of other nations. These national features in the economy, culture and life began to be formed in ancient times and were inherited and developed with the continuance of language and bloodline.

Our people have lived harmoniously in this land, developing the tradition of the Korean way of life created in the period of ancient Korea.

The Korean people are talented, wise and courageous, and have a strong sense of unity. These are national features peculiar to our homogeneous nation.

In its 5,000-year long history the Korean nation bravely and unyieldingly fought against repeated foreign invasions, kept up its spirit without being assimilated to other nations and preserved the tradition of their national culture, the honour of their homogeneous nation and the purity of blood.

In the era of Palhae and Latter Silla people from Koguryo and Paekje, who had lost their country, fought to drive out the foreign forces and restore their territory and country in cooperation with the Silla people, because they wanted to defend the honour of their homogeneous nation. When hundreds of thousands of the Palhae people including prince Tae Kwang Hyon, the royal families, aristocrats and army men flooded into Koryo after the collapse of Palhae, the Koryo government accepted them and provided all with stable living conditions. This was also the result of their strong sense of being the same nation.

The peasant insurgents who fought the feudal rulers, arms in hand, turned their arms against the foreign aggressors who

had invaded their country. For example, the peasant insurgents, who were active in the northwestern part of Korea in 1231, rescued the government army of Koryo from its critical situation when the Mongolian aggressors invaded the country, and dealt a telling blow at the aggressors. Of course, the peasant army in those days did not fully understand the feudal rulers' class nature and their indecision but when the foreign forces intruded their territory and infringed upon the sovereignty of the nation, they estimated the interests and dignity of the nation above everything else and, without hesitation, they sacrificed everything for the cause.

When our country was occupied by the Japanese imperialists, our people rose up as one and stoutly fought against the Japanese aggressors.

The anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, led by our great leader Kim Il Sung, formed the main stream of the anti-Japanese struggle. The whole nation looked up to the great leader Kim Il Sung as the lodestar of national liberation, came forward to fight in the sacred war for national liberation and helped the anti-Japanese guerrillas with utmost sincerity.

When the Japanese imperialists tried to obliterate Tangun during their occupation of Korea, people of all walks of life gathered in protest in Kangdong from all parts of the country to hold a sacrificial service at the Tomb of Tangun every year; the local supporters in Kangdong, Pyongyang, Sunchon and other areas formed "The Association for the Protection of the Tomb of Tangun" and the "Association for the Repair of the Tomb of Tangun", and repaired and enlarged the Tomb of Tangun with the funds collected from supporters.

Our people, united by ties of their homogeneous nation, who came of the same stock and had the same culture, a single language and the same customs, have shared all the vicissitudes and helped each other, pooling their

strength for the defence of the national spirit.

Our nation takes great pride in the fact that they inherited the single bloodline of the homogeneous nation and stoutly defended their national spirit. This inspires all the compatriots in the north, the south and overseas to give top priority to national affairs and to fight with concerted efforts for national reunification under the banner of the 10-Point Programme of Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country.

Restoration of Tangun as having existed in reality is a notable historic event for our nation.

Since our nation was proved to be a homogeneous nation with a 5,000-year long history, the coming generations, as well as the present generation, will be encouraged to ardently love their country and nation and to enthusiastically fight for the prosperity of the nation with a strong spirit of national independence and pride.

This paved the way to the scientific treatment of the history of ancient Korea, the first state of our nation, founded by Tangun, and to a profound and systematic study of the 5,000-year long history of our nation from the Juche viewpoint.

We, historians, will direct our primary efforts to the study of Tangun's activity, to the process of the founding of ancient Korea, the state organs, social systems, foreign relations, the succession of kings in ancient Korea and the creative activities of the people for their independence. For this purpose we will explore and extensively use the existing documentary materials, including the information on the disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun, taking the great Juche idea as our compass.

Now we, historians, are resolved to systematize the history of ancient Korea independently and scientifically and bring about a new turn in the study of our 5,000-year long history.



## **18. Pyongyang Is the Cradle of the Korean Nation**

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Our archaeologists recently excavated the remains of Tangun and other relics in the Tomb of Tangun in Kangdong County, Pyongyang City and made a comprehensive study of them. As a result, Tangun, who had been deemed a legendary and mythical figure, was scientifically identified as a historic man who truly existed. This is an event of epochal significance that clearly proves the long history and homogeneity of our nation.

With the clarification of Tangun, the primitive ancestor of ancient Korea, and the history of Tangun's Korea, the 5,000-year long history of our nation was proved scientifically. We can say with pride that our nation is one of the resourceful nations who founded their first state and entered the road of civilization early in this world.

The dear leader Comrade Kim Jong Il said:

“Pyongyang is a historic city boasting of a long history, a brilliant culture, and the intelligence and talent of our people.”

It is not accidental that Tangun founded ancient Korea with

Pyongyang as the centre, initiated the history of civilization, accomplished the unity of our nation and expanded its territory to a vast area, basing himself in Pyongyang. The reason is that Pyongyang and the adjacent area, with its beautiful mountains and limpid streams, was one of the cradles of mankind and human culture, where people thrived and developed their culture early. Therefore, Pyongyang became the time-honoured home of our nation that gave birth to Tangun, a historic man.

The long glorious history of our nation, covering the history of statehood, began with the establishment of the first ancient state, the history of civilization and the history of our nation, which borders on the dawn of the appearance of mankind, started in the Pyongyang area.

The Pyongyang area is the birthplace of our nation, where human history in our land began and the first state was founded.

The long history of our nation is well illustrated by the Komunmoru archaeological layer discovered in Hugu-ri, Sangwon County, Pyongyang in 1966. The Komunmoru archaeology in the blackish weathered limestone stratum at the foot of a hill indicates the origin of the long history of our nation, which corresponds with the beginning of human history.

The archaeological layer is attributable to the past one million years. Thus, our land is one of the homes of mankind, where the cry of man at birth first broke the long-standing silence on earth.

The fossil remains of the Java man, found in Java Island of Indonesia, which are famous as the first traces of mankind's life in the Eastern Hemisphere, particularly in east Asia, are not more than hundreds of thousands of years old. Hence, the discovery of the Komunmoru archaeological layer shows that people began to inhabit this land from the Lower Palaeolithic

Period from which human history originated, and that the first bud of human culture began to sprout independently there.

The ancestors of our nation had created their own unique culture, ceaselessly developing society with their independent and creative activities to free themselves from nature's yoke since the early stage of primitive society in the Korean peninsula and in the vast northeastern part of the Asian Continent.

The commonness of primitive culture was formed over these wide areas and its characteristic feature differed from that of its neighbours. Just like the cultural commonness in any period and in any area, the commonness of a nation of the same stock is formed in some certain region. In the case of our country Pyongyang, the capital of the first ancient state of Korea established by Tangun, was the regional centre in which the commonness of a nation was formed.

The history of civilization in our country had begun in Pyongyang, and the community and the homogeneity of the nation of the same stock, too, were formed, centring in Pyongyang. It is a natural process of development.

Pyongyang, becoming the home of our nation, is attributable to the fact that historically it was one of the cradles of humanity and human culture.

The ancient archaeological layer that indicates the beginning of our national history and the many fossil bones of our ancestors were discovered in the vicinity of Pyongyang. The famous Komunmoru archaeology was excavated in the Pyongyang area, and in the basin of the Taedong River fossil human bones were found in large quantities. The process of the evolution of man took place ceaselessly in this region, whose lineage branched off from the lineage of the anthropoid apes, through which *Homo erectus* developed to the Palaeoanthropic man, the Palaeoanthropic man to the Neanthropic man, and the

Neanthropic man to the present-day man.

This is illustrated by the fact that the fossil human bones of the Homo erectus stage were excavated from the Komunmoru archaeology. Then the fossil human bones of the Palaeoanthropic stage that relayed the course of the human being, which is a stage of man's evolution, were unearthed in this land and were named after the place of their finding; the fossils of a "Tokchon man" and a "Ryokpho man". The "Ryokpho man" was discovered among the remains in the cave in Taehyondong, Ryokpho District, Pyongyang City in 1977. The fossil bone is the fossil skull of a child at the age of 7 or 8. The "Tokchon man" was found in 1973 in the remains of a cave in Sungrisan, Tokchon City, South Phyongan Province in the basin of the upper and middle reaches of the Taedong River. The two fossil teeth of a "Tokchon man" were unearthed together with a jaw bone of a cave hyena that had been extinct long ago in our country.

Many fossils of the Neanthropic stage were excavated around Pyongyang in the basin of the Taedong River. The fossil bone of the "Sungrisan man" was the fossil human bone of the Neanthropic stage, which was discovered first. It is a lower jaw bone, supposed to belong to a middle-aged man of about 35 or so. This fossil bone was discovered in 1972 in the archaeology in the cave in Sungrisan in Tokchon City, South Phyongan Province, in a stratum different from that of the "Tokchon man". In 1980 the fossil human bones of a Neanthropic man were discovered in two places. One is the "Mandal man" discovered in the Mandal-ri, Sungho District, Pyongyang City, and the other is the "Ryonggok man" from Ryonggok-ri, Sangwon County, Pyongyang City. In the Mandal Cave a comparatively well preserved fossil skull and jaw bones and the stone implements of a microlithic nature attributable to the Upper Palaeolithic period were found. In the

Ryonggok Cave many human bones and two skulls with the skeleton of the face were discovered. In addition, the fossil bones of a Neanthropic man were unearthed in the Kumchon Cave in Jung-ri, Sangwon County, Pyongyang City and in the Komunnong Cave in Phunggok Workers' District, Pukchang County, South Phyongan Province.

So many fossil human bones had been discovered in our country that they figure prominently in the world. Most of them were found around Pyongyang in the basin of the Taedong River and only one or two in other places. Consequently, we can definitely say that the Pyongyang area is one of the cradles of mankind.

Pyongyang became the cradle of mankind as well as of our nation in the period of Tangun. In the beginning of the 30<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Tangun founded the first ancient state in Pyongyang and made the territory of ancient Korea a vast area that included the northwestern part of the Korean peninsula. The inhabitants within the territory of one state naturally form close relations. The inhabitants within the territory of ancient Korea with Pyongyang as its centre, came to strengthen their blood ties, and common features of language and culture.

Later, under the direct influence of ancient Korea, other ancient states emerged in our land and ever wider territory came under its influence.

The other ancient states in our land, under the influence of ancient Korea that was formed, with Pyongyang as a center and became strong, formed and developed close economic and cultural relations. This increased consciousness among the inhabitants of the ancient states of their being the same nation and they developed into a homogeneous nation.

It is proved by anthropological material that Pyongyang is the cradle of our nation and that the homogeneity of our

nation was formed, centring in Pyongyang.

It is well known that the racial characteristic features that represent the homogeneity of a nation begin to be formed primarily at the Neanthropic stage.

Many anthropological materials show us that the commonness of blood ties and the specific features of our nation, began first to be formed around Pyongyang.

There are formal features that indicate the bloodline and homogeneity of the Korean nation. The skeleton of the head is comparatively high, but the skeleton of the face is of middling height. The forehead does not slope backward, but is upright. The eye sockets are comparatively high, the sockets of the teeth are wide and the upper part of the nose is comparatively narrow and protrudes. The commonness in bloodline of Koreans and homogeneity of the Korean nation are based on these features, which distinguish Koreans from neighbours.

The morphological features peculiar to the Koreans were first revealed in the fossil human bones unearthed in the Pyongyang area. These characteristic features were noticed in the fossil bones of the "Mandal man", "Ryonggok man" and "Phunggok man" and in other fossil human bones of the Neanthropic stage, found around Pyongyang in the basin of the Taedong River. The skulls of the "Mandal man" and the "Ryonggok man" are very high and the foreheads are upright. As the two skulls of the "Ryonggok man" show, like the "Mandal man", the skeleton of the head is so high that it figures prominently in east Asia. However, the skeleton of the face is not so high but of middling height. The characteristic features peculiar to Koreans are seen in many respects in the fossil bones of the "Phunggok man" in which the region around the nose remains intact. The upper part of the nose is not low but slightly protruding for that of people of east Asia,

and the nasal bones are comparatively narrow. These features are also observed in the fossil bones of the "Ryonggok man" in which the region around the nasal bones remain intact. But the features of the inhabitants in neighbouring areas are quite different from those of the Koreans. Their skull is not so high, but the skeleton of the face is comparatively high. The forehead slopes backward and the upper part of the nose is low and the nasal bones are broad.

This means that our nation had originated in the Pyongyang area and fused into a homogeneous nation with Pyongyang as the centre. Hence, we can say definitely that our nation, with its long history, originated in the Pyongyang area.

The homogeneity of our nation, too, was formed with Pyongyang as the centre.

In order to form a nation, its homogeneity must be achieved on the basis of a common bloodline. This is formed in two ways. One way is that a race who originated in one place continuously spreads, extending their area of habitation. The other way is that different races in a certain territory form a common blood through ceaseless contacts and mixing.

The homogeneity of our nation was formed in a way that the ancestral stock of our nation, which originated in Pyongyang area, differentiated and migrated northward and southward, extending the area of habitation.

Thus, the main part of our nation was formed in this way and the inhabitants in different areas frequently contacted and mixed with each other. Hence, the common blood of our nation became more stable and our nation maintained its homogeneity unlike other nations.

Koreans, no matter where they were born, are all descendants of the same nation, whose prototype is traceable to the fossil human bones discovered in the Pyongyang area,

and the offspring of the Koreans of the time of Tangun, who founded the first ancient state in Pyongyang and maintained the common features of the nation.

It is ascribable to the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung and the dear Comrade Kim Jong Il that the long history of our nation has its origin in Pyongyang and that the homogeneity of our nation was formed with Pyongyang as the centre.

The result of the disinterment of the Tomb of Tangun has proved that our nation originated in Pyongyang and that the homogeneity of our nation was formed with Pyongyang as the centre. This inspires a high degree of national pride and self-respect in our people and unites the 70 million fellow countrymen of the same blood more closely to fight for the sacred cause of national reunification.



# Notes

## 1. Ancient Korea

The official name for our country in the ancient time was Korea (Joseon). It was called ancient Korea in distinction from Korea under the Yi dynasty after the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Korea derived from Koryo that succeeded Koguryo and founded the first unified state in Korea in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century, known worldwide. The word Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, stands for Joseon. "Joseon" means bright morning.

Once Korea was called "Han". The rulers of the Tang in mid-7<sup>th</sup> century China mistook the three states of Koguryo, Paekje and Silla for Samhan, principalities of Jinyuk that existed in the southern part of the Korean peninsula. Hence, the name Samhan.

## 2. King Pakdal

The designation "Pakdal" came from the name of the race who founded the state of ancient Korea in the Pyongyang area.

The primitive ancestors of the race, who believed the sun to be a ball of fire, called the race the *puru* or *para* (sun) race or the *purudara* or *paradara* race, adding *dara* that meant Mt. Thaebaek at the foot of which they lived.

Later in the course of the use of the language *puru* changed to *pul*, *para* to *pal*, *dara* to *dal*, *pal* to *pak* and *paradara* eventually to *pakdal*. *Pakdal* meant the paternal race of King Pakdal.

The inhabitants of ancient Korea were recorded as *puru*, *pul*, *pal* or *pak* in the Chinese ancient books *Guanzi* (Guanzhong' s Writings), *Zuozhuan*, *Yizhoushu* (history of the Chou dynasty) and *Shiji* (Royal Chronicles).

The ancestors of the Korean nation called the founding father of ancient Korea King Pakdal; later he was called Tangun in Chinese transliteration. The letters *tan* mean *pakdal* tree and the letters *gun*, king in Korean and, consequently, *pakdal* implies the king of the bright race.

The name of King Pakdal (Tangun) gradually became a honorific title for the ruler of ancient Korea. Later it became a proper noun, which implied the founder-king of ancient Korea.

*Paedal* is a modification of *pakdal*, so *paedal* stands for *pakdal*. Phone *pak* or *paek* transmutes into *pae* in Korean. The phone *pak* or *pae* of *pakdal* and *paedal* were transliterated somewhat differently as *puru*, *pul*, *pal*, *pak* or *pae* in the ancient books, but *pakdal* or *paedal* derived from the designation for the population of ancient Korea.

The ancestors of the Korean nation took great pride and felt self-respect in that they were descendants of the *puru* race, the *pakdal* race or the *paedal* race, which constituted a homogeneous nation with King Pakdal as the founding father.

### **3. Tangun Wanggom**

Wanggom is another designation of king in Chinese characters.

### **4. Ancient Koreans**

Fossil Neanthropic men called "Ryonggok man" and "Mandal man" were discovered in Ryonggok-ri, Sangwon County and Mandal-ri, Sungho District around Pyongyang. They resembled the modern men most among the Neanthropic men who inhabited the Korean peninsula and around it in the

Upper Neolithic Period and the Bronze Age and already had the anthropological features of the Koreans. They were the ancient Koreans who were the ancestors of the Korean race. Their languages and customs were similar. They were in the clan or tribal stage and did not form a nation.

### **5. *Sonin* (Saint) Wanggom**

*Sonin* prefixed to Wanggom does not mean the Taoist advocating Taoism of China but comes from the idea of *Son* faith indigenous to Korea. *The Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms* wrote that in Korea there were Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and yet another “mysterious religion” and described it as *Son*. It was also used as a honorific title for King Pakdal, the primitive ancestor of the Korean race. Concerning the remark King Songyang of the State of Piryu made in a contest of wits with King Ju Mong, “I am a descendant of *Sonin*”, *The Rhymed Chronicles of Kings* wrote: “He seems to be a descendant of King Pakdal” .

The idea of the *Son* faith indigenous to the Korean race was later combined with the cult of the founder-king of the state and King Pakdal was regarded as *Sonin*, worshipped by the *Son* faith.

In 1325 Ri Suk Gi wrote: “*Sonin* Wanggom first founded Pyongyang and ... reigned there earlier than the time of Samhan and lived over 1,000 years long.” This provides clear proof that *Sonin* Wanggom is King Pakdal. Samhan was three small states subject to Jinguk founded in the southern part of the Korean peninsula.

### **6. Version of Jizi’ s Arrival at the East**

It is a version framed by the reactionary feudal historians of China in the past that Chinese “Jizi” came to Korea and founded a country and became its king in the 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

Originally “Ji” of “jizi” meant the title of the ruler of a principality but not a name.

A record of the version of Jizi’ s arrival at the East first appeared in the unidentified book *Shangshudachan* in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. It was written in the book that when the Yin dynasty fell and the Chou dynasty was founded “Jizi” fled to Korea, reluctant to be the subject of the Chou dynasty and King Wu of the Chou dynasty appointed him a feudal prince. By doing so, it falsified facts—as if Korea was founded by “Jizi” and was a principality of China.

However, the Chinese history books *Shiji* and *Hanshu* did not dare to reprint the fictitious version.

The version of Jizi’ s arrival at the East was fabricated by the feudal historians of China in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century and in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. with a view to justifying Han’ s policy of invasion of Korea. The historians of China in the past used to falsify history by stating that the ancestors or leaders of neighbour races and tribes stemmed from the Han race of China. The version of Jizi’ s arrival at the East is one of these.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Japanese aggressors advocated the version of Jizi’ s arrival at the East to obliterate the identity of the Korean nation.

After liberation in 1945 the invalidity of the version of Jizi’ s arrival at the East was proved by authentic historical materials.

## 7. Dolmen

Dolmens are the tombs of ancient Korea whose chamber is made out of 4 upright flat stones set up in a hollow cut out of the earth and covered by a large flat lid stone. Large dolmens are nearly 3 metres high, the lid stone is 9 metres long and 6 metres wide and weighs more than 40 tons.

*Pipha*-shaped daggers, earthenware, beads and earrings and other funeral attributes were excavated from these dolmens.

Judging from the size of the dolmens and funeral attributes unearthed, it has been acknowledged that these dolmens generally are the tombs of the nobility of ancient times but not of the common people.

The discovery of so many dolmens representative of the culture of those distant times around Pyongyang is evidence of Pyongyang being the capital of ancient Korea and the political centre in which many aristocrats and government officials had lived.

#### **8. *Pipha*-shaped dagger**

The dagger, which is shaped like a *pipha*, a kind of musical instrument, is a historic relic peculiar to ancient Korea which is not found in the areas of neighbouring countries and shows a high level of metalwork.

The *pipha*-shaped dagger was discovered throughout the territory of ancient Korea, namely, in the Korean peninsula, Liaohe and the basin of the Songhua River. Other historic relics unearthed in the regions where the *pipha*-shaped daggers were found are indigenous to Korea.

Distribution of the culture related with the *pipha*-shaped dagger is evidence that the cultural commonness of the population of ancient Korea was formed and that the original culture of ancient Korea was established, quite different from that in adjacent areas.

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This is a book about the history of the Houwe (220–265). It has disappeared. Most of the books on the history of the Houwe, quoted in these research papers, including *Wiji* and *Weilue*, have been handed down.

51. *Explanatory Notes on Korean Scripts*

This is a book about the Korean script *Hunminjongum*, written by a Japanese in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

52. *The History of the State in the East*

A collection of quotations on the history of Korean dynasties up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century from foreign history books.

53. *The Works of Yon Am*

These are selected works of Korean realist scholar Pak Ji Won (1737–1805).

54. *Geography Notes*

A geography book compiled in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

55. *Chronicles of King Yongjo*

A diary written during the reign of King Yongjo of the Ri dynasty. (1725–1776).

56. *Notes to Poems Written on the Emperor's Order*

This is a book written in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century which gives an account of selected poems compiled towards the close of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

57. *Yizhoushu*

A book on the history of the Chou dynasty in China.

## Afterword

Korean historians have achieved a certain success in the historical research on Tangun and ancient Korea in one year after the First Symposium on Tangun and Ancient Korea held on October 12-13, 1993. Basing itself on the success, the Second Symposium on Tangun and Ancient Korea was held in Pyongyang on October 5-7, 1994.

At the symposium 27 treatises were presented.

At the symposium it was stressed that the history of Tangun's Korea should be newly established in its rise, basic system and contents in view of the fact that modern science has proved that Tangun was not mythical but real existence and that archaeological and other literatures based on the wrong concept of history and the established views on Tangun and ancient Korea based on these literatures should be re-examined and criticized as a whole.

The key points here are to clarify the date of founding ancient Korea, the dynasty of ancient Korea, Tangun's birthplace and the capital and territory of ancient Korea. Because these problems are essential for the correct systematization of the national history and are major ones related to the cradle and cultural centre of the nation.

Korean archaeologists conducted many excavations of the remains of the period of Tangun and ancient Korea around Pyongyang.

In this course there were explored and excavated the ancient walls testifying to the date of founding of Tangun's

Korea and over 500 dolmen tombs and over 150 stone coffin tombs which proved that Pyongyang was the capital of ancient Korea from the period of Tangun's Korea. 18 sites of houses from among over 100 ones which were ascertained were explored and dug up.

This time the tomb in which livings were buried with the dead was dug up around Pyongyang for the first time. The measured absolute date of over 30 human bones discovered in the tomb were  $5,069 \pm 426$  years as of 1994. This proves that slave-owners and slaves differentiated as classes among the inhabitants around Pyongyang before the establishment of Tangun's Korea.

There were excavated many remains which proved that Pyongyang was the cultural centre of ancient Korea.

Such are bronze *pipha*-shaped spearhead which is attributed to the 26<sup>th</sup> century B. C. on the basis of the measured absolute date of remains and human bones dug up together and gilt copper and gold earrings which were proved to be of the 25-24<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and earthenware of the same period.

The iron mirror which is attributed to  $3,104 \pm 179$  years ago shows that iron culture already developed around Pyongyang in the 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

There were dug up many materials which proved the possibility of preservation of human bones for 5,000 years in the geological conditions around Pyongyang.

The earliest measured absolute date of well preserved human bones dug up from dolmen tombs and stone coffin tombs around Pyongyang is 5,069 years ago and that of others is 4,400-4,700 years ago.

Some treatises presented at the symposium dealt with the territory of Tangun's Korea, the politico-economic system and philosophical ideas and some others proved that *Sinji* script

was peculiar to the Korean people.

The treatises dealing with the date of founding of ancient Korea and the period of its existence proved that Tangun founded the country in the early 30<sup>th</sup> century B.C., to be more accurate, in 2993 B.C. when he was 25 years old, that the Tangun dynasty existed for over 1,500 years till the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and that Latter Korea and Man Korea which succeeded Tangun's Korea (ancient Korea) existed till 108 B.C.

The treatise dealing with the origin of the name of Korea made clear that it meant the bright country in the East which worshipped the sun and that it was closely connected with Tangun, the founder of the country, and further with Pakdal, the name of his race.

In December 1994 Tangun's tomb was rebuilt to be worthy of the tomb of the founder of ancient Korea at the foot of Mt. Taebak in Kangdong County of Pyongyang, as the historic national treasure, in pursuance of the intention of President Kim Il Sung.

Tangun's tomb vividly reflects the history of Tangun's Korea and its form is original in conformity with the custom of ancient Korea. Tangun's tomb has been built well architecturally with sculptures reflecting the mettle of Tangun's Korea, a powerful country in the East, and possesses dignity and gravity suited to the tomb of the founder of the country.

Tangun's tomb will shine for ever as a sacred place which inspires not only the present generation of the Korean nation but also the generations to come with national pride and self-respect.





Tangun' s portrait



Tangun's tomb has been rebuilt in an area of 45 hectares at the waist of Mt. Taebak in Kangdong County, Pyongyang City.

It is 70 metres high from the car park to the top of the tomb.

Stone steps number 279 and the total area of faced stone is over 25,400 square metres.

Five granite gate posts arranged in the eastern and western sides respectively are shaped differently from those around other king tombs.

They look like a guide to the 5,000 years long history. The highest of them is 10 metres and the lowest, 1.5 metres.

The monument to the reconstruction of Tangun's tomb is 8 metres high and weighs 25.5 tons.

A dedicated poem is engraved on the back of the monument.





**Portrait of the eldest prince Puru  
Portrait of the third prince Poo**



**Portraits of Ministers Sin Ji, Chi U, Ju In and Yo Su Gi**



**Portrait of the second prince Puso  
Portrait of the fourth prince Puyo**



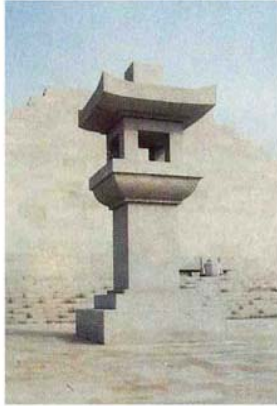
**Portraits of Ministers Phaeng U, Ko Si, Hae Wol, and  
Pi Chon Saeng**



Tangun's tomb shaped like a nine-tiered pyramid which is 22 metres high. The length of its one side at the bottom is 50 metres. Stone blocks used here number 1,994. The heaviest of them weighs 21 tons. Number nine symbolizes the most historically.



Dagger-shaped tower symbolizing the *Pipha*-shaped dagger representative of the culture of ancient Korea. The total height of the tower is seven metres and that of the bronze dagger is five metres.



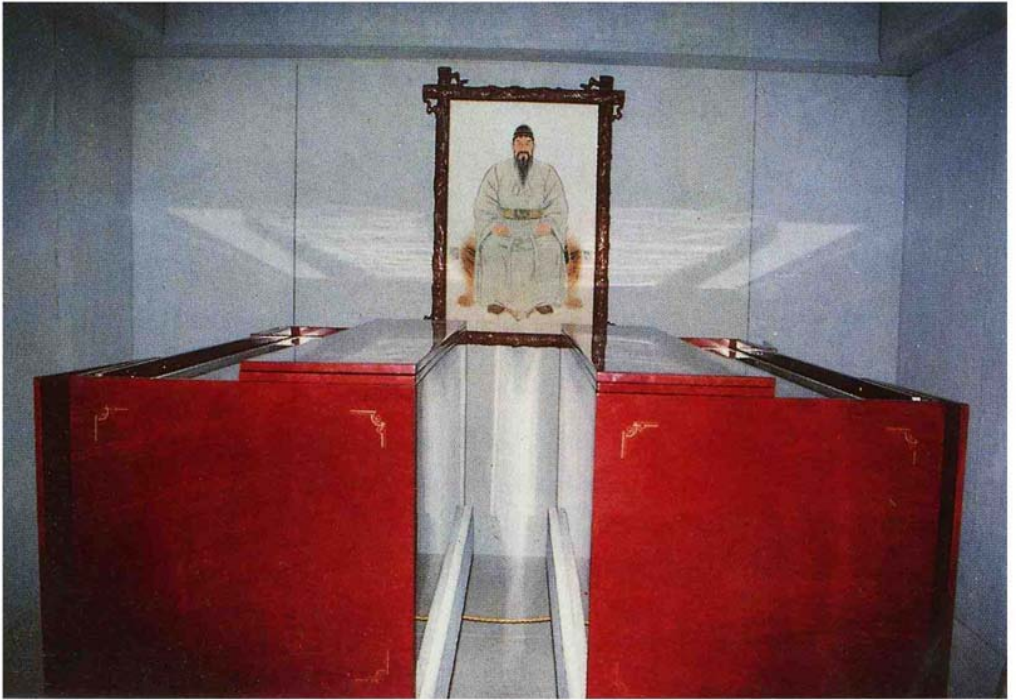
Stone lantern which is called Jangmyongdung (all night lantern). Its height is 5.5 metres.



Stone post. Its height is 6.5 metres.



Stone tiger guarding the tomb. It is 5.7 metres long and 3.5 metres high and weighs 90 tons.



**Glass box for human remains in the coffin chamber. The height of the wall of the coffin chamber is 3.4 metres and that of the ceiling is 5.2 metres. A stone gate stands at the entrance to the coffin chamber.**



**Offeritory table on the drum-shaped stone supports (6 metres in length and 3 metres in breadth) and pot-shaped incense burner (1.5 metres in height).**



“The fact that it has been firmly established through the re-illumination of Tangun, the common denominator to all of us, that he is the father of our nation, is noteworthy here rather than the shocking news about the discovery of his bones that might serve to prove him to be a person who existed in our history. This might be the fruition of the efforts made so far to confirm the long history of our nation and to reinstate our history on our own placing it above our nation.

“... I hope that on this occasion all will take the shortcut closest to national reunification, regarding Tangun as the centripetal figure.” (From the introduction of a south Korean publication headlined, *In Quest of Tangun*)