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INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN KOREA

UNDER THE CH'OE HOUSE: 1196-1258

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ABSTRACT

During the twelfth century the aristocratic elite in Koryŏ began to lose its monopolistic political control over the dynasty. A wider group of men with diverse social backgrounds started to share positions of power and responsibility. These trends became more pronounced in Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170). The military coup d'etat of 1170 which forced the abdication of Ŭijong and the succession of his brother Myŏngjong was in part a result of tensions within the civil officialdom and in part a result of military and civilian disagreements.

Most civilian officials were left unharmed in the coup. Those attacked and purged were individuals who had gained access to and ingratiated themselves with the king. Officials who had remained aloof from ostentatious court activities and persons who had suffered from the mismanagement of Ŭijong's reign not only were spared but often were recruited into the government service after the coup. During the succeeding reign political power passed from one military leader to another until Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn finally seized control of the kingdom in 1196.

In the consolidation of his power Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn was cautious and always alert to traditional power configurations. He carefully pursued a balanced policy incorporating many of the ranking civilian families into his regime. Initially he controlled the country through existing dynastic institutions; only later did he begin to establish new agencies to consolidate his own authority over the kingdom. Civilian officials, restored to their traditional positions of influence,

actively participated in many policy decisions. The monarch was also retained as the nominal source of legitimacy for the entire system. Ch'unghŏn, while maintaining final control over all decision making, actually ruled the kingdom through an appeal to consensus by paying close attention to the concerns of the court and the prominent families of the age.

Working through the preserved dynastic organization, Ch'unghŏn also sought to reassert the power of the central government, now under Ch'oe control, throughout Korea. Ch'unghŏn and his descendants first worked toward bringing stability and order to the country. This involved resolving peasant and slave discontent. To achieve this aim, the Ch'oe house revived the traditional class structure and restricted social mobility for everyone--a restriction that it would eventually relax.

Beneath these surface manifestations of a nominal dynastic revival, however, there were subtle yet profound changes affecting the entire Koryŏ system. Ch'unghŏn, and then his descendants, allowed many dynastic institutions to atrophy while increasing opportunities for men loyal to him to rise in positions of power in the kingdom. His own private armed forces, as well as his own administrative units, were manned by the mun'gaek (retainers) whom he recruited and then advanced because of their loyalty to him personally. He also brought changes to other key administrative sectors. The Ch'oe house expanded the tax system to create new groups of taxpayers and it resorted to other means such as the sigŭp (fief) to maintain its economic independence from the court.

New patterns also emerged in the Buddhist hierarchy under the auspices of the Ch'oe house. The Kyo sect with its elaborate doctrine gradually lost primacy to Sŏn (Zen) beliefs which emphasized meditation and rejected a slavish dependence on scripture. Through realistic political moves Ch'unghŏn was able to contain opposition from the Kyo Buddhists while persuading the Buddhist establishment to support his regime.

New institutional departures and subtle changes in the economic structure and religion are just a few of the highlights of this unique age. Although Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were indeed lovers of power and wealth, this should not obscure an appreciation of their sophistication as generals, statemen and institutional innovators.

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INTRODUCTION

Traditional Korea is commonly divided into three great epochs: United Silla, Koryŏ and Yi Chosŏn. Koryŏ (918-1392), the middle period, is often characterized as an age of transition from the decentralized political authority of Silla to the complete centralization under Yi Chosŏn. Warrior aristocrats ruled the Silla kingdom and they nurtured indigenous Korean political institutions, but by the rise of Yi Chosŏn nearly five hundred years after the fall of Silla, in the place of native ideas, there was a firm adherence to Chinese Confucian ideology and political systems, and civilian literati, not warriors, ruled the kingdom. The social structure which had once been rigidly stratified with no opportunity for upward social mobility under Silla also had been significantly changed by the start of Yi Chosŏn allowing most people opportunities for social advancement. Since many of these developments were evolving in the Koryŏ dynasty, and especially during its one century of military rule (1170-1270), Koryŏ is a crucial period to study in Korea's maturation.

The Koryŏ dynasty lasted 475 years. So many significant changes appeared within this time span, however, that it is almost deceptive to consider Koryŏ as a single era. Still when generalizing about the Koryŏ dynasty as a whole, historians generally talk about civilian aristocratic control of this society with military officers maintaining

subordinate functions within the government.[1] The dynastic administrative structure, it is also asserted, imitated T'ang and Sung bureaucratic models. Social mobility, although considerable freer than the preceding Silla period, was still restricted with positions of authority monopolized by a rather small group of civilian elite. Buddhism and Confucianism combined to form the ideological mainstays of the kingdom. These widely held views are essentially correct of the whole Koryŏ period, but ignore the one century of military rule. This study focuses on this discontinuity within the Koryŏ dynasty: the so-called "military" period from 1170 to 1270.

Two major events, both occurring in the twelfth century, shaped the military period and had a profound effect on Koryŏ political institutions and society. First in 1170 a military coup d'etat challenged the authority of the monarch and enabled military officers for the first time in centuries to reach positions of supreme influence in the kingdom. Then, in 1196 Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, a general in the royal army, further consolidated power into his own hands and inaugurated a new form of rule in which men achieved influence, not so much because of their position in the dynastic hierarchy or by their ties with the monarch, but through a combination of their own military strength and support from the Ch'oe family leaders. The Ch'oe family--through Ch'oe

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[1]Korean historians' views can be found in such general works as Yi Kibaek, Han'guksa sillon (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1967); Yi Kibaek and Yi Kwangnin, Han'guksa ŭi kiban chisik (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1973); Han Ugŭn (Han Woo-keun), The History of Korea, translated by Yi Kyŏngsik (Lee Kyung-shik) and edited by Grafton K. Mintz (Seoul: Eulyoo Press, 1970); and Hugh H.W. Kang "The Development of the Korean Ruling class from the Late Silla to Early Koryŏ." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1964).

Ch'unghŏn, Ch'oe U, Ch'oe Hang, and Ch'oe Ŭi, in that chronological order--ruled the kingdom for much of the military period and in the process effected significant changes in Koryŏ society.

During the century of military control (1170-1270), the kingdom underwent a number of ordeals. Seven different kings reigned during this period and the military leaders deposed three of them.[2] A series of foreign invasions also severely tested the kingdom's ability to maintain its strength. Problems with the Jurchen tribes erupted early in the thirteenth century to be followed by invasions of the peninsula by rival Khitan forces in 1216. No sooner were relations with these groups stabilized than the Mongols launched still further invasions.

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[2]The seven kings in chronological order are Ŭijong, Myŏngjong, Sinjong, Hŭijong, Kangjong, Kojong and Wŏnjong. Ŭijong, Myŏngjong, and Hŭijong were each forced to abdicate. The timetable below places the kings on the left and the powerful military figures who dominated the corresponding age on the right.

Ŭijong	1146	
Myŏngjong	1170	Chŏng Chungbu
		Kyŏng Taesŭng
		Yi Ŭimin
	1196	Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn
Sinjong	1197	
Hŭijong	1204	
Kangjong	1212	
Kojong	1213	
	1219	Ch'oe U
	1249	Ch'oe Hang
	1257	Ch'oe Ŭi
	1258	end of Ch'oe power
Wŏnjong	1259	
	1270	

Difficulties with the Mongols continued for over forty years, and were not resolved until 1270. Of greater significance for the dynasty than these external challenges, however, were the domestic changes that military leaders initiated during their century of rule, which were to have a lasting effect on the dynasty.

It is the contention of this research that the period of military rule within the Koryŏ era has been greatly misunderstood. Traditional historians, such as the compilers of the Koryŏsa, Koryŏsa chŏryo and other Yi dynasty works, have stressed the usurpation of dynastic authority by the military leaders, particularly by the Ch'oe family, and have depicted the entire military period as one of constant turmoil during which sycophants and criminals ruled. In summarizing the events of Kojong's reign (12-14-1259), for example, the Koryŏsa chŏryo states tersely that, "Domestically, powerful officials continued to seize arbitrarily the country's authority, internationally, the Jurchen and Mongols yearly sent troops."[3] We must remember that the writers of these histories, of course, were Confucian scholars who valued highly the legitimacy of the dynastic authority and consequently felt that the period was an aberration from their revered ideal of absolute authority vested in a sage king. They dismissed many of the important military figures of the time as simply "rebellious subjects."

To this writer's knowledge, no scholar has attempted a comprehensive investigation of the military period for its own sake. Korean histories offer generalizations on the period, but none makes an

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[3] Koryŏsa chŏryo (hereafter cited as KSC) Hōsa Bunkō edition (Tokyo: Gakushūin, 1960) 17:50a.

exhaustive inquiry. The several studies that have been made on particular aspects of the military period lack scope, often concentrating on just one aspect of the age and too often stressing only the disorders of military rule.[4]

The crucial 1170 coup d'etat, for instance, has been assessed only on the basis of its surface manifestations resulting in an "accepted" interpretation which says that military officials for many decades suffered under the vindictive domination of a civilian elite and that the compounded difficulties came to a climax during the rule of Ŭijong (1146-1170). Ŭijong's lax moral behavior coupled with his unconcerned attitude toward dynastic administration contributed to the already tense situation. Goaded beyond endurance the military rose in anger in 1170 and massacred nearly all civilian officials. Han Ugŭn describes the event in these words:

> The military officials made their plans and bided their time. The opportunity came in the year 1170, in August... Their action was swift and terrible. When the royal party reached Pohyŏnwŏn the soldiers escorting it turned upon it and slaughtered it to a man, killing even eunuchs and petty clerks until only the King was left. The palace was immediately attacked and every bureaucrat who had the misfortune to be there perished... Prince Ho was placed on the throne in 1171 [sic], and for the next twenty-six years

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[4]Such excellent studies as those by Pyŏn T'aesŏp or Kim Chongguk come immediately to mind. These authors have given very detailed and useful analysis of specific problems in the military period, but, as they would readily admit, they never intended to make their studies of a comprehensive nature. See for example Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Nongmin-ch'ŏnmin ŭi nan," Han'guksa vol. 7 (Seoul: T'amgudang, 1973), pp. 204-254, and Kim Chongguk, "Kōrai bushin seiken no tokushitsu ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu," Chōsen gakuhō, vol. 17 (Oct., 1960), pp. 51-80, and "Kōrai bushin seiken to sōto no tairitsu tōsō ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu," Chōsen gakuhō, vol. 21-22 (1961), pp. 567-589.

> presided helplessly over a series of bloody coup and counter-coup.[5]

The immediate years following the coup d'etat have similarly been examined only in terms of power struggles and revolts. To most historians when Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn rose in 1196 he was just one more soldier seeking the spoils of victory. Then on succeeding to control of the country, he established an even more ruthless form of dictatorship. Again Han Ugŭn provides a vivid portrayal of the events:

> Having killed and supplanted Yi Ŭimin, General Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn now proceeded ruthlessly to eliminate all possible rivals. He replaced all court officials with loyal henchmen, and banished from the palace all monks who were of royal blood and thus might become centers of disaffection. High-ranking officials, generals and even leading Buddhist priests were banished and the government was under his complete control by 1197. He even deposed and replaced the King whenever it suited his purpose, and after King Myŏngjong there were five [sic] significantly brief reigns during his years of power. He allowed nothing to stand in the way of his drive for absolute power.[6]

Although Confucian writers deplored the Ch'oe regime, most scholars admit that Ch'unghŏn's policies were effective in meeting many of the emergencies of his day. He and his descendants, more than any of their military predecessors, were able to quiet the peasant, monk and slave disturbances by developing a strong private military force, and by designing novel political institutions. The reasons for and consequences of the Ch'oe use of a private militia and innovative

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[5]Han Ugŭn, History of Korea, p. 158. For a similar analysis also see Yi Kibaek, Han'guksa sillon, p. 164-166 or Hatada Takashi, A History of Korea, translated by Warren W. Smith and Benjamin H. Hazard (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 1969) p. 45-50.

[6]Han Ugŭn, The History of Korea, p. 161. See also footnote 5.

institutions will be the subject of this study.[7]

Few studies have considered the causes of the 1170 military revolt, and then investigated the Ch'oe house from its political, social, economic and philosophical perspectives. Whereas earlier scholars have emphasized the differences in the social and political attitudes of the military and civilian officials during the early years of the Koryŏ dynasty and have interpreted these differences as being one of the fundamental causes of the 1170 coup, this study will show that on a closer examination there were more factors binding the ranking military and civilian officials than dividing them. The existence of civil-military tension cannot be denied, but that alone does not explain the coup. During Ŭijong's reign, for example, the Koryŏ bureaucratic elite was steadily splitting into two groups: one strictly civilian, allied to the king, and the other, composed of both military and civilian, covertly opposing him.

Most civilian officials were unharmed in the coup. Those attacked and purged were individuals who had gained access to and ingratiated themselves with the king. Officials who had remained aloof from court activities, and persons who had suffered from the mismanagement of Ŭijong's reign not only were spared but often were recruited into the administration of the succeeding kings. Some of the leaders of the

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[7]The major sources for this study have been the official dynastic histories, the Koryŏsa and Koryŏsa chŏryo, completed in the early Yi dynasty (1392-1910). Written by Neo-Confucion literati, these histories have their prejudices against the military rule. Whenever possible, I have tried to use other sources such as tomb inscriptions to confirm events, but such material is scarce. In researching this topic I have continually tried to interpret the sources in light of their biases.

military coup sought revenge and little more; to others, however, the coup's success was an opportunity to reform Koryŏ society. During the succeeding years of Myŏngjong's reign (1170-1197) these two divergent motives were both evident as political power passed from one military leader to another until Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn finally seized control of the kingdom in 1196.

In the consolidation of his power Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn was cautious and always alert to traditional power configurations. He carefully shaped a balanced policy that would incorporate many of the ranking civilian families into his regime. The ten point program he presented to the throne was a public declaration of his intention to restore much of the traditional order. Initially he controlled the kingdom largely through existing dynastic institutions; only later did he begin to establish new agencies to consolidate his own authority over the kingdom. Civilian officials, restored to their traditional positions of influence, actively participated in many policy decisions. The monarch was also retained as the ultimate source of legitimacy for the entire system. Ch'unghŏn, while maintaining final control over all decision making, actually ruled the kingdom through an appeal to consensus by paying close attention to the concerns of the court and the prominent families of the age.

Working through the preserved dynastic organization, Ch'unghŏn also sought to reassert the power of the central government, now under Ch'oe control, throughout provincial Korea. To achieve this first Ch'unghŏn and his descendants worked toward bringing stability and order to the country. This involved resolving peasant and slave discontent.

To accomplish this task, the Ch'oe house initially revived the traditional class structure and restricted social mobility for everyone--a restriction that it would eventually relax. This return to earlier methods and values enabled Ch'unghŏn to claim that he was seeking a restoration of the true dynastic system and thereby win support from the conservative officialdom and populace.

Beneath these surface manifestations of a dynastic revival, however, there were subtle yet profound changes being affected within the entire Koryŏ system. Ch'unghŏn allowed the dynastic armed forces to atrophy while increasing opportunities for troops and men loyal to him to control and govern the kingdom. He placed in his own armed forces, as well as in his own administrative units, men called mun'gaek (retainers) whom he recruited and then advanced because of their loyalty to the Ch'oe leadership. He also brought changes to other key administrative sectors. The Ch'oe house expanded the tax system to include new groups of taxpayers and it devised other means such as the sigŭp (fief) to maintain its economic independence from the court. Significant developments also occurred in religion. Ch'unghŏn supported Sŏn (Zen) Buddhism in the awareness that its philosophic as well as its economic and political influence could act as a check to the established Kyo Buddhist hierarchy. Through sound political moves and sheer prudence, he was able to contain opposition from the Kyo Buddhist religion and manipulate the Buddhist establishment into supporting his regime.

This study, then, through an analysis of the institutional innovations that accompanied the rise of the Ch'oe house, will try to clarify the nature of this military rule that has for many years been an enigma

in Korean history. An investigation of the constructive advances made, as well as the disruptions registered, indicates that during the Ch'oe family's rule, much more occurred than plague, murder and pillage. New institutional departures, subtle changes in the economic structure and religion are just a few of the highlights of this unique age. The acknowledgement that Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were indeed lovers of power and wealth should not obscure an appreciation of their sophistication as generals, statesmen and institutional innovators.

CHAPTER I

THE 1170 COUP D'ETAT: BEFORE AND AFTER

During Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170), the civil aristocrats, who once monopolized power in the dynasty, were already losing their absolute control. Divisions within the royal family combined with friction among the civil elite. The military, cognizant of these tensions and disillusioned with events at the court, then took the initiative and in 1170 overthrew the king, purging the capital of the more notorious sycophants. In order to appreciate the changes that accompanied this event and then Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's revolt twenty-six years later in 1196, it is important to step back and try to comprehend Koryŏ society during the eleventh and twelfth century.

Koryŏ Dynastic Administration

The Koryŏ administration reached its maturity with the reign of Munjong (1047-1083). By that time nearly all major institutions of the dynasty had been established with lines of authority well defined, enabling the government to operate smoothly and efficiently. At the apex of this order was the king who as sovereign approved all appointments, oversaw general governmental operations, and had the option of approving or discarding policy.

The central government as the bureaucratic mainstay of the monarchy was divided into several departments with general overlapping functions (see chart on p. 13). In form the structure was inspired by Chinese models of the T'ang and Sung dynasties, but in practice it was uniquely Korean in content and operation. This order, not the result

of one swift fervor of reform, evolved slowly during the tenth and eleventh centuries.[1] Politically the most influential body in the central government was the Chungsŏmunhasŏng (Royal Secretariat and Chancellery).[2] Its officials, commonly divided into two parts, the sŏngjae or state councilors and sŏngnang or policy critics, were charged with preparing edicts, recommending appointments and reviewing all policy. It could veto royal decisions simply by withholding its consent. The sŏngjae were primarily concerned with the over-all affairs of the state while the sŏngnang had the power to scrutinize administration, censure lax officials and even memorialize policy matters.[3] A second office, the Ch'umirwŏn (Security Council) deliberated on all major questions concerning palace security and national defense, working in close cooperation with the Chungsŏmunhasŏng.[4]

Technically equal but in fact less powerful than the above two was the Sangsŏsŏng (Department of Ministries) and its subordinate six ministries which formed another branch in the central government. Unlike the Chinese model, the top positions in the Sangsŏsŏng (the Tosŏng) seem to have been honorary carrying little responsibility.

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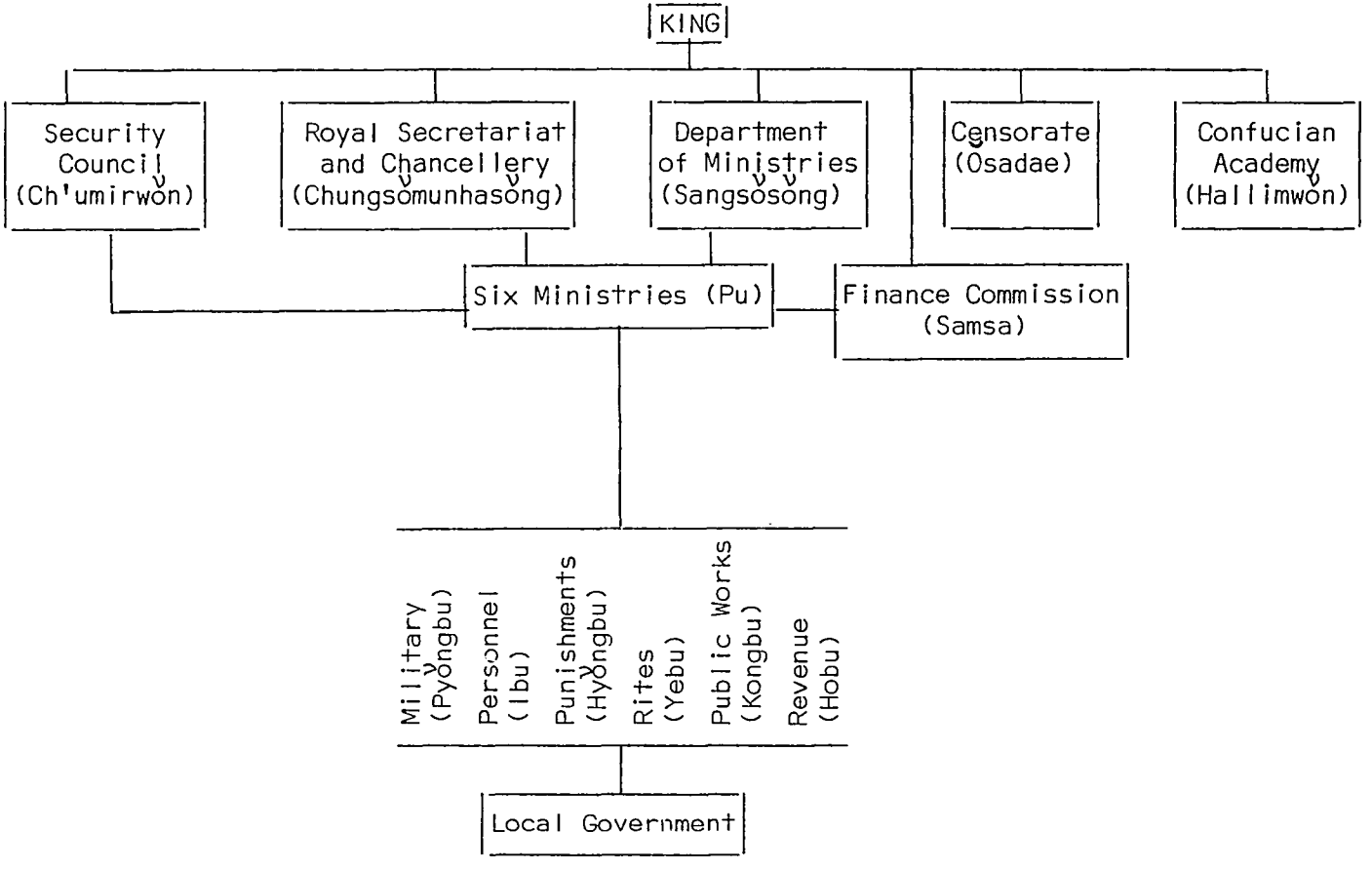
[1]Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Koryŏ ŭi Chungsŏmunhasŏng e taehayŏ," (hereafter cited as "Chungsŏmunhasŏng") in Koryŏ chŏngch'i chedosa yŏn'gu (hereafter cited as Koryŏ chŏngch'i) (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1971), p. 36.

[2]Hugh H.W. Kang, "The Development of the Korean Ruling Class from Late Silla to Early Koryŏ" (hereafter cited as "Ruling Class") (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1964), p. 225.

[3]Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Chungsŏmunhasŏng," p. 56.

[4]Kang, "Ruling Class," pp. 233-234.

The Koryŏ Central Government



The Tosŏng's major duties included drafting diplomatic replies to Japan, prayers for rain and deliberations on punishments.[5] The six ministries, which consisted of the Ministries of Personnel Affairs, Military Affairs, Revenue, Punishments, Rites, and Public Works, in that order of ranking, were in charge of administrative matters and communications on their respective areas of responsibility with local governments.[6] Many of the men who held the top positions in the ministries also held concurrent offices in the Chungsŏmunhasŏng.

Formally, censorial functions were not carried on by the sŏngnang of the Chungsŏmunhasŏng but rather by the Ŏsadae (Censorate) whose duties included overseeing the conduct of officials and examining the qualifications of appointees to government positions. In reality, however, the officials of these two agencies, functioning collectively as a general censoring body called the Taegan, wielded great influence on dynastic policy. Members of the sŏngnang, as part of their duties, usually handled remonstrances and reviewed all government policy. Their endorsement was required before dynastic appointments could take effect. The Ŏsadae (Censorate), on the other hand, informed the crown of any unethical conduct, criticized policy, corrected customs, and examined and impeached officials for their misconduct. In contrast to the sŏngnang, it was much more concerned with the deportment of those

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[5]Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Koryŏ sidae chung'ang chŏngch'i kigu ŭi haengjŏng ch'egye," (hereafter cited as "Chung'ang") in Koryŏ chŏngch'i, p. 25.

[6]Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Chung'ang," p. 13.

holding office than with new appointees.[7]

Politically subordinate, but ideologically just as important as these other agencies, was the Hallimwŏn (Confucian Academy). Often members of the Hallimwŏn would act as chigonggŏ or examiners for the civil service examination. Because of this recruitment function, both the office of chigonggŏ and positions in the Hallimwŏn were crucial posts in the dynasty. Men in these offices advised the court on ceremony and issues concerning dynastic ideology and tutored the royal princes on the Confucian classics in addition to their other responsibilities.

The Samsa (Finance Commission), the highest agency in charge of fiscal matters, was another important organ of the central administration. Responsible for the government budget, the Commission determined the management of all government revenues including payments to officials and the collection of taxes. The Finance Commission was also in charge of the Ministry of Revenue which often served only as a funnel for communications with the local governments.[8]

In the top echelon of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery and the Security Council were a group of men collectively and individually called chaesang (Councillors of State). There were eleven chaesang,

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[7]Park Yong-woon (Pak Yongun), "Koryŏjo ŭi taegan chedo," (hereafter cited as "Taegan chedo") Yŏksa hakpo, 52 (Dec., 1971), pp. 18-19. The specific members of this agency include the taebu, chungsung, siŏsa, chŏnjungsiŏ, kamch'alŏsa, p'ansa, chisa and chaptan from the Ŏsadae, and the sangsi, chigmunha, chwa and u kanŭi taebu, kupsajung, chungsŏsain, kigŏju and kigŏsain from the Chungsŏmunhasŏng.

[8]Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 230. See also Sudo Yoshiyuki, "Kōraichō ni okeru sanshi to sono chii," Chōsen gakuhō, 71 (Oct., 1975), pp. 39-90.

the holders of the six top offices in the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery and the five highest positions in the Security Council. Most of the chaesang also held concurrent positions in the ministries or other influential branches in addition to their posts in the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery or the Security Council. On the advice of this small group of men, the crown made most major decisions and implemented important policies. For example, a man who was in charge of the Ministry of Personnel Affairs would probably hold a concurrent post in one of the key positions of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery. In this way he could propose certain policies to his chaesang colleagues, and on receiving approval there he would make certain of his own ministry's cooperation in enacting the decision. Furthermore by having the chaesang approve the policy, he would be assured of his colleagues' support and thereby encounter relatively little opposition from other influential agencies in the government. The essential oligarchical character of the Koryŏ government as represented in the chaesang is evident. All major dynastic decisions would be made and enforced through this eleven-man body. Looking at the men who ruled the dynasty during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the close oligarchical, aristocratic nature of early Koryŏ becomes more apparent.

Civil Aristocracy

An aristocracy is rule by a hereditary class which is deemed, by itself and others, to monopolize fitness for government. There is a sacred element to this group--i.e., often they claim descent from gods, but the main basis of an aristocracy is usually territorial possession

with a type of petty sovereignty over the population. Often the aristocracy is a single stratum consisting of families bound by blood, wealth and a special style of life.[9]

The Silla Kingdom had maintained a rigid aristocratic order, and much of this tradition was preserved by the new dynasty and nurtured by its institutions. The Koryŏ education system was geared toward perpetuating the rule of a select group of men. Although a number of national schools were established and even some private schools, enrollment in most of these academies was limited to children of ranking officials. The state examination, which has been used by some to show Koryŏ society was esentially a bureaucratic one like its contemporary in China, also did much to foster the existing social order.[10] To sit for the examination the candidate's identity had to be presented by submitting the names of his three immediate ancestors in the paternal line and his maternal grandfather as well as his sib-origins (pon'gwan). To pass the examination time-consuming preparation in the Confucian classics was necessary, an ordeal, which for all but the genius, demanded many years of study and was thus financially impossible for the average peasant.

The perpetuation in power of one clan or several families was made possible by other institutions preserved since early in the dynasty. The Koryŏ dynasty instituted a system of nine bureaucratic grades (p'um)

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[9] International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York: McMillan, 1965) vol. 5, pp. 26-29, and Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (New York: McMillan, 1930) vol. 2, pp. 183-190.

[10] For a discussion of this argument see Pak Ch'anghŭi, "Koryŏ sidae 'kwallyoje' e taehan koch'al," (hereafter cited as "kwallyoje") Yŏksa hakpo, 58 (June, 1973), pp. 35-59.

with each level divided into an upper and lower rank giving in actuality eighteen divisions. In terms of advancement, the fifth p'um grade was considered crucial with a number of privileges extended to men who reached or passed that level. The ŭm privilege (yin in Chinese) was one of the most important devices based on this rank order that enabled the continuation of an elite rule.[11] According to this system, a designated son or grandson of an official of the fifth dynastic grade or higher could receive an official appointment when reaching the age of eighteen. Closely tied to the ŭm rule was the privilege of recommendations. Every official of the fifth grade or above was allowed to recommend a man of virtue and talent to be considered for government appointment. Although there was no fixed schedule when these recommendations would be solicited, this privilege provided an important avenue for children of elite families to enter government service.[12]

The principles of recommendation and ŭm facilitated the perpetuation of the political dominance of a select group of men. There were also institutions that provided the economic basis for the ruling elite. All people in the government service received part of their stipends in the form of rents from land. The rents thus allotted usually ceased when one's service was terminated, but certain other lands became the permanent, heritable property of retired officials. Under the kongŭmjŏn (merit land allotments), the yield from a fixed amount of land was

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[11] Kim Ŭigyu, "Koryŏ ŭmjik ko," (unpublished M.A. thesis, Seoul National University, 1970); Yi Usŏng, "Koryŏjo ŭi 'i' e taehayŏ," Yŏksa hakpo, 23 (April, 1964), pp. 1-76; and Kang "Ruling Class," pp. 236-238.

[12] Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 237

granted to officials of the fifth p'um rank and higher, and this could be transferred to heirs on death. In this way families of ranking officials secured a private economic base.[13] Men who distinguished themselves by meritorious service to the dynasty or those who were descendants of the Koryŏ kingdom also on occasion received large grants of land from the king or other special awards. Through these grants as well as through other accumulated wealth and private land holdings, men who held the ranking offices were able to secure a firm financial base.

The most prestigious and politically important offices required men who were carefully groomed in court affairs and had impeccable records. Only the men of highest ancestry and esteem were appointed to the position of chaesang.[14] The censorial agencies also only included officials who could demonstrate high integrity, knowledge and status.[15] To many this meant only men from certain chosen families. The office of naesi (Palace Attendants) provides another example of posts reserved for men of merit and high birth. The naesi were charged with attending the king. They generally were young men who had successfully completed the state examination. Often sons of leading officials, they were well educated and came from prestigious lineages. Through such an appointment, a

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[13]Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 219. Pak Ch'anghŭi, in "Koryŏ ŭi yangban chŏnsipŏp' kongŭm chebŏb' ŭi haesŏk e taehan chaegŏmt'o," Han'guk munhwa yon'guwŏn nonch'ong, vol. 22 (1973), pp. 209-222, believes that this land grant was much more narrowly distributed and actually very few men received kongŭmjŏn.

[14]John Duncan, "The Golden Age of the Koryŏ chaesang," (unpublished paper).

[15]Pak Yongun, "Taegan chedo," pp. 30-31.

promising young man could commence his government service and learn the rudiments of Koryŏ politics.

In a number of studies on early Koryŏ, there is near unanimity that this period can be labeled aristocratic.[16] Although the royal Wang clan was undoubtedly the most prestigious family throughout the dynasty, there were several other families that continually provided leadership in the dynastic offices and also intermarried with the royal family and among themselves. Many of these same families also claimed descent from Silla kings, which added to the respect and awe that they commanded.[17] Generally families with the Kim, Pak, Yi or Ch'oe surname enhanced their prestige (with a semi-sacred element) by claiming descent from the Silla aristocracy or one of the Silla royal clans, who in turn claimed supernatural origins. Many members of these families were successful in the examinations as well as participants in Confucian academies. Their life styles and political ideology followed Confucian precepts. Undoubtedly the early Koryŏ period can be labeled both aristocratic and oligarchic. The dynastic institutions were designed so that a small group of men of status would be able to control the politics of the kingdom.

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[16]See for example Kang, "Ruling Class," Pyŏn, Koryŏ chŏngch'i, or articles and books by Yi Kibaek, Yi Usŏng or Kim Ŭigyu.

[17]The major aristocratic clans during this period included the royal Wang clan, the Kyŏngju Kim clan, the Ansan Kim clan, the Kwangyang Kim clan, the Kangnŭng Kim clan, the Pyŏngsan Pak clan, the Ich'ŏn Sŏ clan, the P'ap'yŏng Yun clan, the Kyŏngwŏn Yi clan, the Chŏngju Yi clan, the Chŏngan Im clan, the Haeju Ch'oe clan, and the Kyŏngju Ch'oe clan. This list of families is based on similar lists in Kang, "Ruling Class," and Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Koryŏjo ŭi munban kwa muban," (hereafter cited as "Munban") in Koryŏ chŏngch'i, esp. pp. 308-309.

Military Structure and Personnel

The military service was subordinated to the civil authority, and, like other parts of the government, was under the ultimate jurisdiction of the chaesang. Two governmental agencies dealing with military affairs, the Ministry of Military Affairs (Pyŏngbu) and the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn), have already been mentioned, both were staffed with ranking civil officials.[18] The Ministry of Military Affairs managed appointments, the promotion and demotion of military officers as well as the general operation of the postal and transporting systems. The Security Council, however, was much more influential in state affairs than the Ministry of Military Affairs and came to control most military policy.

The actual dynastic military organization was composed of two units of royal guards (kun) and six standing armies (wi), with the following composition:

Two Royal Guards:	1.	Ŭngyanggun	1,000 men
	2.	Yonghogun	2,000 men
Six Armies:			
Standing Divisions	1.	Chwau-wi	13,000 men
	2.	Shinho-wi	7,000 men
	3.	Hungwi-wi	13,000 men
Auxiliary Division	4.	Kum'o-wi	7,000 men
Special Divisions	5.	Ch'ŏnu-wi	2,000 men
	6.	Kammun-wi	1,000 men

Each of these eight units regardless of size, had a commander (sang-changgun or supreme general) and deputy commander (tae-changgun or grand general), who collectively formed a consultive organ known as

[18]Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 233.

the Chungbang.[19] Although the functions of the Chungbang during the early Koryŏ are unclear, as the assembly of the highest military officers directly under the top civil agencies, it had a unique potential for power.

The two royal guards, perhaps the best equipped and trained units, had the duty of guarding the king. In terms of status they rated above the six armies. Among these eight units, the commander of the Yonghogun acted as the spokesman for the members of the Chungbang and was therefore customarily considered to have more prestige. The three units that comprised the Standing Divisions were the most important military companies among the six armies. Composed of both cavalry and infantry, they were trained for war and were important in defending the capital region. The Auxiliary Division, which performed police functions, maintained both a standing force of about 6,000 soldiers and an additional 1,000 men in a labor battalion. The final group, the Special Divisions, had several functions. The Ch'ŏnu forces were ceremonial honor guards while the Kammun-wi guarded the palace grounds and capital gates.[20]

There were also other units with military functions. In times of war the central armies and guards were supplemented by special mobilizations and the formation of five emergency armies which were usually placed under the command of a special commander or wŏnsu appointed for the occasion. These armies recruited men from commoner as well as

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[19]Yi Kibaek, Koryŏsa pyŏngji yŏkchu, (hereafter cited as Yŏkchu) (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 1969), p. 81.

[20]Yi Kibaek, Yŏkchu, pp. 6-8.

aristocratic backgrounds.

The troops served for the duration of the crisis but once peace was won, defense responsibilities were relegated to local residents. The two northern frontier districts were divided into various administrative sections called chu and chin. Each resident was responsible for defense. All taxes remained in the area to meet military requirements. In the southern areas a Chŏngyong (cavalry) was formed for policing and a Posŭng (infantry) for combat duty. A third unit the P'umgun, performed labor functions. Peasants undoubtedly formed these last three units.[21]

Even though the provincial forces were generally filled with commoners, the soldiers that formed the capital units seem to have come from a professional military class and the commanders--the tae-changgun and sang-changgun--from a still more prestigious group in it. The leadership, the men who participated in the Chungbang, while rarely members of the elite aristocratic clans that controlled the civil administration, often came from families that had achieved considerable recognition for their roles in the military service. Looking at the lineage of several prominent generals in Ŭijong's period, it is quite evident that they had ancestors who had also held prominent military

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[21] Yi Kibaek, "Koryŏ chuhyŏngun ko" (hereafter cited as "Chuhyŏngun") in Koryŏ pyŏngjesa yŏn'gu (hereafter cited as Pyŏngjesa) (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1968), pp. 202-229 and "Korea--The Military Tradition," (hereafter cited as "Military Tradition") in The Traditional Culture and Society of Korea: Thought and Institutions, ed. by Hugh H. W. Kang (Honolulu: Center for Korean Studies, 1975), pp. 19-20.

posts and were related to other recognized military clans.[22] Although lacking some of the high aristocratic characteristics of many of the powerful civilian clans, these officials who reached military posts of the fifth rank or above (which corresponded to similar ranking in civil posts) could take advantage of the privileges of rank and receive the ŭm rights as well as the special hereditary grants. This class was not totally forbidden to participate in civil affairs and on occasion, some of these officers held ranking positions in the ministries or other high posts.[23] Furthermore there were a number of cases in which men who came from ranking military families passed the civil service examinations and entered the civil bureaucracy.[24] Some of the more prestigious aristocratic clans such as the Kyŏngwŏn Yi also had military lines or clan members who occupied solely military positions.[25]

These military officers called muban were the upper stratum of the military class families (kunbanssijok), the special class that had the

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[22]See for example the tomb inscription for Ho Chinyong in Yi Nan'yong, Han'guk kŭmsŏngmun ch'ubo (hereafter cited as HK) (Seoul: Chungan University Press, 1968) pp. 152-153, or Yang Wŏnjun in HK pp. 145-146. Many of these men's ancestors had been prominent military officers. The case of Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn makes an equally interesting case; not only were his paternal relatives ranking generals but also his maternal relatives. Similar cases can be found for the relatives on Chin Chun, Chŏng Kŭgon, Chŏng Sukch'ŏm, Kim Pu or Kim Sun.

[23]Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Munban," pp. 298-299.

[24]See biographies of Mun Kukkyŏm in Koryŏsa (hereafter cited as KS) Yŏnse edition (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 1972), 99:15b-19b; Kŭm Ŭi in KS 102:1a-3a; Yu Kongwŏn in KS 99:19b-20b, and Chōsen kinseki sōran (hereafter cited as CK) (Seoul: Governor General's Office, 1933), vol. 1, pp. 420-423; and No Yongsun in KS 100:6b-7a, and CK, vol. 1, p. 415.

[25]Fujita, Ryōsaku, "Ri Shi-ken to sono kakei," Seikyū Gakusō, XIII (Aug., 1933), 1-37; XV (Feb., 1934), 109-135.

responsibility of supplying soldiers in the Koryŏ dynasty. When a professional soldier grew old or sick, someone else in his family inherited the position.[26] In the event that a kunbanssijok family died out, a new replacement could be selected from among the children of officials of the sixth rank or lower or from qualified peasants.[27] Men from the kunbanssijok could advance into officers' positions. In this way there was the potential for men of ordinary backgrounds to advance into the upper ranks of the military service.

As stated above, until the military coup of 1170, the civilian leadership maintained its control over the military service. Through their positions in the Security Council and Ministry of Military Affairs, the civilian aristocrats were able to control the administration of the military. Furthermore, when special mobilizations were ordered in wartime or during civil disturbances, the civilian leadership took command of the armed forces and handled the strategy of defense.[28]

The military leadership was held in a subordinate position by various institutional mechanisms. Although the officer in charge of the Yanghogun, as spokesman for members of the Chungbang, represented the armed forces, each commander of the capital units was directly responsible only to the highest civil authority of the government. This not only balanced the power within the central army, but also prevented the command of the entire central forces from falling into the hands

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[26]Yi Kibaek, "Military Tradition," p. 16, and"Koryŏ kunin ko" (hereafter cited as "Kunin") in Pyŏngjesa, pp. 82-130.

[27]Yi Kibaek, "Military Tradition," pp. 17-18, and "Kunin," pp. 82-130.

[28]Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Munban," especially pp. 285-290.

of any one military officer.[29] In still other ways it is apparent that the military officials had an inferior status relative to their civilian counterparts during this period. According to dynastic ranks, which were divided into eighteen grades, the top military post was at the fifth division (upper third p'um), while the civilian ranks reached as high as the second level (lower first p'um). If the highest military officer (a sang-changgun) were to advance still further, it was necessary for him to assume a civilian title. For this reason to reach a top position as a chaesang, a military officer would have to take a civilian position and title and abandon his military status. Further evidence of civilian control over military functions is seen in the exclusion of military officers from the position of pyŏngmasa (Military Commissioner). The pyŏngmasa were civilian officials carrying jurisdiction over both military and civil affairs for the two northern frontier provinces, and they were directly responsible to the chaesang.[30]

Military officers had little responsibility in the highest levels of political decision making. As stated by one Koryŏ historian:

> The area of duty saved for the military officials was strictly confined to the field military units where they served as the commanders of the six Wi and two Kun, and where the technical skills of the professional soldiers were presumably best utilized for the most effective result. It is evident that the military officials were completely barred from positions of political responsibility in the early Koryŏ government. It is also evident that even among the civil officials only a small number from a carefully selected group actually had access to power, and they in fact ran the government through an intricate system of control.

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[29]Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 179.

[30]Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 234.

> Under the circumstances, it is small wonder that the reorganized government of early Koryŏ in time produced a new oligarchical aristocracy who dominated the government and perpetuated themselves in power for generations.[31]

The Regional Power Structure

In addition to military and civilian officials, one other group had some bearing in central politics: clans with a local or regional power base. At the start of the Koryŏ dynasty, Wang Kŏn had to work through the various local leaders to rule the kingdom, and only through a slow, deliberate policy was the dynasty able to assert its influence over the various regions. Indeed, the history of the early Koryŏ is in part a record of the gradual expansion of the central administration into regional Korea.

The state succeeded in restraining centrifugal elements and co-opting the local power elite by promising prestigious offices, ranks and titles, along with substantial emoluments. Nearly all prominent Koryŏ officials ultimately emerged from such regional origins having as ancestors men who had once been hojang (township headmen). The Kyŏngwŏn Yi clan, for example, was a powerful family controlling much of the area around modern Inch'ŏn. The Haeju Ch'oe clan was well established in the Haeju area. Many military officers were also products of prominent local families.

The dynasty tried to control the various regions of the country through institutional mechanisms. It established an elaboarate regional chu-hyŏn system at the end of the tenth century to improve

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[31] Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 235.

local administration, and through the dispatch of central officials and the dispersal of directives via the Ministry of Revenue, the dynasty, permitting a considerable degree of local autonomy, governed rural Korea. Under the command of the local hojang (township headman) each town was a near self-sufficient governing unit with specified people in charge of local peace keeping, emergency food supplies, and general administrative matters. The local hojang, selected by and from among the prominent area families, was in charge of the collection of taxes, the mobilization of the area residents for specified projects and the administration of dynastic commands.[32] As the office of hojang carried great potential for local autonomy, the dynasty closely watched the hojang, checking any independent designs, and tried to link local interests with state needs. Through the office of sasimgwan (local inspector general), which was a centrally appointed official representing the dynasty in local affairs, the power of the hojang was blunted. The sasimgwan, although never able to surpass the power of the hojang, spoke for the interests of the dynasty in the local power structure and kept the central government informed of any events in his area of responsibility.[33] The dynasty also established a hostage (kiin) system through which the sons of prominent local officials were required to go to the capital to work in dynastic offices. Two things were accomplished by this. First, the dynasty was able to exert indirect influence over

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[32]Kim Chongguk, "Korai jidai no kyori ni tsuite," (hereafter cited as "Kyori") Chōsen gakuhō, 25 (Oct., 1962), especially pp. 94-101.

[33]See Hatada Takashi, "Korai no jishinkan" (hereafter cited as "Jishinkan") in Chōsen chūsei shakaishi no kenkyū (hereafter cited as Chōsen chūsei) (Tokyo, 1972), pp. 105-139.

the hojang and other local leaders through this system, and second, the children of prominent local officials, through their experience of working in the central bureaucracy, might be enticed to serve the dynasty or at least be more amenable to the central authority.

By Munjong's reign, regional designations were well established bringing many areas into some sort of contact with the central administration, and under Yejong's rule this order was made even more elaborate with the establishment of local kammugwan (district offices).[34] Since centrally appointed officials, staffed through the kammugwan, were dispatched to rural areas, one can infer that by this move the responsibilities and thus the power of the hojang and other local officials were further curbed. Then, in Injong's reign the stipend system was refined, placing for the first time many regional officials on the dynastic salary scales.[35] This also reflects the further expansion of the central government into rural Korea.

Coupled with the extension of the central authority into local areas were subtle changes in the composition of the dynastic administration. Starting around Injong's reign, there begins a marked increase in the number of men in the central government who are immediate descendants of local officials. It seems that in compensation for their loss of authority in their home regions, the local hojang and their families were offered central dynastic positions. In Injong's reign,

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[34] KS 77:43a.

[35] See KS 80:11a-13a, and Yi Hŭidŏk, "Koryŏ nokpongje ŭi yŏn'gu," (hereafter cited as "Nokpong") in Yi Hongjik paksa hwan'gap kinyŏm (hereafter cited as Yi hwan'gap) (Seoul: Sin'gu munhwasa, 1969) pp. 165-193.

for example, Yi Chunyang, Ch'oe Yu and Pak Ŭisin, all prominent figures, had been the children of local elite clans.[36] One must not get the impression that these changes were accomplished without incident, rather these developments which had significant implications for the dynasty met with opposition. The rebellion led by Yi Chagyŏm in 1126 was caused in part by tensions evolving out of rivalries between the established central aristocrats and officials who still had close ties with various localities.[37] Although differences were muted after this rebellion, such competition remained a source of potential violence.

Although the dynastic structure was able to weather most political storms, fissures were appearing that ultimately would precipitate the 1170 coup d'etat and the rise of the military forces. But to understand the actual operation of the Koryŏ system and also to understand what was occurring in Koryŏ society during the years immediately prior to the rise of the military, we need to examine the reign of Ŭijong (1146-1170).

Dynastic Administration Under Ŭijong

The composition of certain key offices in the dynastic civil power structure during Ŭijong's reign is presented on Chart A (pp. 31-35) to clarify the degree of oligarchical and aristocratic control along

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[36] See Kim Chongguk "Kyori," pp. 113-115 and Pak Kyŏngja, "Koryŏ hyangni chedo ŭi sŏngnip," Yŏksa hakpo, 63 (Sept., 1974) pp. 53-88.

[37] Kim Yun'gon in "Koryŏ kwijok sahoe ŭi che mosun," Han'guksa vol. 7 (Seoul: T'amgudang, 1973), pp. 40-50, suggests Yi Chagyŏm represents the established central aristocrats and officials like Han Anin, Yi Su, Mun Kongin and Chŏng Kuksu, who were purged by Chagyŏm, represent families that recently entered the central hierarchy.

CHART A: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Chaesang						
Chungsŏmunhasŏng						
Ko Chŏgi	C	E		K		
Kim Kŏgong	C		L	K		2
Kim Pusik	C	E	AA			
Kim Yŏnggwan	C	E	AA			
Kim Yŏngbu	C	E	AA	K		2
Kim Yŏngyun	C	E	AA	K		3
Mun Kongwŏn	C	E	AA			3
Pak Sunch'ung	C		L			
Sin Suk	C			K		3
Ch'umirwŏn						
Kim Kŏgong	C		L			1
Kim Yŏnggwan	C	E	A			1
Kim Yŏngbu	C	E	A			1
Kim Yŏngyon	C	E	A			1
Sŏ Kong	C		AA	K		2
Sin Suk	C					2

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Yang Wŏnjun	C		A			3
Wang Ch'ung	C	E	AA			
Yu P'il	C	E				3
Yun Ŏni	C	E	A			
Yi Sik	C		A			
Yi Wŏnŭng	C	E				4
Yi Insil	C	E	A			
Yi Chimu	C	E	A			2
Ch'oe On	C			K	B	
Wang Sik	C			K		
Yu P'il	C	E				2
Min Kongyun	C	E	A			1
Im Kwang	C	E				
Im Kŭkch'ung	C	E	A			2
Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng	C	E		K		

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Ch'oe Yuch'ing	C			K	B	
Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng	C	E	A			2
Ch'oe Yunŭi	C	E	AA			4
Ch'oe Chayŏng	C					2
Ch'oe Chae	C	E	A			
Ch'oe Ham	C	E	AA			2
Hŏ Hongjae	C	E		K	B	1
Kim Yŏngsŏk	C	E	AA			
Ch'oe Yuch'ing	C				B	3
Ch'oe Yunŭi	C	E	A	K		2,3
Ch'oe Chayŏng	C					1
Ch'oe Ham	C	E	A			1
Yi Yangsŭng	C	E				

CHART A: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Chungsŏmunhasŏng (3-7 p'um grade)						
Kim Kwangjung	C	E	A			1
Kim Ubŏn	C	E				
Kim Chonjung	C	E	A	K		2
Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA			1
Pak Yukhwa	C					2
Yang Sunjŏng	C				B	1
Yun Inch'ŏm	C	E	A			2
Ch'umirwŏn (3-7 p'um grade)						
Kim Tonjung	C	E	AA		B	2
Kim Yang	C	E				2
Kim Yŏngyun	C	E	A			1
Kim Iyŏng	C					
Min Yŏngmo	C	E	AA			2
Pak Sunch'ung	C		L	K		1
Sŏ Kong	C		A			1
Sŏ Sun	C	E			B	4
Yi Munt'aek	C		L			2
Yi Wŏnŭng	C	E				1,3
Yi Chisim	C	E			B	
Chŏng Chiwŏn	C	E				
Cho Mungwi	C				B	
Cho Chinyak	C					2
Ch'oe Nubaek	C	E	L			
Yang Sunjŏng	C				B	2
Yang Wŏnjun	C		A		B	2
Yu Sŏk	C	E	A	K		
Yu P'il	C	E				1
Yi Kongsŭng	C	E	A	K		2
Yi Tam	C					
Yi Set'ong	C				B	
Yi Wŏnŭng	C	E				2
Ch'oe Ubo	C	E	A			1
Ch'oe Yunŭi	C	E	A			1
Ch'oe Ŭngch'ŏng	C		A			
Han Noe	C				B	
Hŏ Sesu	C					
Im Kŭkchŏng	C		A			1
Im Kŭkch'ung	C	E	A			1
Im Chongsik	C				B	
Chŏng Summyŏng	C	E	L			
Cho Chinyak	C					1
Ch'oe Yuch'ing	C				B	2
Hŏ Hongjae	C	E				1

CHART A: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Six Ministries																				
Personnel																				
Pak Sunch'ung	C		L	K		I	Yi Chimu	C	E	A			I	Han Chŏng	C					2
Yun Tonsin	C	E	A		B		Ch'oe Yuch'ing	C			K	B	7	Hŏ Hongjae	C	E		K	B	I
Military																				
Kang Ch'ŏyak	C				B		Sŏ Kong	C		A	K		2	Chin Yunsung	C				B	
Ko Chogi	C			K			Yi Kwangjin	C		AA				Chae In	M					
Kim Yŏngbu	C	E	A	K			Yi Munt'aek	C		L			I	Ch'oe Yuch'ing	C			K	B	6
Kim Yŏngyun	C	E	A	K			Cho Tonghŭi	C				B		Ch'oe Chayŏng						
Kim Chang	C						Chi Sim	M			K									
Punishments																				
Kwŏn Chŏnggyun	M					I	Kim Chonjung	C	E	A	K		I	Yi Kongsŭng	C	E	A			4
Kim Tonjung	C	E	A		B	I	Pak Yukhwa	C					I	Im Kŭkch'ung	C	E	A			3
Kim Onjun	C																			
Revenue																				
Kim Kŏgong	C			K		2	Yi Inyŏng	C	E	A				Ch'oe Ch'un	C		A		B	
Yang Wŏnjun	C		A			I	Chŏng Pokkyŏng	C		AA				U Pangjae	M					I
Yi Yunsu	C						Ch'oe Chap'a	C												

CHART A: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Rites																				
Kim Yang	C	E				3	Sŏ Sun	C	E			B	3	Yun Inch'ŏm	C	E	AA			1
Pak Yu	C						Yu Sŏk	C	E	A	K									
Public Works																				
Kim Kahoe	C						Im Kŭkchŏng	C		A			2	Yi Kwangjin	C		A			
Yun Ŏnmun	C		A				Pang Chasu	M												
Other																				
Min Yŏngmo	C	E	AA			1	Yi Inbo	C				B		Ch'oe Ch'i	C				B	
Sangsŏdosŏng																				
Kang Ch'ŏgyun	C				B		Kim Kwangjung	C	E	A			3	Sŏ Sun	C	E			B	
Chi Sim	M			K			Kim Tonsi	C		AA		B		Sin Suk	C			K		4
Kwŏn Chŏnggyun	M					2	Kim Sillyŏn	C		AA				U Pangjae	M					2
Ch'oe Yuch'ing	C			K	B	5	Pak Yukhwa	C					4							
Ŏsadae																				
Ko Yongbu	C						Sin Suk	C					1	Ch'oe Tongsik	C				B	
Ko Chasa	C	E					C Ch'ungjŏng	C		L				Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng	C	E	A	K		1
Kim Kisin	C				B		Wang Sik	C			K			Ch'oe Yunŭi	C	E	A	K		2
Kim Yang	C	E				1	Yi Kongsŭng	C	E	A	K		1	Ch'oe Yunin	C	E	AA			
Mun Kongyu	C		AA				Yi Pokki	C				B	2	Han Munyu	C	E	A			
Mun Kongwŏn	C	E	A			2	Yi Ŭngjang	C		AA				Han Chŏng	C					1
Pak Yun'gong	C				B	2	Yi Chaksŭng	C						Ham Yuil	C					2

CHART A: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ŭijong's reign (1146-1170) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	banished in 1170	miscellaneous
Chigonggŏ																				
Kim Ubon	C	E				2	Im Kŭkch'ung	C	E				2	Yi Kongsŭng	C	E				2
Kim Yŏnggwan	C	E				2	Kim Yŏngsŏk	C	E				2	Kim Yŏngbu	C	E				
Ko Chogi	C	E				2	Yu Sŏk	C	E				2	Yi Chisim	C	E				2
Yu P'il	C	E				2	Ch'oe Yunin	C	E				2	Kim Yang	C	E				2
Mun Kongwŏn	C	E				2	Kim Chongjung	C	E				2	Kim Yongyun	C	E				2
Yi Chimu	C	E				2	Yi Wŏnŭng	C	E				1	Hŏ Hongjae	C	E				2
Sŏ Sun	C	E				2	Kim Kwangjung	C	E				2	Yi Yangsŭng	C	E				
Yi Tŏksu	C	E																		

Legend and Totals

Total	96	
C - Civilian	90	(93%)
M - Military	6	(6%)
? - unknown		
E - passed examination	41	(42%)
A - father fifth p'um rank or above	39	(40%)
AA - father and grandfather fifth p'um rank or above	21	(22%)
L - commoner or functionary background	5	(5%)
H - inferior background		
K - concurrent position		

Numbers under miscellaneous indicate progression in advancement.

Same symbols will be used in later charts.

with the subtle changes occurring in the system during this reign. To understand the political organization, the ranking dynastic offices are listed with the men who filled these offices. Information concerning the lineage of these men, their means of entering the civil service (if they used the state examination), as well as whether they were from the military or civilian branch, is also included to establish the social background of the officials. A man is classified in the military service if it appears that when he first entered the government service he occupied a military position. Men have been given a special designation if their fathers or grandfathers held the fifth p'um rank or higher. As was noted earlier, this rank is a notable demarcation between men of high and low prestige. Once this rank is achieved, one is assured of many economic, social and political privileges. This analysis is intended to provide an assessment of the general power configurations of Ŭijong's reign.[38]

Chart A thus includes all men mentioned in the Koryŏ dynastic histories, or other sources such as tomb inscriptions, as holding these designated posts during this period. Often the material on these individuals is scanty, making it difficult to offer a complete analysis. Moreover, if every office considered on Chart A were filled, there would be some 105 positions. Since there is no roster of men holding offices, one must be satisfied with this rough scheme, although at best it presents only an estimation of the trends during this time. Out of the ninety-seven men listed on this chart, six men were found to have held

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[38]This same basic organization will also be used in the analysis of subsequent periods.

military ranks while all others appear to be civilian officials. Forty-one men (42% of all officials found) are known to have passed the state examination, and thirty-nine men (40%) can be identified as having fathers who held the fifth rank or higher. Of these men, half (twenty-one men) also had grandfathers who held the fifth rank or higher.

The chaesang, which represent the power elite under the king and through which the powerful controlled the dynastic machinery, are listed at the top of the chart. As the chaesang are divided into two groups, the ranking members of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery (Chungsŏmunhasŏng) and the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn), this division is also reflected in the chart. Some forty-two members of the chaesang have been discovered for this period. Twenty-six were in the top positions of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery as munhasijung (Chancellor), p'yŏngjangsa (Executive), ch'amjijŏngsa (Assistant Executive in Political Affairs), chŏngdangmunhak (Assistant Executive in Letters), and chimunhasangsŏ (Administrator); the remaining were in the Security Council as p'anwŏnsa (Supreme Administrator), chiwŏnsa (Acting Administrator) or tongchiwŏnsa (Co-Administrator). Of the chaesang at least twenty-nine (67%) are known to have successfully completed the state examination, indicating that ability was an important criterion for admission to this body. Twenty-four (57%) of the men had fathers or grandfathers who held ranking posts (fifth rank or above) in previous years. When one looks at the clans of these men, many elite clans, such as Kyŏngju Kims, Kyŏngwŏn Yis, Ich'ŏn Sŏs or Haeju Ch'oes are found. But it is also obvious that other families were also represented in this top stratum: the Namp'yŏng Mun clan, the Tongju Ch'oe clan, the

Yŏgwang Kim clan, and lineages that were not of the established elite, though only a few, also reached these ranking offices and held positions as chaesang. There were even several men such as Pak Sunch'ung or Kim Kŏgong whose families had had few previous connections with the central officialdom but rose to prominence from the post of sŏri (functionary).[39] The aristocratic families no longer had a monopoly on the most important offices, but their influence was still potent.

The composition of the officials in the lower offices of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery (third to seventh p'um rank) and the lower Security Council (third to seventh p'um rank) reflects weakening aristocratic control. Slightly more than half of the lower members of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery and the Security Council can be identified as having completed the state examination. Less than half, at the minimum, however, could claim to have immediate ancestors who held the fifth rank or higher in the civil structure. This is the most notable difference from the chaesang. Although Kyŏngju Kims, Kyŏngwŏn Yis, and other aristocratic families are represented, many men with no record of a father or grandfather active in governmental affairs also appear. This same pattern can be found for the next two major categories--the six ministries and the Ŏsadae (Censorate). Few men in these offices had immediate forefathers who had reached high dynastic ranks indicating ancestry was no longer of paramount importance to achieve

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[39] Kim Kŏgong was a sŏri who came from Pugwŏn. A descendant of Kyŏngsunwang, a Silla king, Kim Kŏgong was the founder of the Wŏnju Kim clan; see KS 99:42a-b and Chŭngbo munhŏn pigo (hereafter cited as MHP) (Seoul: Tongguk munhwasa, 1964) 47:42a. Less is known about Pak Sunch'ung; the sources merely indicate that he rose from a sŏri to top offices, KS 18:19b.

office. In the ministries military men are found holding civil ranks. Some five officers held posts in the Ministry of Military Affairs, Punishments, Public Works or Revenue. The remaining ministries, the Ministry of Personnel Affairs and the Ministry of Rites, seem to have been reserved for men with civilian backgrounds. Included also in this dynastic overview are men who held posts in the Department of Ministries (Sangsŏdosŏng). As the functions of this department seem to have been absorbed by the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery or the six ministries, appointments to positions here were largely honorary.[40] It is interesting to see that at least three of the men who were given these offices held military ranks and only two of the eleven men in the Department of Ministries show evidence of passing the state examination. Equally significant is that at a minimum three could claim to be descendants of men of high ranks. As was suggested, positions in the Department of Ministries had very little real political power and were given more as honors on the basis of loyal service to the dynasty. The office of chigonggŏ (examiner) has been added to this chart. Those who were chigonggŏ usually held this post only for the duration of an examination period and then returned to their original posts. In this particular instance all of them held another office included on this chart and as chigonggŏ they played an additional role in the recruitment of civil officials. They were generally men not only of high learning but also of great prestige.

From the chart, what sort of conclusions can be made about developments during Ŭijong's reign? Power still rested in the chaesang which

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[40] Pyŏn, "Chung'ang," p. 35.

brought many concurrent appointments in important sectors of the bureaucray--at least twelve chaesang positions had concurrent posts in other agencies. But the overall composition of the dynastic structure, including the chaesang, seems to have lost some of the exclusiveness that might have characterized earlier periods of the dynasty. Leading aristocratic families were still evident but at least six men from local hojang or functionary backgrounds also played roles in decision-making. The state examination also seems to have played an ambiguous role. Successful candidates congregated in the high offices and especially the chaesang; still, less than 45% of the men in the bureaucracy were found to have proven themselves through the completion of this examination. The examination's function in this society was important. It brought prestige to the successful; it also seems to have facilitated their advance through the ranks. But it does not appear to have been a necessary step to reach high ranks. Although the oligarchial nature of the system remains, and the aristocratic flavor is present, the dynastic structure was neither as rigid nor as exclusive as described in the earlier section. In fact, one could argue that the aristocracy was losing its absolute power. Accompanying this change in aristocratic influence were controversial developments in the court.

Ŭijong and His Opponents

Controversy surrounded Ŭijong even before he became king. Both his father, the king Injong, and his mother, Lady Im, opposed his inheritance of the throne. Injong feared that his son would be incapable of being a just lord and Lady Im, the queen, wanted her second

son to ascend the throne.[41] Only through the intervention of the royal tutor, who promised to guide and admonish Ŭijong, was an orderly succession permitted. Once in power, however, the new king quickly sought to assert his own independence and in the process incurred criticism from many quarters.

The censorial bodies, from the start of his reign, proved to be Ŭijong's most formidable opponent, and behind their remonstrances patterns were evolving that indicate two distinct groups at court were appearing. On the one side, Ŭijong was supported by eunuchs, a number of naesi (palace attendants), and many ranking officials who would back the king not just because he was the rightful monarch, but also because they owed their own prominence to royal patronage or because they found that the men who opposed the king were their own opponents as well. The king as the legitimate monarch carried esteem and it was in the interests of the entrenched officialdom to support the king and thereby maintain the status quo as well as their own position. Ŭijong undoubtedly had much support from the oligarchical establishment, but in opposition to this group, another clique, centering especially in the censorial bodies, was emerging during Ŭijong's reign.

The censorial agencies made vociferous attacks on the deterioration of the naesi, the growth of the power of the eunuchs and the king's failure to attend to state affairs. Censorial attacks became so strong that all government functions came to a near standstill on

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[41] KSC 11:8a, and KS 98:23a.

several occasions. Soon after Ŭijong came to power the censorate launched an attack on the king's constant enjoyment of kyŏkku (polo).[42] Evidently the king refused to acquiesce in the censorate's remonstrance for he continued to spend much time watching this equestrian sport and neglected state affairs according to the censorate. Kings before had enjoyed this sport but the censorate was perhaps using Ŭijong's patronage of kyŏkku as a cause célèbre to attack the monarch. Not until many protests six years later did the king finally agree to release his horses and abandon the game.[43]

The king was also criticized for the individuals that he recruited into his court. Eunuchs and palace attendants in particular were the targets of a number of censorial attacks. Within a year after Ŭijong came to power, petitions were already lodged against several eunuchs and a palace attendant.[44] Although the conflicts between the king and his censors often led to a stalemate, once some fourteen naesi were removed from office and later a eunuch who had violated Confucian codes of dress was severely reprimanded.[45]

Although the king might have been guilty of errors, there was a group within the power structure that was on particularly bad terms with the king and several royal followers. An incident in 1151 deserves special note for it reveals the first evidence of this group.

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[42] KSC 11:1a-b.

[43] KS 17:35b-38a, KSC 11:14a.

[44] KS 17:24a-b, KSC 11:2b-3a.

[45] KSC 11:9a.

What is even more remarkable is that this group had ties with the maternal royal family and the censorial bodies. In the spring of 1151 Chŏng Sŏ, a naesi nangjung (Office Chief of Palace Attendants), Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng, a chaesang and former censor, and Yi Chaksŭng, an Ŏsajapdan (Censor of Miscellaneous Affairs), were all demoted, and at the same time Prince Kyŏng, brother of Ŭijong, was stripped of a number of titles. Tension had been building within the royal family for years. Even before Ŭijong came to power, challenges to his succession had already been registered as demonstrated by the endorsement of Ŭijong's second brother to be the choice for the throne by his parents. Once in power Ŭijong became suspicious of his brothers and on a number of occasions suppressed their activities. One brother abandoned all political designs and became a monk at one of the major Buddhist temples--Hŭngwangsa.[46] The others, remaining at court, became rallying points for opposition and Kyŏng was perhaps the most central figure and a major threat to Ŭijong.

Kyŏng was on good terms with his mother's family, the Chŏngan Im clan, especially one Im Kŭkchŏng, and through the Im clan he was indirectly related to Chŏng Sŏ, Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng and Yi Chaksŭng.[47] The king, frustrated by so many censorial attacks, was suspicious of many of the censors and suspected that there might have been some plot afoot between his brother Kyŏng and some of his distant relatives in

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[46] KSC 11:17b.

[47] Im Kŭkchŏng was Prince Kyŏng's maternal uncle. Im's sister was married to Chŏng Sŏ. Chŏng Sŏ was a key man in extending these relations for his sisters were in turn married to Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng and Yi Chaksŭng.

the censorate. Prompted by these doubts, a number of the king's attendants led by a certain eunuch Chŏng Ham brought charges that Kyŏng had designs on the throne. Although the charges were not substantiated, Ham soon concocted rumors about the relations between Prince Kyŏng and the extended maternal royal family. Kim Chonjung, an ally to the king, reinforced these tales building the case against Kyŏng and his relatives. The histories indicate that Chonjung's motives were far from pure. "Chonjung was on unfriendly terms with the queen's sister's husband Office Chief of Palace Attendants (naesi nangjung) Chŏng Sŏ and the queen's brother Transmitter (sŏnsŭng) Im Kŭkchŏng."[48] Kim also had an old friendship with the eunuch Chŏng Ham, and now because of his petty grudges, he charged the atmosphere by playing on the king's own fears, culminating in the dismissal of these "anti-Ŭijong" officials.

The men who were demoted at this time not only shared a common bond through marriage ties and links with the censorate, but also had similar regional origins as well. Chong Sŏ, for example, was from Tongnae near modern Pusan and entered the dynastic service through the ŭm privilege being appointed a naesi.[49] The Chŏng family had long been prominent in local politics with many of its members acting as area hojang (township men). While a naesi, Sŏ probably first challenged the eunuchs and Kim Chonjung, and this might have contributed to his demise. But other than his opposition to Chonjung and his close ties

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[48] KS 90:28a-29b, KSC 11:9b-11a.

[49] HK p. 100.

with Kyŏng, we know little more at this time. One cannot help wonder, however, whether Sŏ's own family background, as the grandson of a hojang, and his links with men of similar origins like the Chŏngan Im or Tongju Ch'oe clans might have been an additional factor in his banishment.[50] Opposition to Ŭijong was forming around such men as Chŏng Sŏ, Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng and Im clansmen who were all from families with strong regional ties, relatively new to dynastic politics, and related to each other through marriage. These men, some of them censors, were quite possibly using remonstrance as a means to attack the king and undermine his authority, but the forces at the court were quite strong. One month after Sŏ was removed, his alleged crimes were recorded in the government register along with those of Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng and Yi Chaksŭng.

For the subsequent five years little was heard from Chŏng Sŏ, Prince Kyŏng or their relatives until suddenly in 1157 it is reported that Kyŏng was exiled to Ch'ŏnanbu and Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng, Im Kŭkchŏng, Kim Iyŏng, Yi Chaksŭng and Chŏng Sŏ were all demoted. Kim Iyŏng was one of Sŏ's in-laws who had survived the earlier purge. This incident seems to have been sparked by Ŭijong's suspicions that his mother's family still harbored ill will for him. Fearing that his mother would in fact undo his plan, Ŭijong had her sent to Pojesa temple first and

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[50]The Im clan grew to prominence in Injong's reign when individuals from many local clans were entering the central bureaucracy. Im Kŭkchŏng was married to a T'anju Han. This clan suffered under Yi Chagyŏm's earlier rebellion. Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng, another associate, was from the Tongju Ch'oe clan and this family seems to have maintained themselves as a prominent local family in Tongju since early in the dynasty. The lineages of Kim Iyŏng and Yi Chaksŭng remain obscure.

made it appear that he had no control over the ensuing events.[51] To Ŭijong, all of these people posed a threat to his power structure that could best be handled by dismissal or banishment. One historian concluded,

> Taeryŏnghu Kyŏng's rebellion is not clear. His mother is still alive and suffers because of her son's exile. Ŭijong is ungrateful. Yuch'ŏng is upright and a renowned official of his age. Chaksŭng, a pure principled and in every way a good censor, is disliked by Chŏng Ham and unable to escape exile--alas![52]

The censorial agencies, even with these banishments, did not surrender. It continued to admonish the king, then in 1163 the censors, under the leadership of one Mun Kŭkkyŏm, launched one last attack. Mun criticized and chided the king for supporting eunuchs and confidants who only damage the throne. When he referred to the scandals of the palace, Ŭijong in anger burnt the petition and banished Mun.[53] After this attempt the censorate seems to have abandoned further reproof, for the king was all too willing to force his critics into exile, and too many officials had resigned their positions in disgust. With Mun's removal there were few who dared to challenge the authority of the king.

Most of this purged group did not reappear until after the military coup of 1170. Still, it is important to realize that, even though they were removed from the power structure, their interest in politics continued. This particular group had tenuous and somewhat indirect

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[51] KSC 11:21b-22a.

[52] KSC 11:22a.

[53] KS 99:18a-b, KSC 11:34a-b.

ties with the military. Kim Iyŏng, Chŏng Sŏ's brother-in-law, was related by marriage to Chŏng Chungbu. Chungbu, as will be seen later, was one of the leading generals of the period and was instrumental in planning the 1170 coup. Chungbu's son Kyun married Kim Iyŏng's daughter.[54] Other ties between this group and the military are also apparent. Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng's sons, In and Tang, both were registrars in the capital armies.[55] Although these positions were civil posts, it might be inferred that through these two men, both of whom became quite important after the 1170 coup, the military leaders and this disgruntled group of officials might have been able to communicate and share their distress over court politics.

The king bore the brunt of many censorial attacks, was this criticism justifiable or was it the result of political intrigue? The answer is mixed. Although one cannot overlook the possible political motives behind many of the attacks, especially in light of the competition between the king and his brother Kyŏng, Ŭijong, according to the histories, does not seem to have heeded or compromised at all with the censors' requests. In fact on one occasion Ŭijong was so wearied by the constant attacks from the censorial bodies that he devised a unique way to silence his critiques. The histories relate,

> The king went to Injijae, also known as Kyŏngnyonjae. He presented a poem that read, "In a dream clearly I heard of a truly happy place--the hermitage under Puso mountain." Accordingly the king had pavilions built there and decorated them. Daily with palace favorites he got drunk and enjoyed himself, and had no concern for state

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[54] KS 128:10a.

[55] HK p. 159.

> affairs. The censorate requested him to desist but the king, using this poem, would immediately explain the meaning of his dream to refute them. After this the censors could only stop.[56]

Ŭijong was undoubtedly an aesthete who had a unique, senstive appreciation for nature and all its beauty. He was also a devout believer in the Buddhist faith. Throughout his twenty-four year reign, Ŭijong was continually traveling across the countryside and into the forests of the land in search of peace and relaxation. While in the capital he would also devote much of his energy to the full appreciation of nature. The dynastic histories, full of entries relating to Ŭijong's love of nature, record on numerous occasions his invitations to officials to appreciate the royal gardens, the flowers, the grass, the rare birds and other animals.[57] At other times he would write poems on the blessings and happiness of a rain shower or other natural events.[58] One evening a flickering light was spotted moving through the forest behind the royal palace. The neighboring residents were all alarmed until they discovered that the light was caused by Ŭijong who enjoyed strolling through the trees after dark.[59] Later the king heard that near a certain temple there was a place where stream water collected causing a dense growth of trees. Ŭijong ordered that a

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[56] KS 18:20b-21a, KSC 11:32b-33a. Although many deeds deserved reprimand, one cannot help pose the question if the censorial agencies were not over reacting, and by the extreme use of remonstrance making their response meaningless.

[57] KS 18:14b-15a, KSC 11:29a.

[58] KS 18:16a, KSC 11:29b.

[59] KSC 11:13b.

pavilion be constructed there and exotic plants and trees be brought. Since the water was not deep enough for boats, a dam was also made forming a lake. The king was especially pleased.[60] Many other similar tales are recounted in the sources.

The king, his support of Buddhism constant, often would journey to temples and there pray and relax. Once when a prince was born, the king copied a number of sutras in gold and silver characters and repaired the wall of the prestigious temple Hŭngwangsa.[61] On another occasion, warned of an evil omen, Ŭijong called for prayers to Buddhist images and in various shrines held services.[62] On his travels to temples and the countryside, the king's compassion for others was readily apparent. Once while on the road to Hŭngwangsa, Ŭijong saw an old lady and gave her cloth and wine.[63] On another trip to Pohyŏnwŏn he gave a beggar cloth and cotton and then presented other travelers with enough rice and soup to last for two days.[64] It is unfortunate that his love for nature and respect for Buddhism did not enable him to become more alert to the needs of his kingdom.

Ŭijong was not a good judge of men. He lacked an ability to discern the able and promote the wise. He tended to follow poor advice and reward the sychophant and flatterer. A deterioration in the calibre of men in the government is clearly visible when one examines the

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[60] KS 18:33b-34a, KSC 11:43a-b.

[61] KS 18:5a-b, KSC 11:18a-b.

[62] KSC 11:20a.

[63] KS 18:14a, KSC 11:29a.

[64] KS 18:15b, KSC 11:19b.

king's most trusted aides. The naesi, or palace attendants, were traditionally men of high lineage and impeccable morals. These were the men who worked with the king daily and attended to his needs. As mentioned earlier, it was here that many aristocratic youth would have their first introductions to court politics and their initial training in the government. During Ŭijong's reign there is a rather dramatic shift in the social status of the naesi, as fewer men from prestigious families are found occupying offices there. Of some twenty-seven men discovered to have been naesi during Ŭijong's reign, only three were known to have been successful examination candidates, whereas at a minimum ten showed evidence of having a father or grandfather in high offices. Five came from distinctly humble or functionary households. Although these figures may seem unclear, by the end of the reign few important personages remained in the naesi offices.[65] During Ŭijong's reign many eunuchs appear with some holding positions as naesi.[66] The deterioration of the naesi is apparent in other ways. The censorate on a number of occasions was forced to admonish these royal attendants and demand the dismissal of some.[67] The histories even indicate that some who were granted positions as naesi had obtained their prominence through bribery.[68]

The naesi, rather than acting as a restraint on less enlightened royal activities, joined and abetted the king in his neglect of state

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[65]See Appendix A with list of men in naesi offices.

[66]See Yi Uch'ŏl, "Koryŏ sidae ŭi hwan'gwan e taehayŏ," Sahak yŏn'gu, I (1958), p. 35.

[67]KS 17:38b, KSC 11:14b and 11:30b.

[68]KSC 11:44a.

affairs. Accompanying Ŭijong on his endless journies, the naesi promoted an atmosphere of debauchery and intoxication. The naesi also incurred fiscal irresponsibility by competing in offering precious gifts to the monarch. One entry in the histories, demonstrating the decadence of this group, relates,

> All naesi compete in presenting precious gifts. The king gave the left division ten kun of white gold and sixty-five kun of red silk, and the right division ten kun of white gold and ninety-five kun of red silk. At that time many influential men in the right division, by obtaining through the eunuchs royal permission, sought many precious objects from public and private places. At the same time they presented two choice horses. The left division, ashamed at being unable to equal them, borrowed five fine horses and presented them to the king. Later, unable to repay the debt, they were daily pressed for payment. Contemporaries laughed at them.[69]

During this period eunuchs flourished. They played prominent roles as naesi and became close advisers to the king. Chŏng Ham, Ŭijong's favorite eunuch, became quite powerful and was able to decide the fate of many officials both civil and military. Other men like Kim Yu, by bribing eunuchs could receive a sought-after appointment.[70] Eunuchs, accompanying the king on his travels, would supervise royal expenses and use many such opportunities to enrich themselves. They would also conspire with monks who had royal support and engage in the construction of temples, harassing the peasants and interfering with farming.[71]

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[69] KS 18:26a-b, KSC 11:38b.

[70] KSC 11:44a.

[71] KS 18:18a, 18:11a, KSC 11:30b.

People openly acknowledged that "power rested with the eunuchs."[72]

The civil officialdom was far from united during Ŭijong's reign. The aristocracy that had once operated as a monolith was weakening, men of humble origins or less prestigious backgrounds were making advances, eunuchs were gaining in power and the naesi were losing their elite character. The censorate, perhaps overreacting, perhaps motivated by ulterior goals, protested these changes but was ultimately overwhelmed and silenced. The court was divided by the theatrics of overzealous eunuchs and a king who would rather lose himself in the love of nature than attend to politics. Problems were further aggravated by dissension in the royal family which was abetted by tensions between officials who were well ensconced in the capital hierarchy and those who had regional ties. These strains that were appearing in the civil structure could not have escaped the notice of the military officers who also were abused by the tyranny of the king's supporters.

Status of Military Personnel

During this period the political and economic status of the military officer was in flux. Historians have argued that the military class experienced a slow rise in their economic, social and political prominence. This general advance in their status brought a corresponding increase in their aspirations causing them to revolt to enhance

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[72] KSC 11:28b

still further their positions in the kingdom.[73] If one examines this argument, its validity becomes questionable. Early in the dynasty land allotments were distributed in favor of the civil officials and to the detriment of military officers.[74] In 1076 this discrepancy was corrected, advancing the highest military officer, the sang-changgun (supreme general), to a level equal to his civilian counterpart in rank and in some cases setting the land allotments in the military officer's favor. At the end of the tenth century the sang-changgun was in land grade five and in Munjong's reign (1046-1083), some sixty years later, he had moved up to grade three. In real terms this meant that the sang-changgun received 130 kyŏl of land (80 kyŏl of paddy land and 50 kyŏl of wood land) under the old system which was changed to 125 kyŏl of land (85 kyŏl of paddy land and 40 kyŏl of wood land) under the new. Although the military officer was advanced on the scales, his actual land holdings were not increased.[75] A similar case can be made for the grand general (tae-changgun) and general (changgun).

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[73]Pyŏn T'aesŏp presents this argument in "Koryŏ muban yŏn'gu" (hereafter cited as "Muban") in Koryŏ chŏngch'i, pp. 342-398.

[74]The chŏnsikwa, literally field and wood classification system, distributed land rent yields to all civil and military officials, and other people who served the dynasty, according to their position. For a more comprehensive discussion, see Chapter VII on Ch'oe House finances.

[75]For an analysis of the changes in the chŏnsikwa see Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 218, and Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Muban," pp. 375-376. One kyŏl of land equalled approximately 96 ares of land. See Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Traditional Land Tenure Relations in Korean Society: Ownership and Management," (hereafter cited as "Land Tenure") in The Traditional Culture and Society of Korea: Thought and Institutions, ed. by Hugh H. W. Kang (Honolulu: Center for Korean Studies, 1975), p. 94, fn. 19. Ares incorrectly appears as acres.

Adjustments were also made in stipend scales. In addition to land allotments, officials were paid specified amounts of rice every year. These stipends were also weighted to favor the civil official, but when the land allotment system was changed, these rice stipends were established to provide equal payments for officials of the same rank, be they military or civilian. The sang-changgun, which was a third p'um senior rank received the same amount of salary as a minister (sangsŏ) in the six ministries who also had the same p'um rank. Table two below compares the salary scales of military officers and similarly ranked civilian officials in 1076.[76]

Table 1[77]

Rice received	p'um rank	military post	civilian post
300 tu	3a	sang-changgun	6 sangsŏ
233.05 tu	3b	tae-changgun	sangsŏ
200 tu	4a	changgun	sirang
120 tu	5a	chung nangjang	sijung
86.10 tu	6a	nangjang	wŏnoerang

note: a = senior b = junior

The economic status of the military official relative to that of the civil official had improved since the start of the Koryŏ dynasty. However, the fundamental concept of civil supremacy still remained. On all these scales, it was the civilian ranks that monopolized the top of all payment scales. One might also question the equality of land distributions. Although the military officers were receiving greater amounts of paddy land, what type of land were they actually

[76]See also KS 80:2a-6a and Kang "Ruling Class," p. 223. One tu equals 316 cubic inches.

[77]Adapted from Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Muban," p. 378.

receiving? Was it as of the same quality as the land given to the civil officers? Probably not, although, with the available sources, no satisfactory answer can be found to these questions.[78]

If the military officer's economic status was not improved significantly, was he still able to obtain some gains in political or social scales? Military officers, even though limited in number, did hold civil positions working in the ministries and parts of the Department of Ministries. Ranking military officers also could take advantage of the ŭm privilege and recommend men for military office. In these ways some men were able to exercise political power. There was a growing consciousness among military officials of their potential political power as well. At the start of the eleventh century, the Koryŏ dynasty was confronted with several major invasions by the northern Khitan tribes and without the preparations and defense offered by the military forces, the dynasty could have been totally overpowered. One result of these invasions was to increase military awareness, and when some civil officials tried to limit military salaries in 1014, the military officers revolted. Although this coup lasted less than half a year, it was a manifestation both of general military discontent over the policy of civil supremacy and also of their revived political consciousness.[79] Some of the economic changes mentioned above were undoubtedly a result of this revolt and the new political potential of the military officers.

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[78] Yi Kibaek does suggest that the military officers were given land of inferior quality. See "Military tradition," p. 21.

[79] Kang, "Ruling Class," p. 211.

During the early Koryŏ period, there were several other major challenges to the authority of the throne which left the military with still greater involvement in the political arena. At the close of the eleventh century when several civil aristocrats vied for power, many military leaders found themselves playing a role in settling the disturbance. The subsequent rebellions led first by Yi Chagyŏm and then the monk Myoch'ŏng, which were also quelled through the use of Koryŏ troops, further elevated the influence and power of the military officials. Still, even with these developments, when Koryŏ was faced with serious internal and foreign attacks, the idea of civil supremacy was very much evident and the military officers were effectively barred from exercising their full power. In Ŭijong's reign, for example, not one military officer was admitted to the top decision-making body of the chaesang. Although the power and influence of the military leadership had increased, it was still denied access to the important political bodies of the dynasty.

Socially the status of the military officer was equally ambiguous. One cannot deny the fact that biographies of men of military descent do start appearing in the Koryŏsa during the 1040's, a fact which might indicate some rise in their status. Equally significant is the number of men from military families who were allowed into the civilian structure and advanced to top positions through civilian offices.[80] Namp'yŏng Mun clansmen, Kigye No clansmen or Ch'ungju Yang clansmen are just a few examples.[81] It is important to remember, however,

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[80] Pyŏn, "Muban," p. 347.

[81] Pyŏn, "Munban," and see references in notes 22 and 24.

that these families represent the elite of the military officer corps and presumably there was not so much of a social gap between them and the leading civilian families. Other examples can also be cited. In 1110 a military examination was instituted which established certain levels of competence by which to rank men. Through this examination, which enabled soldiers to be appointed on the basis of their skills, the professional standard and the social prestige of the military service increased. Twenty-three years later, however, civilian officials, jealous over the advances that the military officials were achieving, forced the abandonment of these examinations.[82] The functions the common soldiers performed also changed. No longer handling only military matters, soldiers increasingly worked on labor tasks such as digging ditches or on other public works projects. It seems clear that this represented a decline in the social status of the military class.[83] Not only was the military officers' social recognition not rising, the common soldier was in worse straits. For all these reasons the military undoubtedly chaffed under civilian dominance.

The problems and conditions of Ŭijong's reign further exasperated the military leadership and helped foment the coup of 1170. The differences between the two services were accentuated in this period as many ranking civil officials accompanied the fun-seeking monarch Ŭijong on his countless trips. With the king they would drink and relax, often refusing to allow their military attendants relief from

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[82]Pyŏn "Muban," pp. 366-367.

[83]Yi Kibaek, "Koryŏ kunbanje haŭi kunin" (hereafter cited as "Kunbanje") in Pyŏngjesa, p. 289.

their guard duties. There was an expression of arrogance rarely seen in dynastic politics as the civil officials ridiculed and belittled even high ranking but hapless military officers. On one occasion General Chŏng Chungbu, a stately man of some six feet and later a leader of the 1170 revolt, had his long grey beard burnt as a practical joke by a civil official from an elite aristocratic family.[84] Other similar attacks on the military officials were not uncommon.

The eunuchs, with their new power, and their accomplices the naesi, instigated many disputes at this time. The rise of eunuchs, who often came from rather humble or socially less prestigious families, was abhorrent particularly to the military clans. Although military officers were subservient to civilian officials, they were nevertheless proud of their family status and heritage. The military establishment became increasingly aggravated when the eunuchs centered their jokes or character assassinations on unsuspecting military officers. In 1156 a nangjang (junior colonel) Ch'oe Sukch'ŏng, angered at the churlish behavior of eunuch Chŏng Ham and a civilian Yi Wŏnŭng, announced his intention to kill them both. His plot was revealed, however, and Sukch'ŏng was banished.[85] U Hagyu, another military official, in recollecting his father's words, revealed a brewing discontent among the military when he said, "My father once warned saying, 'The military officials have seen injustices for too long. Is it possible for them not to be indignant?'"[86]

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[84] KS 128:1b.

[85] KS 122:12a, KSC 11:19b.

[86] KS 100:6a-b, KSC 12:41b.

The 1170 Coup d'etat

As early as 1164 the military officers started to consider drastic actions to rectify their grievances. In the spring of that year the king, on an excursion to the countryside, was appreciating the scenery with civilian scholars by singing and drinking. The military escorts, generals and soldiers alike, were fatigued by constant jaunts like this and burned with indignation. It was at this time that Chŏng Chungbu, the commanding general of the royal guards, and other military officers first considered a military coup d'etat.[87] Although they made no definite plans at the time, as the years progressed they became increasingly desperate and determined to act.

As was related earlier, the king and his close officials and attendants paid less and less attention to state affairs and more attention to their personal enjoyment and relaxation, with the military officials often placed in an uncomfortable situation of being grossly neglected. Moreover, the military officers often had to take blame and punishment for the actions of their civilian counterparts. On one royal excursion, a civilian official's horse lost its footing causing a stray arrow to fall near the royal coach. Rather than accept the blame for the mishap, the man remained silent and allowed the king to believe that military officers had made an attempt on his life. The guiltless officers in question were banished.[88] After another such party, two military officers, Yi Ŭibang and Yi Ko voiced the indignation that their fellow officers had suppressed too long. "Now the

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[87] KS 128:2a, KSC 11:35a-b.

[88] KSC 11:40a-41a.

civilian officials are haughty, drunk and full, but the military men are hungry and troubled. How long can this be tolerated?" Chŏng Chungbu, still resenting the fact that his beard had been burnt, seized the opportunity to complete plans for a revolt.[89]

Chŏng, the leader of the 1170 coup d'etat, was a member of the Haeju Chŏng clan. This same clan had already produced several decades earlier a famous general--one Chŏng Chŏngsuk--who not only helped suppress the Myoch'ŏng revolt but was also promoted to the second p'um rank and given the semi-honorary civilian title of chwabogya.[90] Chungbu, holding a leading post in the military structure, must have been quite aware of the potential strength of the military. He undoubtedly recalled that in the past military men like his relative Chŏngsuk had been called to render service when the aristocratic civilian leaders were unable to correct crises brewing in the dynasty. Moreover the military was once brave enough to initiate action on its own to redress grievances when they were mistreated and abused by arrogant civilian authorities. Military officers had also played very prominent roles in checking foreign invaders or bringing settlements when feuding civil officials resorted to open armed confrontation. Chŏng, besides being aware of the traditions of the military, was also quite familiar with the unsettled conditions prevailing at the court. His son's father-in-law, Kim Iyŏng, for example had been among those who had been banished. Chŏng watched the censorate's power erode as

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[89] KS 128:2a, KSC 11:49a.

[90] HK p. 118, KS 98:3b.

eunuchs and naesi interfered with the management of state affairs. He also saw the growing arrogance of the ranking officials who surrounded the king.

The schism within the civil structure became increasingly visible. With the growing frequency of royal pleasure parties, men of principle, who had been active in the government, began to turn away, and some undoubtedly looked to the military as a possible last resort to bring an end to the rapidly degenerating state of affairs. The tenuous ties between the Prince Kyŏng-Chŏngan Im clan and the military have already been suggested. Certainly if there had not been divisions among the civilian officials, and if there had not been a core of ranking officials equally disillusioned with court activities, chances for the success of a military coup d'etat would have been greatly diminished, if not nil. By the summer of 1170, these were some of the various forces moving the kingdom toward an unavoidable conflict. Then in the eighth month, on a signal from General Chŏng Chungbu, the military struck, killing or banishing well over fifty officials, eunuchs, and palace attendants, and forcing Ŭijong to abdicate.[91]

Aftermath of the Coup

To comprehend the ramifications of this incident, a careful investigation of both the men who were removed from office and the men who advanced with the coup d'etat is essential. Through this analysis, the role of both military and civilian officials will become apparent. To assure the success of their revolt, the military elicited the

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[91] KS 128:2a-3a, KSC 11:51a-52a.

cooperation and aid of civilian officials. It is the civilian officials who were critical of Ŭijong and his associates that generally advanced to prominence after the coup and worked with the military establishment.

The revolt was executed by military officers with Yi Ko, Yi Ŭibang and Chŏng Chungbu, all members of the royal guard, as the prime instigators. Civilian officials, however, played supplementary roles. Chŏng, as general, carried esteem; the other conspirators were not as distinguished. Table A with the accompanying tally is a list of all the identifiable men forced out of power with the revolt. After a careful gleaning of the sources, at least forty-seven men were discovered to have been targets of the purge initiated at this time. Many of the ousted men were eunuchs, palace attendants, and civil officials who had clustered around Ŭijong and participated in the royal pleasure jaunts. At least twelve naesi were removed from the power structure, and an additional ten nameless naesi were also dismissed at the same time.[92] Regardless of one's arithmetic, the naesi were by far the single, largest group to be ousted. During Ŭijong's reign, even though the social status of the naesi was dropping, they had continued to interfere in court affairs. Clearly the naesi, always in attendance on the king, had abetted many of the excesses of Ŭijong's reign and by this had incurred the wrath not just of the military leadership but of many civilians as well. In addition to the naesi, thirteen other men who were clearly identifiable as having achieved their position through

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[92] KSC 11:55a.

TABLE A: Men removed from power in 1170 *coup d'etat*

Name	Origins	Office held	miscellaneous
Chin Hyŏn'gwang		naesi sogyŏng	
Chin Yunsŭng		pyŏngbusirang	
Ch'oe Ch'i		wŏnoerang	
Ch'oe Ch'un		sogyŏng	
Ch'oe Hyŏn		naesi sogyŏng	
Ch'oe On	Chiksan	chich'umirwŏnsa	father: Hongjae partied with king formerly a pyŏngmasa
Ch'oe Tongsik		kamch'alŏsa	
Ch'oe Yuch'ing		p'yŏngjangsa	partied with king
Ch'oe Yunsŏ	Haeju	taebusogyŏng	
Cho Mun'gwi		wiwisogyŏng	
Cho Munjin		sirang	passed examination
Chŏn Ch'iyu		pongŏ	
Cho Tonghŭi		pyŏngbusirang	
Han Nŏe		kigŏju	
Hŏ Chadan		Taesasŏng	
Hŏ Hongjae		p'anibusa	passed examination formerly a pyŏngmasa, chigonggŏ
Im Chongsik		ubusŭngsŏn	partied with king
Kang Ch'ŏgyung		tosŏng nangjung	
Kang Ch'ŏyak		pyŏngbu nangjung	
Kim Chagi		sach'ŏn'gam	a diviner
Kim Kisin		ŏsajapdan	
Kim Kŏsil		haenggung pyŏlgam	naesi
Kim Kwang		naesi chihu	
Kim Kwangjung	Kwangyang	pisŏgam	passed examination formerly a pyŏngmasa, chigonggŏ
Kim Sujang		pyŏlgam	

TABLE A: Men removed from power in 1170 coup d'etat (Continued)

Name	Origins	Office held	miscellaneous
Kim Tonjung	Kyŏngju	sŭngsŏn	passed examination father: Pusik
Kim Tonsi	Kyŏngju	sangsŏ	passed examination father: Pusik
Pae Chin		chihu	father: Kyŏngsŏng
Paek Chadan			eunuch
Pae Yŏn		naesi chihu	father: Kyŏngsŏng
Pak Pogyun		taebusogyŏng	
Pak Yun'gong		siŏsa	naesi
Sŏ Sun		tongchich'umirwŏnsa	formerly a pyŏngmasa chigonggŏ
Ŭm Chungin		sach'ŏn'gam	
Wang Kwangch'wi			eunuch
Yang Sunjŏng		ch'umirwŏnsa	
Yi Chisim		kukchagam taesasŏng	passed examination chigonggŏ
Yi Inbo		wŏnoerang	
Yi Pokki		chiŏsadaesa	partied with king
Yi Set'ong		sŭngsŏn	
Yi Tangju		naesi	
Yi Yungsu			son: Yi Kyubo
Yŏng Ui		naesisaryong	father: earlier banished mother: descended from traitor
Yu Ikkyŏm		chihu	
Yun Chongak	P'ap'yŏng	taebujubu	passed examination father: Inch'ŏm
Yun Sunsin	P'ap'yŏng	ibusirang	passed examination father: Oni also known as Tosin
Yu Pangŭi		naesi	

TABLE A: Men removed from power in 1170 *coup d'etat* (Continued)

Total: 47

naesi	12
Members of Ch'umirwŏn	6
Members of Pyŏngbu	3
Members of Ŏsadae	4
pyŏngmasa	4
men who passed examination	3

devious means, or who while in power contributed to the misgovernment that was common during Ŭijong's reign, were also removed. Many of these people were eunuchs and others were ranking officials, and like the naesi, they were purged. This entire group had harassed the soldiers and officers for many years. They caused Chŏng Chungbu and his followers, as well as many civilian officials, to burn with indignation and shame. Now they were the target of reprisals.

The next largest group of people removed were officials associated with military policy. Six members of the Ch'umirwŏn (Security Council) and three members of the Pyŏngbu (Ministry of Military Affairs) were victims of the 1170 revolt. In addition four former pyŏngmasa (military commissioners) were also removed. It has been suggested that the civilian officials who held this last post had considerable military power.[93] Thus it was essential to remove them and other civil officials in military agencies not only to secure absolute control over the dynastic military structure but to be free from possible civilian counter coups. It is noteworthy to recollect that the modest goals for the first major military revolt in 1014 had been obstructed by just such a counter coup.

Returning to Chart A, which is a presentation of men who held specific dynastic ranks during Ŭijong's reign, only three chaesang out of a possible eleven were removed and they were close associates of Ŭijong. Nine members of the lower ranks of the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn) and Royal Secretariat and Chancellery (Chungsŏmunhasŏng)

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[93] Suematsu Yasukazu, "Kōrai heibashi ko," Tōyō gakuhō, vol. 39, no. 1 (1956) and Seikyū sisō (Tokyo, 1968), p. 207.

were also dismissed. The importance of the Security Council has been discussed, officials in the lower ranks of the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery were important in daily remonstrance and drafting criticism of policy. The Ŏsadae (Censorate), which neglected its duties during the last seven years of Ŭijong's rule, seems also to have been affected with four of its nine ranking members demoted or killed. The Sach'ŏn-dae (Institute of Astronomical Observation), which was in charge of reporting celestial changes and remonstrance through the observation of natural events, similarly had two of its members dismissed. By looking at these figures it becomes apparent that not all civilians were ruthlessly slaughtered with the 1170 revolt as often charged, but rather that the military leadership was generally quite selective in whom they chose to purge. The list of victims from the P'ap'yŏng Yun clan underscores this point. Yun Inch'ŏm survived the coup and during Myŏngjong's reign (1170-1197) advanced to a position of prestige, but Inch'ŏm's brother Tosin and his son Chongak both were killed in the revolt. Lax officials who were guilty of mismanagement or extreme ostentation during Ŭijong's rule were the victims of the revolt, while those officials who were dedicated servants and honest in their administration often survived. Coupled with this element that bespeaks reform, was the military leadership's desire to exercise full control over the military establishment as well as formulation of military policy.

Through an investigation of the men who advanced in the early years after the revolt, the character of the revolt will become still clearer. Chart B represents the make-up of the civil power structure during the first five years of Myŏngjong's reign (1170-1175). For

CHART B: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the first five years of Myŏngjong's reign (1170-1175)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Chaesang																	
Chungsŏmunhasong																	
Kyŏng Chin	M				2	Chin Chun	M		AA		3	Yun Inch'ŏm	C	E	AA		3
Yang Suk	M				1,2	No Yŏngsun	C		A			Yi Kongsŭng	C	E	A		
Chŏng Chungbu	M		A		1,3	Sŏ Kong	C		AA			Yi Kwangjin	C		AA		
Ch'umirwŏn																	
Im Kukch'ung	C	E	A			Kyŏng Chin	M				1	Yun Inch'ŏm	C	E	AA		
Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng	C	E	A			Chin Chun	M		AA		2	Kim Ch'ŏn	C	E	A		2
Han Ch'wi	C	E															
Chungsŏmunhasŏng (3-7 p'um grade)																	
Yi Soung	C					Wang Segyŏng	C	E	A			Ch'oe Uch'ŏng	C	E			
Kwak Yangsŏn	C	E				Im Minbi	C	E	A			Han Ŏn'guk	C	E			
Kim Podang	C		AA			Ch'oe Tang	C	E	AA			Kim Hwayun	C	E			
Ch'umirwŏn (3-7 p'um grade)																	
Ki T'aksŏng	M				2	Yi Ŭibang	M					Min Yŏngmo	C	E	AA		2
Song Yuin	M					Yi Chunŭi	M					Kim Ch'ŏn	C	E	AA		
Yi Kwangjŏng	M			K		Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA								

CHART B: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the first five years of Myŏngjong's reign (1170-1175) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Sangsŏdosŏng					
Yi Munjŏ	C		AA		2
Six Ministries					
Personnel					
Yi Munjŏ	C		AA		I
Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng	C	E	A		
Military					
Yi Ŭibang	M				
Cho Wich'ong	C				
Ham Yuil	C				
Ŏsadae					
Ki T'aksŏng	M				I
Yi Kwangjŏng	M			K	

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Yi Chimyŏng	C	E			
Public Works					
Kim Podang	C		AA		
Yu Ŭnggyu	C		A		
Rites					
Yi Ŭngch'o	C	E	AA		
Chang Ingmyŏng	C				
Ch'oe Kyun	C	E			
Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng	C	E	A		3
Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA		
Yi Ŭngjang	C		AA		
Ch'oe Ch'ŏkkyŏng	C	E			

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Kim Sŏngmi	?				
Punishments					
Min Yŏngmo	C	E	AA		I
Unclear					
Song Sungbu	C				
Chang Ch'ungui	C	E	A		
Chin Kwangin	C	E			

CHART B: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the first five years of Myŏngjong's reign (1170-1175) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Chigonggŏ					
Kwak Yangsŏn	C	E			
Kim Hwayun	C	E			
Yun Inch'ŏm	C	E	AA		
Han Ŏn'guk	C	E			
Han Ch'wi	C	E			
Kim Ch'ŏn	C	E	AA		
Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA		
Min Yŏngmo	C	E	AA		

Totals:

Total	43
C	34 (79%)
M	8 (18%)
?	1
E	21 (48%)
A	19 (44%)
AA	12 (28%)

(symbols explained in Chart A, p. 35)

comparative purposes the chart is divided in the same manner as Chart A which depicts the composition of the civil power structure during Ŭijong's reign. Even though the Chungbang became the major center for dynastic decision-making, once the military leadership was firmly established in Myŏngjong's reign the civil structure was still instrumental in effecting policy. As the Koryŏ civil bureaucracy was used to administer the country, it was the civil structure that brought a sense of continuity as well as a sense of legitimacy to military rule. An examination of identifiable personnel in the dynastic civil structure thus will illustrate novel aspects of the 1170 revolt.

Of the forty-three men included on Chart B, only eight (18%) were recorded as having military ranks while thirty-four (79%) were active in the civilian branch. One man's service is unknown. Of the civilian officials found, twenty-one (62%) were identified positively as passing the civil service examination. This percentage is nearly half of the entire group which appears on Chart B. The lineage of many of these men is unknown, but at least nineteen (44%) had fathers who held the fifth rank or above in the dynastic structure. Probably this figure would be still higher if there were complete records. Twelve of the men or 28% of all men presented on this table were found also to have had grandfathers in the fifth rank or above. A number of individuals, such as Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng, whose immediate ancestry lay in powerful regional families also continue to hold positions. This suggests that strong provincial elite clans, first seen in Injong's reign and then seen again as a possible focal point of loyalty for one group in Ŭijong's rule, still carried political potential in Myŏngjong's reign

(1170-1197). On the other hand, not a single person of humble origins appeared in the dynastic ranks. In assessing these figures, it becomes apparent that in spite of the potential for men of ordinary, commoner origins to enter the dynastic bureaucracy, if one's father had already had some dynastic service, chances of success remained strong. If one had successfully completed the state examination, he was given more assurance of a ranking appointment.

These trends are underscored by the composition of the elite chaesang. Among the thirteen chaesang listed at this time, four were products of the military service and the remaining nine were civilians. Although military officers had not previously served as chaesang, these men were all from well known families with three of the four coming from clans that had produced distinguished generals during the earlier reigns. Yang Suk, for example, had even held a civil position during Ŭijong's reign. Of the nine civilians at least five had passed the state examination, and eight were from families with previous dynastic service. Men like Im Kŭkch'ŭng, Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng or Yun Inch'ŏm were promoted to the chaesang positions soon after the coup. The Kyŏngju Kim, Kyŏngwŏn Yi and Ich'ŏn Sŏ clans were also represented. Clearly the elite character of the chaesang had not been radically changed by the coup.

The military leaders do not seem to have tried to dominate any one area in the bureaucracy either. As with the chaesang, in the all important lower posts of the Security Council, its membership was almost equally divided between civilian and military families. In the Ministry of Military Affairs there was only one military officer found--Yi

Ŭibang. But Yi was one of the ringleaders of the coup and undoubtedly through this position he was able to dictate the work of the ministry, including promotions for many.

Noteworthy results surface when Chart A (representing Ŭijong's reign) and Chart B (representing the first five years of Myŏngjong's reign) are compared. The most obvious is the increase in the percentage of men with military ranks holding civil positions: 6% in Ŭijong's reign as opposed to 18% at the start of Myŏngjong's reign. But this alone would hardly suggest that something as drastic as a military coup d'etat had occurred. When looking at possible changes in the general composition of the civil structure, other trends appear. The percentage of men found to have successfully completed the examination increased from 41% to 48%. This might indicate that the military leadership was more serious in its search for men of talent, a view which becomes more apparent when consideration is reduced to only civilians. That is, 45% of all civilians on Chart A passed the examination as opposed to 62% on Chart B. Ability was becoming more valued as a criterion for important civilian appointment and advancement. In comparing the lineage of the men during the two periods, only minor changes occur as 39% of the people on Chart A had ancestors active in the government as opposed to 44% represented on Chart B. The greatest change between the two charts was the appearance of military officers in the Royal Secretariat and Chancellery and Security Council as chaesang. Until the coup these two prestigious agencies had been reserved for ranking civilian officials, but now they were opened to men with military titles. Dynastic policy was no longer formulated by

civilians alone, though they still retained a major role.[94]

For a variety of reasons civilians participated in the new regime. Even though Ŭijong was forced to abdicate and was replaced by Myŏngjong, the court was still influential in choosing some men. Several of Myŏngjong's friends, such as Min Yŏngmo or Ch'oe Yŏhae as well as royal relatives, received their positions in part because of their ties with the king.[95]

The "anti-royal clique" that was purged in 1157 also returned to power following the coup. Shortly after the revolt the histories relate that Kim Iyŏng, Yi Chaksŭng and Chŏng Sŏ were all summoned to the capital and given office land.[96] At about the same time Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng and Im Kŭkch'ung--Kŭkchŏng's brother--were made chaesang. These later entries alone might appear insignificant but when considered together with the rise to prominence of this whole group and recalling that this clique did have some ties with the military, it becomes conceivable that they might have worked toward the enhancement of the military's success. Certainly without their support, the coup might have been far less successful.[97]

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[94]This same trend can also be supported by the pyŏngmasa. Once reserved only for civilian officials, half of the sixteen pyŏngmasa during this period were military officers.

[95]KS 101:1a-2a, KSC 13:32a-b, KS 101:7a-8a, KSC 13:11b-12a.

[96]KS 19:12b; 90:39a, KSC 11:58a.

[97]Prince Kyŏng, Ŭijong's early antagonist, was passed over in succession and instead his younger brother Ho was made king and ascended the throne as Myŏngjong.

The revolt was to an important degree a product of the political tensions that had intensified in Ŭijong's reign. The political and social decline in the status of the military is only one aspect. The ineffectiveness of Ŭijong as a king, coupled with the debauchery and arrogance of the court officials, eunuchs and naesi, inflamed the passions of many civilian and military officials. Cleavages within the court which set the king against his brothers and own mother marred the politics of the age. Men with similar local origins banded in common interest. The dynastic political institutions were not able to provide a check either, as the remonstrances of the censorial bodies, perhaps inspired by political intrigue, passed unheeded. Under mounting tension the grievances of the military leaders and the disillusionment of the civilian scholars coalesced to facilitate the 1170 military coup d'etat.[98]

Once the revolt was completed and the new king Myŏngjong enthroned, military rule became increasingly problematical and confusing. To some the start of Myŏngjong's reign appeared as an opportunity to rectify the grievances of the past. Unfortunately others, such as Yi Ŭibang, were often after power and revenge.

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[98] It is important to remember that not one military officer was dismissed during the initial stages of the revolt. Although reform of the civil structure was an important motive behind the coup, it did not spread to affect the military elements. This point is made to indicate that although civilian support was crucial, there were still tensions present between military and civilian personnel, and this can be easily accounted as an additional force causing the revolt.

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICS OF MYŎNGJONG'S REIGN AND THE RISE OF CH'OE CH'UNGHŎN

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's seizure of power in 1196 ended twenty-six years of stormy rule under a succession of military leaders. During this period power gradually shifted away from a junta, represented by the Chungbang, the council in which the leaders (tae-changgun and sang-changgun) of the two guards and six standing armies met to discuss common military problems, into the hands of one man. In this chapter the politics of Myŏngjong's rule will be assessed. At the start the new military leaders utilized much of the dynastic machinery to rule the kingdom, but they also depended on personal followers to augment their power. It was a chaotic period with a number of local revolts that left a profound mark on all activities. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's rise to power was in part an answer to the turmoil of the times. He was more successful than his military predecessors in providing solutions to the issues confronting the Koryŏ kingdom at the end of the twelfth century.

The Chungbang, immediately after the 1170 coup d'etat, as the highest military agency, took charge of the kingdom. Because of its importance in the military structure, it had already played a significant role in the events of the 1170 coup. The Chungbang at that time decided which civil officials should be spared prosecution. For example, because Sŏ Kong had long resented the arrogance of his fellow civilian colleagues, the Chungbang ordered that his house be guarded and no one harmed.[1] After the coup Chŏng Chungbu and other generals

[1] KS 94:7b-8a, KSC 12:4a.

all participated in this council, and through joint decisions made there, policy was often declared. Chŏng Chungbu and Yi Ŭibang were key leaders of the revolt, but without the cooperation and united efforts of the generals in the Chungbang, little support, planning or coordination from the Koryŏ central army would have been obtained.

Even though the chaesang still existed, the Chungbang assumed many of its functions, becoming the de facto, supreme deliberative chamber in the kingdom in charge of all matters. At this time the Chungbang handled the enforcement of punishments, the investigation of rumors, and the seizure and banishment of disorderly people.[2] In addition to these administrative and judicial responsibilities, the Chungbang presented appeals to the king on the standardization of market weights and measures, and matters concerning the capital city, such as the widening of roads by removing squatters.[3] The Chungbang, becoming in reality the most powerful agency in the government, also assumed ultimate responsibility for the civil dynastic structure. On one occasion, it requested a reduction in the number of civil offices and at another time it memorialized that naesi and tabang offices be concurrent.[4] While clearly demonstrating the authority of the Chungbang, these episodes also reveal attempts to curtail the political

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[2] KS 19:28a-b, KSC 12:23b, KS 19:36a, KSC 12:20b, 12:34a, KS 20:20a-b, KSC 13:11a-b, KS 20:22b, KSC 13:15a-b.

[3] For market regulations see KS 20:8b-9a, 85:12a, KSC 12:51b-52a. For routine matters see KS 19:36b, 122:18a.

[4] KS 75:41b, 101:10a, KSC 12:56b-57a, 13:15b. The Tabang office was a civilian rank that was associated with royal attendants. See Yi Kibaek, Yŏkchu 1, p. 96.

strength of civilian offices and assure greater equality between the two services through institutional reform. The Chungbang also controlled appointments, oversaw military matters such as the dispatch of patrols, and enforced its own form of military justice.[5]

Although it became the paramount organ in the dynasty after 1170, the Chungbang, in its functioning, was surprisingly similar to the chaesang offices. Like the chaesang, group decisions were important in effecting Chungbang policy. Thus the essential oligarchical decision-making process that had been so basic to Koryŏ life before 1170 was carried over into the Chungbang. But now, rather than ranking civil ministers effecting programs, generals took charge of many of these responsibilities. During the first half of Myŏngjong's reign, much of the dynastic authority was reserved for generals in the Chungbang. This council came to oversee nearly all aspects of Koryŏ life.[6]

Dynastic Structure

Even though the Chungbang became the highest decision-making body, the new leadership did not dismantle the dynastic civil structure following the 1170 coup. The importance of certain civilian elements in effecting the coup and the necessity of maintaining the civil structure has been discussed. Chapter I presented an analysis of the

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[5] For appointments see KS 19:32b, KSC 12:30b. For dispatching patrols see KS 20:36b, KSC 12:46a, KS 20:19a, 82:2a, KSC 12:51b.

[6] The Chungbang then suddenly after 1187 temporarily vanishes from the historical records not to reappear with its full capacity until after the rise of Ch'oe Chunghŏn. The reasons for this disappearance will become more evident later in the chapter. Yi Ŭimin in his rise to power sought to assure his absolute position. It appears that there was no room or need for the Chungbang in this scheme. Rather Ŭimin tried to assume most of its tasks.

dynastic composition immediately after the 1170 coup to enable a more exact assessment of the leadership changes that occurred following the revolt. For similar reasons, the composition of the dynastic structure during the subsequent twenty-one years of Myŏngjong's reign (1175-1196) or until the rise of Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn will be discussed here. This examination will clarify the institutional and social trends of this age demonstrating the new prominence achieved by military officers and the weakening of social class distinctions as a barrier to high offices.

Civilians still held a majority of the offices in the dynastic administration at this time (1175-1196).[7] Of the seventy-seven men who were found to have held civil ranks during this period, forty-five men (59%) entered the government service through civilian posts and were classified as civilians. On the other hand, thirty-one men, or some 40% of the people who held civil ranks originally were military officers. The service background of one man was unclear. The changes occurring during this time were much more dramatic than the initial five years of Myŏngjong's reign. According to the figures obtained, the participation of military personnel swelled from 18% of the positions to 40%. This was indeed a considerable expansion, but with this increase of the participation of military personnel, occurred a corresponding decrease in the number of successful examination candidates in the system. Only thirty-one men, or 40%, of the bureaucracy presented here were found to have completed the examination. This is a drop of almost ten percent. But, looking at only the civil officials, at least thirty-one out of forty-five, or 69%, completed successfully the state examination, which

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[7] These figures are based on Chart C, pp. 80-83.

CHART C: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the middle of Myŏngjong's reign (1175-1196)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Chaesang					
Chungsŏmunhasŏng					
Kyŏng Chin	M				
Kwŏn Chŏlp'yŏng	M			K	1
Ki T'aksŏng	M			K	
Tu Kyŏngsŭng	M		A		2
Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA	K	2
Mun Changp'il	M		AA		4
Min Yŏngmo	C	E		K	
Paek Imji	M				2
Pak Sunp'il	M		H		
Song Yuin	M			K	1,2
Yŏm Sinyak	C	E	AA	K	
Yun Inch'ŏm	C	E	AA		
Yi Kongjŏng	C				
Yi Kwangjŏng	M				
Yi Kwangjin	C		AA		
Yi Sŏung	M				
Yi Ŭimin	M		H	K	3
Yi Insŏng	?				
Yi Chimyŏng	C	E			2
Yi Hyogyu	C	E	A		
Ch'umirwŏn					
Kim Sun	M		AA		
Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA		
Mun Changp'il	M		AA		2
U Hagyu	M		A		
Yu Konggwŏn	C	E	AA		
Ch'oe Yŏhae	C	E			
Ch'oe Yŏn	M				
Ch'oe U Ch'ŏng	C	E			2
Ch'oe Yuga	C	E			
Ch'oe Ch'ungnyŏl	M				2
Im Minbi	C	E	A		
Cho Yŏngin	C	E	A		
Ch'oe Sebo	M		H	K	
Ch'oe Yŏhae	C	E			
Ch'oe Yuga	C	E			
Ch'oe Munjun	C	E			
Han Ch'wi	C	E			
Ch'oe Ch'ungnyŏl	M			K	2
Yi Chunch'ang	C				2
Ch'oe Sebo	M		H		
Yi Kwangjŏng	M				
Yi Ŭngch'o	C		AA		
Yi Insŏng	?				

CHART C: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the middle of Myŏngjong's reign (1175-1196) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Ch'ungsŏmunhasŏng (3-7 p'um grade)																	
Mun Chŏk	C				1	Yi Sunu	C	E				Ch'oe Uch'ŏng	C	E			
Song Chŏ	C	E				Yi Ŭngch'o	C	E	AA			Ch'oe Ch'ŏk	C	E		K	
Wang Segyŏng	C	E	A			Yi Chimyŏng	C	E			1	Hwangbo T'ak	C	E			
Yu Konggwŏn	C	E	AA		2												
Ch'umirwŏn (3-7 p'um grade)																	
Ki Hongsu	M					Song Ch'ŏng	M					Ch'oe Munjun	C	E	AA		1
Tu Kyŏngsung	M		A		1	Yŏm Sinyak	C	E	AA			Im Yu	C	E	A		
Mun Changp'il	M		AA		1	Yi Munjŏ	C		AA			Cho Wŏnjŏng	M		H		
Mun Chŏk	C				2	Im Minbi	C	E	A			Ch'ae Sunhŭi	M				
Sangsŏdosŏng																	
Sin Poji	M					Chang Ch'ungŭi	C	E	A			Ham Yuin	C				1
Yi Ŭimin	M		H		2	Ch'oe Tang	C	E	AA			Hong Chungbang	M				
Six Ministries																	
Personnel																	
Ki T'aksŏng	M					O Kwangch'ŏk	M					Ch'oe Tang	C	E	AA		
Mun Kŭkkyŏm	C	E	AA	K		Wang Segyŏng	C	E	A			Ch'oe Sebo	M		H		
Min Yŏngmo	C	E		K		Yi Sangno	C										
Yŏm Sinyak	C	E	AA			Im Pu	C	E	A								

CHART C: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the middle of Myŏngjong's reign (1175-1196) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Military					
Pak Sunp'il	M		H		
Song Yuin	M			K	
Yu Konggwŏn	C	E	AA		I
Yi Kongjŏng	C				
Punishments					
No T'agyu	M		AA		
Paek Imji	M				I
U Suryu	C?				
Rites					
Kim Pu	M		A		
Son Ŭngsi	C				
Yŏm Sinyak	C	E	AA		
Revenue					
Kwŏn Chŏlp'yŏng	M			K	
Pak So	L	E			
Yi Ŭngjang	C				
Yi Yŏngjin	M				
Yi Ŭimin	M		H	K	3
Chin Saryong	M?				
Ch'oe Ch'ŏkkyŏng	C	E			
Yun Chongyang	C	E	AA		
Yi Yŏngjin	C				
Yi Ŭimin	M		H		I
Public Works					
Cho Wonjong	M		H		
Chin Kwangin	M				
Ham Yuil	C				2
Ch'oe Munjun	C	E			
Hyŏn Tŏksu	C				
Unclear					
Yun Chonghoe	C		AA		
Yi Chunch'ang	C				I
Chong Seyu	M				
Ch'oe Ch'ungnyŏl	M			K	3
Ch'oe Chŏng	C	E	A		
Ch'oe Ch'ŏkkyŏng	C	E			

CHART C: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during the middle of Myŏngjong's reign (1175-1196) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Ŏsadae					
Tu Kyŏngsŭng	M		A		
Mun Changp'il	M		AA		3
Chŏng Kukkŏm	C				
Chigonggŏ					
Yu Kongwŏn	C	E	AA		
Yun Chongham	C	E	AA		
Yi Chimyŏng	C	E			
Hwangbo T'ak	C	E			
Sin Poji	M				
Yu T'aek	C	E	AA		
Chin Kwangin	M				
Im Yu	C	E	A		
Cho Yŏngin	C	E	A		
Ch'oe Sŏn	C	E	AA		
Ch'oe Yuga	C	E			
Yi Ŭngjang	C				
Im Minbi	C	E	A		
Ch'oe Chŏng	C	E	A		
Ch'oe Hyojŏ	C	E			

Totals:

Total	77
C	45 (59%)
M	31 (40%)
?	1
E	31 (40%)
A	29 (37%)
AA	18 (23%)
H	4

(symbols explained in Chart A, p. 35)

is the same percentage for the early part of Myŏngjong's reign. This demonstrates the importance of the examination as a valuable step for civilian entrance into the dynastic service.

This survey shows that not only individuals of high lineage but also men lacking illustrious ancestors reached prominent offices, indicating rather dramatic changes in the social order. Some twenty-nine men, or nearly 40%, were found to have had fathers who held the fifth rank or higher and about half of this group, at least eighteen men, had grandfathers who also held the fifth p'um rank or above. Even though this figure is nearly the same as that from the earlier period, there is an increase in the number of men who came from obscure, inferior, or otherwise undistinguished backgrounds. Yi Ŭimin, Pak Sunp'il, Ch'oe Sebo and Cho Wŏnjŏng all had humble origins whereas during the earlier reigns, similar men had been barred from holding ranking posts.[8] Now, with the relaxation of social codes, they, and undoubtedly others, advanced into positions of importance. When recalling the rather strict social legislation maintained before 1170, and the continuation of this phenomenon after 1170 as demonstrated by the composition of the civil structure during the first five years of Myŏngjong's reign, this rise to prominence of men of inferior origins is a very significant development.

The composition of the chaesang also reflects these trends. Although the Chungbang assumed a number of the functions of the chaesang,

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[8] Cho Wŏnjŏng was the son of a jade artisan and government slave; KS 128:27a, KSC 12:60b-61a. Yi Ŭimin had a similar background; KS 128:19a. Ch'oe Sebo's lineage is listed as humble (pi); KS 101:21b, KSC 13:31a. Pak Sunp'il also is recorded as having humble origins. KS 100:22b.

many of the generals who worked in the Chungbang appear also to have held offices as chaesang. The merging of the functions of the chaesang and the Chungbang seem to have occurred during this period.[9] Although the Chungbang reached final decisions on its own, it called upon the chaesang to legitimize, in effect to rubber stamp its approval of Chungbang-initiated decisions. The chaesang were frequently assembled for ceremonial purposes and met with the king to carry out Chungbang policy. Of the thirty-five chaesang ascertained during this period, sixteen, or slightly under half were military officers, while eighteen were civilian officials. Until the coup of 1170 in practice only civilians reached the chaesang rank. Now nearly half of the members held military titles and three of these military officers came from inferior origins.[10] At a minimum fourteen or slightly less than half could claim to have fathers in the fifth p'um rank or above, at least eight of these could also claim grandfathers holding the fifth p'um rank or higher.[11] But when compared to the chaesang of Ŭijong's reign where at least 57% of the men had fathers in ranking positions and 62% had passed the state examination, there does appear to be a

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[9] During this time the chaesang and members of the Chungbang were assembled together to enact legislation or perform ceremonies. See for example KSC 12:51b-52a, KS 20:8b-9a, 85:12a.

[10] They were Pak Sunp'il, Yi Ŭimin and Ch'oe Sebo. See also Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Manjŏk ran palsaeng ŭi sahoejok soji," (hereafter cited as "Manjŏk...") in Koryŏ chŏngch'i, p. 464.

[11] Men like Mun Kukkyŏm of the Namp'yŏng Mun clan, whose father Kongyu reached the lower second p'um in the Ch'umirwŏn and his grandfather Ik who was a chwasangisangsi, or Yi Kwangjin of the Kyŏngwŏn Yi clan, whose grandfather was a p'yŏngjangsa, are representative of this group. See HK pp. 150-151 and KS 95:17a.

significant decrease in both the intellectual achievement as well as the social rank of these people.

Military men are also found occupying many other offices. In the lower posts of the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn), the Censorate (Ŏsadae) and many of the ministries, the number of positions they held was nearly equal those of civil officers. Only in the Ministry of Rites, the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat (Chungsŏmunhasŏng), and the office of Examiner (chigonggŏ), did civilian personnel clearly dominate. As the Ministry of Rites was responsible for ceremony and concerned with Confucian learning, it is quite natural that many civilian scholar officials would hold posts there. Similarly the chigonggŏ conducted the state Confucian examinations, a function little suited to military officers. In the third to seventh p'um ranks of the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat, according to this survey there were no military officers. Of those members identified all but one had successfully completed the state examination. At this level much of the actual drafting and reviewing of government measures occurred. Although the chaesang and Chungbang members were responsible for making final decisions, undoubtedly this lower group took charge of much of the preliminary work and final scrutiny of judgements. These tasks demanded men of proven bureaucratic ability and skill.

In the dynastic administration new trends were appearing. The civil officials still held a majority of positions, but the increase in the numbers of military officers holding civil posts is plain. It is equally apparent that the rigid class barriers that had prevented men of inferior origins from assuming important posts were also eroding

and men with less administrative experience were receiving appointments. Although overall the percentage of men who successfully completed the state examination dropped, a large number of civilian officials who had passed the examination were recruited into the system, helping to maintain a semblance of administrative order and stability during this period. Still the question of whether these changes in personnel contributed to the decline of government administration during this period must be raised.

Institutional Dysfunctions

The perpetuation of the civil dynastic structure and the Chungbang were not sufficient to guarantee political and social stability for this period. Instead administrative breakdown followed the rise of the military. The very nature of the Chungbang seems to have contributed to the instability. As long as the Chungbang was supreme, no one individual, not even Chŏng Chungbu, was able to exercise absolute authority. Decisions could be made only by joint cooperation. If one general wanted to enforce his will he needed to enlist the agreement of several other commanders in the Chungbang. Under this system the ambitious often resorted to power plays, assassinations or counter-coups to bolster their positions. Within four months of the 1170 coup, one of the early conspirators, Yi Ko, killed several military leaders who had criticized his behavior.[12] Immediately after this incident Yi Ŭibang murdered Yi Ko. Four months later a jealous Yi Ŭibang also

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[12] KS 128:16b, KSC 12:1a-2a.

had Ch'ae Wŏn, another military officer, killed.[13] Chŏng Chungbu and Yi Ŭibang, realizing that they were both vulnerable to attack, concluded a pact avowing their mutual loyalty. In 1176, after maintaining the status quo for nearly four years, this alliance collapsed as Chungbu's son, Kyun, suddenly assassinated Yi Ŭibang.[14] For the next several years Chungbu moved with caution lest others try to avenge Ŭibang's marder.[15] This type of atmosphere was hardly conducive to the development of political stability or the strengthening of the administration.

Just when it appeared that power was beginning to stabilize around the Chŏng family, Kyŏng Taesŭng, a young general in his twenties, assassinated Chungbu and Kyun. Taesŭng, indignant at the failures of the military leadership, vowed to restore full power to the monarch and expel all evil elements from the kingdom.[16] But Taesŭng, in his eagerness to reimpose order in Koryŏ society, resorted to extremely harsh action, imprisoning and severely punishing many, thus incurring the distrust of soldiers. His far-reaching plans came to an abrupt end when he died at the age of thirty, a victim of strain and excessive

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[13] KS 128:16b, KSC 12:1a-2a.

[14] KS 19:25b, 128:18b, KSC 12:17a-b.

[15] KS 128:18b, KSC 12:26b. Some of Ŭibang's retainers were captured and banished.

[16] KS 100:10b-18a, KSC 12:44a-45b; for example before he assassinated Chŏng Chungbu, Kyŏng Taesŭng stated that he wanted to expel the evil groups in power and return authority to the king.

anxiety.[17] Looking at Kyŏng's accomplishments while he was in power, one finds little evidence to indicate that Kyŏng had either restored authority to the king or that the Chungbang had relinquished its command over the kingdom. Although Kyŏng Taesŭng clearly dominated the age and was perhaps the most important figure of his time, the Chungbang continued to legislate and direct policy.[18] After Kyŏng Taesŭng's premature death, Yi Ŭimin, Taesŭng's arch rival came out of seclusion and, quickly rising to authority, dominated the kingdom until his own death in 1196.

Loyal followers such as mun'gaek (retainers) and in some cases small private armies supported each of these early strongmen in his quest for authority. Although the Chungbang was at the fulcrum of power, men who held ranks there augmented their strength with private forces. There is evidence to indicate that private military capacity was important in maintaining the dominance of earlier leaders like Yi Chagyŏm,[19] but once the 1170 revolt was completed, private forces rapidly expanded. When Ch'ae Wŏn was killed shortly after the coup,

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[17] KS 128:21b, KSC 13:1b. Taesŭng seem to have been extremely insecure. After one year in power he even had his trusted henchman, one Hŏ Sŭng, executed, claiming Sung had become over bearing; see KS 100:18b-19a, KSC 12:48b-49a.

[18] In fact during this time when Kyŏng Taesŭng had supposedly returned power to the king, there is an incident indicating that the royal family very much feared the possibility of the Chungbang hearing about the king's heartbreak on losing one of his concubines. See KS 20:11a, KSC 12:46b-47b. There is no evidence to indicate that the Chungbang had relinquished any of its authority.

[19] Suematsu Yasukazu, "Heibashi," p. 207.

he had soldiers who died with him,[20] as was the case on Yi Ŭibang's murder several years later.[21] Similar evidence is available that men like Cho Wŏnjŏng had their own clique of attendants who were used as bodyguards and props for power.[22]

When Kyŏng Taesŭng achieved prominence in 1179, he organized his followers into a special guard detachment called the Tobang. The Koryŏsa chŏryo reports that after killing Chŏng Chungbu and his son Kyun, "Taesŭng in fear of retaliation summoned a suicide squad of some 110 people and stationed them as support at his house. Calling them the Tobang, he used them to guard himself."[23] From this record one can learn the original size of the private bodyguard Taesŭng maintained; that is, he had at least 110 men at his disposal. Although no exact figures are available for other officers' bodyguards, the size was probably smaller. Like the retainers of other men, when Taesŭng died, the government authorities dismantled his Tobang and banished or killed most of his soldiers.[24] There was a strong bond of loyalty between the leader and his followers and a leaderless Tobang, or a retainer who had lost his lord was a threat that had to be met. In Taesŭng's case, the histories explain that Taesŭng valued one Kim Chagyŏk who was commander of the Tobang, and when Taesŭng died the Tobang, under Kim's

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[20] KSC 12:2a.

[21] KS 128:18b, KSC 12:26b.

[22] KS 128:27b, KSC 13:17b-18a, 13:36b.

[23] KS 100:18a, KSC 12:45b.

[24] KS 100:18b, KSC 12:26a-b.

direction, tried to collect funds for his funeral.[25] This type of relationship helps explain why men who had lost their master, a leaderless Tobang in Taesŭng's case, were dispersed so quickly. Even though the regular dynastic army was not eliminated during this period, the new military leaders of the kingdom were using their own troops to act as bodyguards and provide additional weight to enforce their will. Because of this dependence on armed force, and the neglect of institutional controls, constant intrigue and assassination marred the political history of Myŏngjong's reign.

Accompanying the political instability was a definite deterioration in administration. The subtle changes in the composition of the bureaucracy that have already been noted might have caused some mismanagement. Men who lacked administrative experience and training hampered decision making and the enforcement of policy. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, shortly after he rose to power in 1196, reflected on some of the failures of Myŏngjong's reign when he presented a ten point reform proposal to the king. In this memorial he attacked the bureaucracy, the powerful families, the Buddhist hierarchy, and the monarch himself for ineffective policies that had pushed the kingdom perilously close to total collapse. To Ch'oe and others the greatest fault rested with the bureaucracy. In four of his proposals Ch'unghŏn attacked the officialdom for being lax in its management of government affairs and seeking self-enrichment while letting the nation slip toward political and social bankruptcy. In proposal two he looked at the bureaucracy

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[25] KS 100:19b, KSC 12:57b-58a.

and claimed that the inordinate number of officials was creating fiscal havoc.

> Lately, there has been an excess of people in the two departments and various ranks. The salaries are insufficient and evils have spread.[26]

In 1184 the Chungbang had made a similar appeal, hoping to curtail the number of civilian positions, thus assuring greater fiscal balance. Judging from Ch'unghŏn's criticism twelve years later, the Chungbang's earlier attempt at reform seems to have failed.[27] To Ch'oe many of the problems of Myŏngjong's reign grew from the lack of virtuous officials. In proposals four, five and seven he discussed this failure.

> Rents from private and public land all come from the people. If the people are in poverty how can enough payments be collected? The clerks are not good and only seek profits. They harass and injure. The slaves of powerful houses fight to collect land rents and the people all groan; anxiety and pain flourish.
>
> The various to (circuit) commissioners ought to investigate conditions, but they do not. Rather they demand exactions, and on the pretense of presenting them to the king, they burden the stations to transport them. Sometimes, however, they pocket them for private expenses.
>
> Many functionaries in the provinces are greedy and their behavior is shameless. The various circuit commissioners who are sent out do not question this. When people are humane and pure, they do not commend this. They allow evil to continue and their purity is of no benefit. How can one discipline and promote goodness?[28]

Ch'unghŏn, in proposal eight, also criticized the bureaucracy for their ostentatious behavior.

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[26] KS 129:5a, KSC 13:41a.

[27] See note four.

[28] KS 129:5a-6a, KSC 13:41a-b.

> Today court officials are not frugal or thrifty. When they repair their private houses, arrange their clothes and amuse themselves, they take precious materials and they adore the exotic. These customs are injurious and defeating. They cannot go on.[29]

To Ch'unghŏn the decline in the calibre and ability of Koryŏ's officialdom was apparent, and it was a major cause for the instability in Myŏngjong's reign.

The king as the paramount authority was instrumental in maintaining the integrity of the system. The monarch held an important position as the titular head of the kingdom and the royal authority was the major legitimizing force in the dynasty. Thus, it must have been inconceivable for the military to rule the kingdom without a king selected from the royal Wang clan. Furthermore, royal succession had to be explained to China and that country's approval gained before official enthronement could occur.

The new leadership did not strip Myŏngjong of all power once he was crowned. In fact much legislation required his approval. Even though it is evident that the military often could control Myŏngjong, using him as a rubber stamp for Chungbang policy, the king was able to select officials and recruit his associates into the dynastic service. Ch'oe Yŏhae and Min Yŏngmo are two examples of men who achieved offices because of their close ties with Myŏngjong.[30]

The king, even during this period, also established the moral climate of the kingdom. If he was a just ruler and scrupulous in his

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[29] KS 129:6a, KSC 13:41b.

[30] See p. 74.

deportment, officials would have to be more circumspect in their behavior. But Myŏngjong, whether because he was encouraged by military officers, or because he was similar in character to his brother Ŭijong, took little interest in court affairs, concerning himself more with wine and women. When his favorite concubine died, Myŏngjong lost all self-control and wept. Soon the king had his daughters attend him, and even sleep with him, to assuage his grief.[31] In 1184 a similar incident occurred. The histories report,

> Because his favorite concubine died, the king wept for a long time and did not eat meat or listen to government matters. People laughed saying, "In mourning for his mother the queen dowager, within fifty days he returned to his normal diet. Now on the other hand he is like this. How he has lost propriety".[32]

Myŏngjong did little to assert his prerogative or to ensure enlightened, stable rule. As king he discussed appointments with eunuchs and favorites, and allowed unruly competition and bribery to become a common practice.[33] The political environment further degenerated with the influence of princes who had become monks. These royal offspring, while using a temple as their official residence, often returned to the court and had considerable influence through their mothers, who were concubines. Men seeking favors would come to these monks presenting gifts and promises.[34] The decline in royal administration and the

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[31] KS 20:4a-5a, KSC 12:46b-47a.

[32] KS 20:17a, KSC 13:2b.

[33] KS 20:17b-18a, KSC 13:4a-5a.

[34] KSC 13:29a.

growth of fiscal irresponsibility, depleted the king's treasury.[35] In 1189, the dynasty having no funds to provide salaries, borrowed white gold and cloth from local officials.[36] Ch'unghŏn, attacking this neglect, asked the king to seek wise advice and accept remonstrance.

> The officials of the Chungsŏmunhasŏng have the duty to speak out on the state of affairs. Therefore, if the king has deficiencies, they should admonish regardless of dangers to themselves. Now all flatter with self-abasement and blindly agree without discretion.[37]

The king's failure to return to his official palace incurred more problems. Ch'unghŏn, in proposal one, warned the king that this negligence would lead to dynastic disorders.

> Taejo ... built a great palace so his descendants as rulers would live there forever. A while ago the palace was burnt and then rebuilt in a grand style. But because of beliefs in the theory of divination, for a long time it was not occupied. How can one just rely only on yin and yang? Only your majesty on a proper day can enter to occupy it and follow the heavenly commands.[38]

Clearly to Ch'unghŏn and others, the monarch Myŏngjong was not a positive force in bringing stability to the kingdom at this time.

Still another object of rebuke by Ch'unghŏn was Buddhism, which had been a powerful religious force as well as an institutional body carrying considerable authority in the dynasty. Buddhist temples had been the destination of many of Ŭijong's excursions, and often monks

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[35] KS 20:18b, KSC 13:5b-6a.

[36] KSC 13:15a.

[37] KS 129:6b, KSC 13:42a-b.

[38] KS 129:4b-5a, KSC 13:40a.

had close ties with the ranking aristocrats and the royal family.[39] During Myŏngjong's reign many princes became monks, but remained at court to participate in Koryŏ politics.[40] In his sixth proposal, Ch'unghŏn discussed the debilitating consequences.

> Now only one or two monks are mountain dwellers. They loiter around the royal palace and enter the royal sleeping quarters. Your majesty, being lost in Buddhism, on each occasion has allowed them (to do this). The Buddhist monks already abuse your good graces, and through their activities tarnish your virtue. But your majesty has aided them by commanding the naesi to take charge of the Sambo (Dharma, Buddha, Sangha) and they use grain to collect interest (through loans) from the people. The evils from this are not small. Only your majesty can expel the monks and keep them away from the palace and refuse interest on grain loaned to the people.[41]

In addition to the monks interfering in politics, temples built by generals and ranking officials proliferated throughout the kingdom. Becoming, in effect, private foundations, individual donors maintained them to arrogate their power. Ch'unghŏn attacked these, too, in proposal nine.

> In T'aejo's day, temples were constructed following favorable and unfavorable topographical features and this, accordingly, made the nation peaceful. In later ages, ministers, generals, ranking officials and unreliable monks, without examining whether or not the topographical conditions were favorable, established Buddhist buildings and named them their prayer halls. Injuring the earth's vital system, they produced calamity several times. Please, only

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[39] KS 18:32b, 88:29b, KSC 11:42a-b. Ŭijong's brother Ch'unghŭi makes a good example.

[40] See for example Honggi, KS 129:7a, KSC 13:42b. These princes were detested by some scholars, see KS 101:2a-3a, KSC 14:10a.

[41] KS 129:5b-6a, KSC 13:41b-42a.

> your majesty can make the yinyang (geomancy) officials investigate and remove immediately any (additional structures) besides the temples. Do not let yourself be an example of ridicule for later generations.[42]

Ch'unghŏn at this time also leveled criticism against the arrogance of private families. In proposal three, Ch'unghŏn claimed,

> Those in power are very greedy and grab public and private land. The property of the very rich families crisscross the chu and kun.[43]

Individuals not only increased their power through illegal landholdings, but also sent slaves to the countryside to help expand their economic power through unethical means.[44] To Ch'unghŏn, this type of abuse was particularly damaging for it weakened the dynastic fiscal structure by curtailing government revenues.

In all of the ten proposals, there is the constant theme that the governmental machinery must be revitalized and the excesses of Myŏngjong's age checked. There is special attention placed on the problems of the common people and the social and political conditions that made the people and the government so vulnerable to the crafty and the unethical. The chaotic conditions of the time were in part a product of the weak administration, an ineffectual monarch, excessive Buddhist influences and unbridled individuals, but equally damaging were the numerous revolts and counter revolts that occurred throughout Myŏngjong's reign. These rebellions, more than any other factor, pushed the kingdom perilously close to the brink of disaster and forced the

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[42] KS 129:6a-b, KSC 13:42a.

[43] KS 129:5a, KSC 13:41a.

[44] See note 28, and pp. 102-104.

appearance of the strong, autocratic leadership of Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn.

Counter Revolts and Their Causes

During Myŏngjong's reign there were over fifteen different revolts led by men from various segments of Koryŏ society. Several years after the military rose to power, it was confronted by its first major challenge when civilian officials, led by Kim Podang, a military commissioner for the northeastern district, revolted. After being demoted to kongbusirang (Executive of the Ministry of Public Works) in 1171, Podang's disillusionment with Chŏng Chungbu and Yi Ŭibang increased. In 1173 Kim Podang, mustering troops in northeastern Korea, sought to kill Ŭibang and Chungbu, and restablish complete royal authority.[45] The military quelled the revolt after a month, but it was the first overt challenge to the military leadership. Within one year, Cho Wich'ong, an official at Sŏgyŏng, again mobilized troops in the same province and with the same objective. Since Wich'ong was a pyŏngbusangsŏ (Minister of Military Affairs) at the end of Ŭijong's reign, and was probably dismissed like the other civilians in the Ministry of Military Affairs at this time, revenge might also have been among his motives, although the records are silent on this point.[46] The military leadership fought Wich'ong's forces for the next year and a half, trying to capture him and his collaborators. Although civilian resistance was fairly well contained once Wich'ong was apprehended in 1176, the military leadership still faced serious disaffection among monks, slaves

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[45] KS 19:21b-22a, 128:7a-b, KSC 12:7b-9a.

[46] KS 100:7b-11a.

and peasants.

The most serious demonstration of Buddhist opposition to the new military order occurred in 1174 when over 2000 monks assembled from Chunggwangsa, Honghosa, Kwibŏpsa and Honghwasa in an attempt to assassinate Yi Ŭibang and his brother. These temples were all affiliated with the Kyo Buddhist sect which numbered many members of the royal family among its clergy. Because of this association, the sect had formerly carried great political and economic power.[47] As one of the greatest landowners of the age, the Kyo sect was also dependent on the integrity of the land system. When the seizure of power by the military challenged the Kyo sect's economic position,[48] one option open to it was to revolt against the generals, seeking to restore the supremacy of the king and the traditional order, and thus to protect the sect's vested economic interests.

In fact the royal family itself may have instigated the Kyo sect revolt in 1174. This is perhaps indicated by the monks demanding, immediately after the successful assassination of Ŭibang in 1176, the dismissal of Ŭibang's daughter who had been forced upon the crown prince as a wife.[49] Yi Ŭibang's attempt to intermarry with the royal family had aggravated the court and forced the king and his attendants to look to the monks for help. The king's brother was a monk at the

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[47] Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wollamsaji chin'gak kuksabi ŭi ungi e taehan ilgoch'al," (hereafter cited as "Wollamsaji") Chindan hakpo, 36 (Oct., 1973) pp. 29-31.

[48] Kim Chongguk, "Korai bushin seiken no tokushitsu ni kansuru ichi kosatsu" (hereafter cited as "Korai bushin") Chōsen gakuhō, 17 (Oct., 1960), p. 587.

[49] KS 128:18a-b, KSC 12:17a-b.

prestigious Kyo temple Hŭngwangsa. The royal family and Kyo sect had benefitted reciprocally in the past from their close relations. Because of these links, the royal family presumably turned to the Kyo sect to help restablish its authority by reducing the power of the new military establishment and by killing men like Yi Ŭimin.

The court continued to be an active patron of Buddhism throughout Myŏngjong's reign and used Buddhist influence to maintain its own authority. Pomp and fervor accompanied Buddhist ceremonies. Members of the royal family continued to join the Buddhist clergy and establish themselves at famous temples.[50] Monks were also summoned to restore order and reinforce armies. When there was a fire in the palace, monks joined other groups to extinguish it.[51] Later, when rebels revolted in 1176, monks were enlisted to aid the army.[52] And with another rebellion in 1182 they played an active and effective role in pacification. Whether these monks too were affiliated with the Kyo sect is impossible to ascertain, but what is apparent is that the monks, as demonstrated by these incidents and Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's criticisms, played a significant role in the kingdom. They were a potent arm to royal will as testified by their complicity in the assassination of Yi Ŭibang, but they also interfered with dynastic politics and by their actions promoted political and social instability.

Peasant revolts also disturbed this period, over a dozen occurring in various parts of the country during Myŏngjong's reign. Such revolts

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[50] KSC 13:29a.

[51] KS 19:16a-b, KSC 12:5a.

[52] KS 19:29a, KSC 12:25a.

were not unique to this period. Throughout Korean history, peasants often rebelled during times of hardship. Some hoped merely to correct the injustices of their age, others sought to establish a new social order. During Ŭijong's reign, peasant unrest had become serious. In 1162 and then in 1168 disturbances were grave enough to force the dispatch of central government troops and officials.[53] The causes of these uprisings were many. Perhaps the most oppressed group of people during Ŭijong's reign was not the military officers or the civilian officials, but the peasants and the socially inferior. The histories relate how in one incident, corvee workers, who usually were farmers, had to provide their own provisions while working for the state. One laborer was too poor to do even this and had to depend on his comrades to eat.

> One day his wife came with food and said, "Please ask your friends to come and eat." The worker said, "Our family is poor, how did you provide food? Did you have relations with another man and receive it or did you steal it? His wife replied, "My face is ugly, with whom could I be intimate? I am stupid, how could I steal? I simply cut my hair and sold it." Then she showed her head. The worker sobbed and could not eat. Those who heard this were very sad.[54]

High taxes, loss of property, or a breakdown in the land system often forced peasants off their land. When in migrating, or just wandering in search of a new livelihood, their predicament became intolerable and they often resorted to open revolt. In Ŭijong's reign, the luxurious style of life pursued by the king exacerbated the situation

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[53] KS 18:38a-b, KSC 11:31a.

[54] KS 18:31a-b, KSC 11:41a-b.

by further weakening the court and its ability to respond to peasant discontent.[55]

The military coup did not solve peasant problems. In fact, during Myŏngjong's reign, under the leadership of such generals as Chŏng Chungbu or Yi Ŭimin, the state of affairs deteriorated still more. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, in his reform proposals criticizing the laxness of the official hierarchy, indicated some of the causes for the harsh peasant conditions. Power struggles within the leadership, accompanied by civilian and clerical counter revolts, had its impact on the peasants, already in dire straits from the harshness of Ŭijong's role. The political instability of the court and the government hierarchy at this time further weakened the land and tax structure.[56] The new ruling elite, comprised of both the humble and aristocratic, by failing to enforce strictly social class distinctions, indirectly invited other groups to press for their own political advancement.[57] Although direct evidence is lacking, the general rise in status of men of humble origins, even slaves, might have also inspired the peasants to revolt with the hope of improving their own livelihood.

Slaves and other men of humble origins played an unparalleled role in the political and social life of the dynasty during Myŏngjong's reign. Men of slave ancestry such as Cho Wŏnjŏng reached ranking

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[55] Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Nongmin-chŏnmin ŭi nan," (hereafter cited as "Nongmin") Han'guksa, vol. 7; Hatada Takashi, "Korai no Meiso Shinso jidai ni okeru nōnmin ikki," (hereafter cited as "Nōnmin") Rekishigaku kenkyū vol. 2 no. 4 (Aug., 1934), 2-15; vol. 2 no. 5 (Sept., 1934), 2-14.

[56] Hatada, "Nōnmin," no. 4, pg. 2.

[57] Pyŏn, "Nongmin," p. 211.

positions. In this new type of social structure, many other slaves also achieved manumission through political advancement or economic means. In 1188 an instructive incident occurred.

> P'yŏngjangsa Kim Yŏnggwan's house slave P'yŏngryang once lived in Kyŏnju. Through hard work at farming, he became rich and an influential person. He was manumitted from his low (ch'ŏn) status and became a commoner (yangmin) with the position of sanwŏn tongjong (Executive Captain). His wife was sogam Wang Wŏnji's house slave. Wŏnji's house was poor, so he led his family and entrusted them to P'yŏngryang. P'yŏngryang generously consoled him, urging him to return to the capital. Secretly, with his wife's brothers Inmu and Inbi, they killed Wŏnji's wife and children on the road. His (P'yŏngryang's) son was Yegyu and was married to P'algwan p'angwan Pak Yujin's daughter. Inmu married Myŏnggyŏng hakyu Pak Usok's daughter. Thereupon, the Ŏsadae arrested, interrogated and banished P'yŏngryang. It fired Yujin and Usok. Inmu, Inbi, and Yegyu all escaped and hid.[58]

Here P'yŏngryang was able to use money and influence to raise his status to that of a commoner and when the other slaves lost their masters, they too escaped their humble status. It is impossible to ascertain how many other slaves were able to break through social barriers during this period, but the fact is that in this age manumission could be achieved through purchase and other means. Other suggestive facets can be seen in this passage. Wives of slaves occasionally lived separate from their husbands and were attached to different masters. The most surprising revelation is that slave owners would even attach themselves to former slaves for security, as in the above case where Wŏnji attached himself to P'yŏngryang. One final point should also be mentioned. P'yŏngryang's relatives were using marriage ties with daughters of low ranking government officials to achieve upward mobility, but their fathers-in-law,

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[58] KS 20:24b-25a, KSC 13:20b-21a.

Pak Yujin and Pak Usok, were dismissed from office because of complicity with these people.

Slaves during the twenty-six years following the military coup assumed many important economic roles and aided their masters in building their estates and income. In 1177 Yŏm Sinyak dispatched his slave to collect grain from his fields. In a dispute that followed with another slave over rents, Sinyak was ultimately held accountable for the actions of his slave and was dismissed from his post.[59] Besides managing their masters' fields and collecting profits, slaves also aided their owners by going on profitable tribute journeys to China. In 1187 the histories reported,

> Song Yuin requested that his slave go (on a tribute mission to Chin). Because those who paid to go were already many, Ch'oe Chŏng did not include him. The slave, relying on his master's power, followed. Finally a Chin man inspected and seized him, sending him back. When Chŏng returned, he was dismissed.[60]

It seems from this incident that owners would dispatch their own slaves to join these missions since profits from tribute exchanges were quite high. Slaves making these trips would be able to accumulate goods and wealth for their masters. Unscrupulous officials used slaves in many other ways. One Wang Kong, for example, when trading would send his house slave to bargain for goods and refuse to give a fair price.[61]

The fact that slaves shared the fate of their owners, did much to enhance their status and mobility, but slaves could also be a liability

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[59] KS 99:29a, KSC 12:32a-b.

[60] KS 128:13a, KSC 12:34b-35a.

[61] KSC 12:55b-56a.

to their masters. Slave owners had the ultimate responsibility for their slaves' activities. Yŏm Sinyak was dismissed for his slave's quarrel, and Wang Kong was also removed from office when his slave fought with another slave over commodities. On the other hand slaves followed their masters in death. After Yi Ŭimin was assassinated by Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, officials were dispatched to various districts to punish Ŭimin's slaves and attendants.[62] Slaves advanced and fell with their masters, but in the midst of these chaotic conditions, there was a considerable amount of social emancipation. The slave's life was improving. It is not surprising that during this period slaves were involved only once in a major disturbance. They had no reason to change the new system for they were advancing and enjoying a considerable degree of mobility in their new status.

Other members of the humble or ch'ŏnmin class experienced a similar rise in their fortunes at this time. Eunuchs, traditionally of low social rank, became quite important in political decisions in the early military period.[63] They surrounded the king and through royal favors and conniving managed to influence many events. On one occasion, eunuchs and high ranking officials in the Censorate (Ŏsadae) met for bathing and drinking.[64] Accompanying this relaxation in social codes related to behavior, were changes in the customary limitations (hanjik) for bureaucratic advancement. Because Cho Wŏnjŏng was the son of a

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[62] KS 128:25a, KSC 13:38a-b.

[63] See Yi Uch'ŏl, "Hwan'gwan."

[64] KS 20:19a-b, KSC 13:8b.

jade artisan and his mother was a government slave, he was limited to the seventh rank in Ŭijong's period. After the 1170 coup, he advanced to the highest offices.[65] Yi Chunch'ang offers another example. The histories relate:

> Yi Chunch'ang's mother was the daughter of one of Yejong's palace women. According to the old precedent, concubines were of the mean status and their children and grandchildren were limited in their official advancement to the seventh grade. Only those who passed the state examination reached the fifth grade. Chunch'ang was appointed to the third grade.[66]

During this period slaves and eunuchs were found constantly around the highest leaders in the government. And with these changing conditions, it is little wonder that peasants too sought to improve their lives, if necessary by resorting to revolt.

Changes in the local power structure must have also had an impact on peasant conditions. In the first years after the 1170 coup the central government continued to assert its authority over the various regions, and in fact, it seems to have intensified its attempts to govern rural Korea more closely. In 1172 and 1175 the dynasty established district offices in many new areas.[67] It reorganized and made much more elaborate the Sŏgyŏng office system in 1178.[68] In the

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[65] KSC 12:60b-61a.

[66] KS 100:26a, KSC 13:10b-11a.

[67] KS 19:19b, KSC 12:6a. By scanning the Tongguk yŏji sŭngnam (hereafter cited as TYS) (Kojŏn kugyok edition. Seoul, 1964), one can immediately see that a number of localities first got kammu offices either in 1172 or 1175.

[68] KS 80:10a, KSC 12:35a.

same period the office of ch'albangsa (Royal Commissioner for Inspection), which had not been used since Injong's reign, reappeared dispatching officials to the countryside to inquire into the people's livelihood.[69] To expedite rural administration, the leadership made the office of kwonnungsa (Royal Commissioner for the Promotion of Agriculture), a joint position with anch'alsa (Royal Inspector).[70] Through these ploys the central government was attempting to assert its influence over regional affairs.

The success of this expanded system depended on reliable officials. Judging from the excessive criticism Ch'unghŏn leveled against regional administrators in his ten proposals, good officials were lacking. This system still might have worked despite poor personnel if it were not for other problems. The regional system after being rapidly expanded at the start of Myŏngjong's reign, actually seems to have been overextended and unable to operate efficiently. To support the new district offices, the dynasty would need strength to enforce its commands, but with the deepening political chaos, the kingdom was unable to assure uniform administration or bring force to its directives. One might also speculate as to how well peasants accepted the expansion of the government. More government officials often meant more intervention and expenses which could bring peasant resistance. The situation deteriorated rapidly because of the revolts led by officials, monks and peasants. If regional policy had been firmer and the administration better coordinated, peasants might not have had an opportunity to voice

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[69] KS 20:9a-b, 75:17b-18a, KSC 12:52a-b.

[70] KSC 12:17a.

their grievances, but the opposite occurred. Much of rural Koryŏ gradually seems to have been left to itself as the central authority withdrew its agents to the capitol. Local leaders or randomly dispatched central officials assumed authority in their place and then often arrogated revenues to themselves. This encouraged the depletion of the dynastic treasury and when it was finally exhaused in 1186, the court looked first to regional (mok) officials to provide needed loans. Profits from the land were available, but local officials, not the court, pocketed most of the benefits. What the dynasty needed was a man to counter these centrifugal elements and to reassert authority over the kingdom.

Rise of Yi Ŭimin

The political and social state of the kingdom took another turn for the worse with the rise of Yi Ŭimin to power. Ŭimin, a man of humble origins, was notorious for his instigation of the murder of the former king, Ŭijong, in 1173. During Kyŏng Taesŭng's short rule, Ŭimin, in fear for his life, left the capitol, returned to his home near Kyŏngju, and lived there until Taesŭng's premature death. Then, Myŏngjong, wary lest this treacherous soldier also rebel, summoned Ŭimin back to the capitol and gave him ranking positions in the dynasty.[71] From this time until 1196, when he was assassinated by Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, Ŭimin was in effect a dictator over the kingdom. He ruled by whim and sought to fill his private coffers to the neglect of dynastic administration.

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[71] KS 128:21b, KSC 13:1b.

During his twelve-year dictatorship, the Chungbang gradually disappeared from the historical records which gives further testimony to Ŭimin's assumption of one-man rule. After 1187, the only entry pertinent to the Chungbang appears in 1193, when ranking officials had a party in the Chungbang to congratulate one of their members whom the king had just appointed a meritorious subject. As the group got loud, Ŭimin criticized them saying, "How can you ministers discard restraints and sing and blow (flutes) like charlatans?"[72] Yi Ŭimin led a rather dissolute life that would hardly justify his criticizing the behavior of others. This remark, coupled with the absence of Chungbang activities from the record at this time may indicate a conscious effort on Ŭimin's part to curtail the Chungbang's authority. By this policy, Ŭimin might have further inflamed the anger of military personnel like Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's, for they were being removed from positions of influence.

The curtailment of Chungbang authority also meant the restriction of group decision-making, so that Yi Ŭimin was able to place himself in a much more absolute position than any of the earlier military leaders. Thus, even though Ŭimin's mastery of the dynasty was short, he initiated changes that facilitated the rise of autocratic rule. Ŭimin eliminated the necessity for group decisions which had been a characteristic of the Chungbang. He did this to consolidate power for himself and reduce the chance for a potentially chaotic environment, but he undermined any possibility for a broad base of support.

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[72] KSC 13:29a-b.

Ŭimin's rule was plagued by problems, foremost among them, peasant revolts. This form of social instability was aggravated by the constant abuses of power by Ŭimin and his sons. On one occasion, a general sought to pacify a local disturbance. After being foiled in every attempt, he discovered that Ŭimin's son Chisun, had conspired with the bandits. Chisun, as soon as he learned the general's strategies, would report them to the bandits. They rewarded Chisun by sharing their spoils. The general, realizing that justice was hopeless, committed suicide.[73] This type of action compounded the political, social and economic issues that festered throughout the reign. Perhaps only by the assertion of judicious authoritarian control could order be established. Ŭimin, without respectable social origins, uneducated and learned only in greed, failed to build for himself a viable, permanent political structure that would guarantee social and political stability. That task, partly as a result of his own initial steps, was relegated to others.

Rise of Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn

For Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, as for many other military and civilian officials, the years following the 1170 military coup d'etat must have been difficult and disappointing. Rather than rectifying the mismanagement and degeneracy that had characterized much of Ŭijong's administration, the new military leadership further aggravated the conditions that brought about more instability in the kingdom. There were attempts to rectify the ills of the age, but these were short-lived and erratic.

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[73] KS 128:22a-23a, KSC 13:30a-b.

Then Ch'oe Chunghŏn assassinated Yi Ŭimin in 1196. General Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, a product of the social and political intrigue of Myŏngjong's reign tried to offer solutions to the issues confronting this torn society. There were many motives and goals behind Ch'unghŏn's action, and in his consolidation of power, he proceeded on paths distinct from the earlier attempts to rule by Chŏng Chungbu, Kyŏng Taesŭng or Yi Ŭimin.

The initial cause of Ch'unghŏn's seizure of power, incredible as it may seem, was a dispute over chickens, or so the histories claim. Yi Ŭimin's son Chiyŏng had seized the chickens of Ch'unghŏn's brother Ch'ungsu. An altercation followed that saw Ch'ungsu nearly arrested by Chiyŏng. Exasperated, Ch'ungsu went to Ch'unghŏn claiming, "Ŭimin's four sons are in fact the country's bandits. I want to kill them, will you join me?"[74] Ch'unghŏn was slow to acquiece, but confronted by his brother's determination, he reluctantly agreed. The Confucian histories use the chicken incident to explain the commencement of the assassination. Although this chicken affair might have occurred, certainly the Ch'oe family would not try to murder a man just because his sons might be chicken thieves! There were undoubtedly many other causes behind the Ch'oe moves. In this age of political intrigue, where rivalries among the various military leaders were common, the man who acted first was often the victor. It was inevitable that sooner or later some malcontent would attempt to assassinate Yi Ŭimin. Ch'unghŏn, like many other generals of the age, was after power and influence. It was his own good fortune that the timing and denouement of his attempt were

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[74] KS 129:1b, KSC 13:36a-b.

successful.

To the Ch'oe family, the Yi clan represented an inferior level of the Koryŏ social order. Yi Ŭimin's mother was a slave and his father had made a living selling salt in the Kyŏngju area. Because of his unusual physical strength, Yi eventually secured a place in the capital army from Ŭijong and thence advanced to sang-changgun (Supreme General).[75] Yi Ŭimin represents all that was wrong with the age. Not only was he of inferior birth himself, but he also violated the strict Koryŏ social order by elevating socially inferior people such as slaves into high policy-making positions.[76] If Yi Ŭimin represented the lower levels of the social scale, Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn came from a far more distinguished group. Ch'unghŏn, an Ubong Ch'oe, was the son of sang-changgun Wŏnho. Because of his father's high rank, Ch'unghŏn was able to enter government service through an ūm (yin) protective appointment.

With Yi Ŭimin as the dictator, Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and other generals were thwarted in power. Early in Myŏngjong's reign, Ch'unghŏn, achieving recognition for bravery in quelling anti-military revolts, advanced to be a Pyŏlch'o toryong (Commander of Special Patrol Troops) and subsequently became a colonel in the capital divisions.[77] His prospects were good at the outset, but additional appointments came slowly. His duties during most of the middle of Myŏngjong's reign remain vague. For a time he was assigned to Kyŏngsangdo as an anch'alsa (Royal

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[75] KSC 128:19a-25b.

[76] See for example KS 128:23a, KSC 13:46a-47a.

[77] KS 129:1a-2b, KSC 13:36a-38a.

Inspector), but apparently, angered by the treachery of various powerful officials (who by implication included Yi Ŭimin), he returned to the capital.[78] When his brother started to complain of Yi Ŭimin, Ch'unghŏn had become a general but does not appear to have advanced very rapidly since the early days of Myŏngjong. Ch'unghŏn might have been slighted at being passed over and ignored for advancement. He was probably further angered by the political and social disintegration caused by the ineffective rule of Yi Ŭimin, the son of a slave.

The desire to gain power was presumably one of the propelling forces behind Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's own attempts, but one must not ignore the fact that Ch'unghŏn also aimed to rectify the errors of the previous twenty-six years. Ch'unghŏn and his brother were unhappy with the military leadership that had brought chaos and social disorder to Koryŏ society. Through a revolt they could initiate their own reforms. To them Yi Ŭimin, the strongman of the country for the preceding twelve years, embodied all that was evil in the current system. Ch'ungsu had even labeled Ŭimin's sons "the country's bandits." Thus, perhaps to rectify this deteriorating situation, to restore political and social order to the kingdom, and to secure his own position in power, Ch'unghŏn agreed to participate in the assassination of Yi Ŭimin.

Once the brothers had agreed to eliminate Yi Ŭimin, they acted with speed. Even though Ch'unghŏn had few soldiers to assist him at this juncture, with a small cadre of men who were all trusted friends and relatives, he was able to effect the assassination of Yi Ŭimin

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[78] Chōsen kinseki sōran (hereafter cited as CK) (Seoul: Governor General's Office, 1933) vol. 1, pp. 440-445.

quite efficiently.[79] A small group guaranteed that plans could be discussed in secrecy, and carried out with precision. Ch'unghŏn relied on his younger brother Ch'ungsu, his nephew Pak Chinjae and his relative No Sŏksung during this early phase.[80] Together they assassinated Yi Ŭimin as he was leaving a pavilion in the mountains, and then they raced to the capital to check any possible opposition.

This small core was immensely important, but it was crucial that once Yi Ŭimin was killed, other people rally to Ch'unghŏn's standard. Clearly Ch'unghŏn was depending on the discontent of the populace and officialdom to swing support to him, but he also depended on key individuals. One such person was General Paek Chŏnyu, a general in the capital, who played an important role in carrying the day for the Ch'oes. On Yi Ŭimin's death, Ch'unghŏn met Paek on the streets of Kaegyŏng and reported the event. Paek, on hearing of Yi's assassination, agreed to summon dynastic troops. Although history will never know Paek's true feelings, in the subsequent years he became a loyal supporter of the Ch'oe rule and advanced in the high echelons of power. Having secured Paek's support, Ch'unghŏn now commanded the force he needed to check any opposition instigated by survivors in the Yi family.

With troops assembled to pacify potential resistance, Ch'unghŏn went to the king for royal approval. This was another significant step in the Ch'oe consolidation of power. Without royal sanction, Ch'unghŏn might have had to face the Yi clique in a later battle with a reduced

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[79] KS 129:1b-2a, KSC 13:36b-37a.

[80] Of these three men only Sŏksung would later refrain from challenging Ch'unghŏn's authority and they remained close throughout their lives.

following. However, with Myŏngjong's approval, Ch'oe received additional supplies and had two generals dispatched to attack any remaining opponents. This entire operation, completed in less than one day, was a prelude to the actual Ch'oe consolidation of power that was to occupy the ensuing months until Ch'unghŏn gained total mastery of the government.

Ch'unghŏn, although never having devised a blueprint for control, pursued deliberate, well-planned strategies to secure his command. The purge of other possible sources of resistance soon followed the successful assassination of Yi Ŭimin. Military officers, controlling the country since the coup some twenty-six years earlier, represented the greatest threat. The generals had power and could rally a force to topple Ch'unghŏn when they felt it necessary and feasible. If any group were to check Ch'unghŏn, it would be the ranking generals of the dynasty. Thus, it is not surprising to discover that within the first one and a half years of Ch'oe rule, Ch'unghŏn purged at least ten generals, six grand generals, and six supreme generals.[81] This number represented over half the leadership of the Chungbang, so that through this action, he neutralized the potential power of the Chungbang, and advanced only men loyal to his authority. Looking at a more general list, within the first two years of Ch'oe rule, some fifty-five people were known to have been removed. At least thirty-three of them were men with military backgrounds, while only five men were civilians. The remaining victims were either monks, concubines or had unclear social status. Of this purged group, many were threats to Ch'unghŏn and his

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[81] See Appendix B.

regime, but a few were the hapless victims of an insecure general Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn.

If Ch'unghŏn was harsh with the military, he was much more balanced and judicious in his encounters with civilian officials. He removed only five civilians at this time because of their possible involvement in opposition to Ch'oe rule. Civilian officials, already isolated from real authority for over twenty years, were much weaker than the military elements and offered little threat to the new regime.

Other reasons for Ch'unghŏn's more favorable attitude toward civilians were that by elevating them, they could be potentially useful in building his regime. The civilians were the basis of the entire bureaucratic system that was fundamental even in the military period. Civilians and civil institutions had to be maintained for the government to operate, for civilians had administrative skills and experience.[82] The civilians also provided a sense of continuity and legitimacy, which was essential for political stability. By expanding the role of the civilians, he would balance the power of the military and bring into the political arena another force with which any future opponent to the Ch'oe regime would have to contend. Ch'unghŏn could also provide good administration through the recruitment of scholars into his structure, bringing further respect to the Ch'oe authority. In fact Ch'unghŏn succeeded in doing just this.

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[82] Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Koryŏ hugi ŭi muban e taehayŏ," (hereafter cited as "Hugi ŭi muban") in Koryŏ chŏngch'i, pp. 407-408.

Some of the policies Ch'unghŏn pursued demonstrate vividly the new favor that the civilians received. As Chapter IV notes, men with civilian background held many of the ranking positions in the dynastic bureaucracy during the years Ch'unghŏn and his descendants ruled. He also emphasized the civil service examinations. Three months after Ch'unghŏn assumed power, he had a formal examination held with thirty-seven men successfully completing the test. This was one of the largest groups to pass the examination at one time in the Koryŏ dynasty. The Ch'oe rule during its subsequent years held the examinations with considerably more frequency, with a larger group of men passing the examinations than in previous years when the civilian officials were in total control.[83] This might have enabled him to have a cadre of followers among the civilian officials of the dynasty, and it would incorporate a larger group of men, trained in the classics and Confucian ideology, into the system, benefitting the dynasty as well as Ch'oe.

Although anxious to promote men loyal to his rule, Ch'unghŏn had to assure his complete control over civil institutions. The most effective and efficient means was to take office for himself. Two months after the assassination of Yi Ŭimin, Ch'unghŏn received an appointment as chwabogya (Senior Executive) and ch'iŏsadaebu (Acting Chief Censor).[84] The first post, one of the top ranks in the Department of Ministries (Sangsŏsŏng), is considered to be an honorary position.[85]

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[83] Min Pyŏngha, "Koryŏ musin chipchŏng sidae e taehan ilgo," (hereafter cited as "Musin chŏng") Sahak yŏn'gu, 6(1959), pp. 27-68.

[84] KS 20:36b, 129:7a, KSC 13:42b-43a.

[85] Pyŏn, "Chung'ang," pp. 15-16.

The other appointment, however, was a high position in the censorate with real authority. By taking this post Ch'unghŏn would be in a position to forestall any criticism leveled at him and his allies. Equally significant, he would be able to initiate moves to censor his opponents through the formal dynastic machinery. A few months later, Ch'unghŏn acquired additional responsibilities, but most of them, purely honorary, were rewards for his merit in removing Yi Ŭimin from office.[86] Ch'unghŏn, in this way, established his reputation as an esteemed general who had helped save the kingdom from the tyranny of Ŭimin.

Finally after one complete year in power, he advanced to sangchanggun, one of the highest military ranks, but he still did not assume the highest positions in the civil structure of the government.[87] At the end of 1197, Ch'unghŏn, in addition to his duties in the censorate, was placed in the Ch'umirwŏn (Security Council).[88] Although he did not take one of the leading posts in this agency, Ch'unghŏn wanted to have direct influence in this office which deliberated on military matters and the affairs of the northern frontier provinces. After this, Ch'unghŏn refrained from further advancement until some two and a half years later when he assumed the concurrent officer of pyŏngbu sangsŏ (Minister of Military Affairs) and chiibusa (Administrator of Civil Personnel).[89]

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[86] He soon became for example ch'ungsŏng chwai kongsin (a meritorious subject), see KS 129:7a, KSC 13:44a-b.

[87] KS 21:1b, 129:9a, KSC 13:47a-b.

[88] KS 20:4b-5a, KSC 13:52a.

[89] KS 129:13a, KSC 14:5a.

Through these appointments into the top echelons of the Ministries of Civil Personnel and Military Affairs, Ch'unghŏn personally assumed total command over appointments and advancements within both the civil and military sectors of the officialdom. He managed, in this way, to have effective control over all the institutions of the dynastic structure; he influenced policy without having to resort to measures outside the normal dynastic framework; and he decided who would advance in the government. Thus Ch'unghŏn could adhere to the "traditional rules of the game" and yet assure himself of being the most powerful player and umpire. In the subsequent years Ch'unghŏn continued to advance to still higher posts in the government and soon reached the leading civil positions that once only the most senior statesmen held. Through this entire advancement, however, he was slow and deliberative, rarely making a rash move that would incur criticism and condemnation. Even though some might have opposed him in private, Ch'unghŏn was wise enough to silence this group by cloaking his actions and path into the top stations of civilian power with legitimacy and prudence.

This same pattern also emerges when one studies the marriage ties that Ch'unghŏn established for himself and his family. Marriage links have always been an important means to advance one's political power in traditional Korean society. The founder of the Koryŏ dynasty, Wang Kŏn, alone had some twenty-nine wives from all parts of the country. Ch'unghŏn, through his marital unions, attempted to win the favor and respect of the leading families.[90] At the time of his seizure of power,

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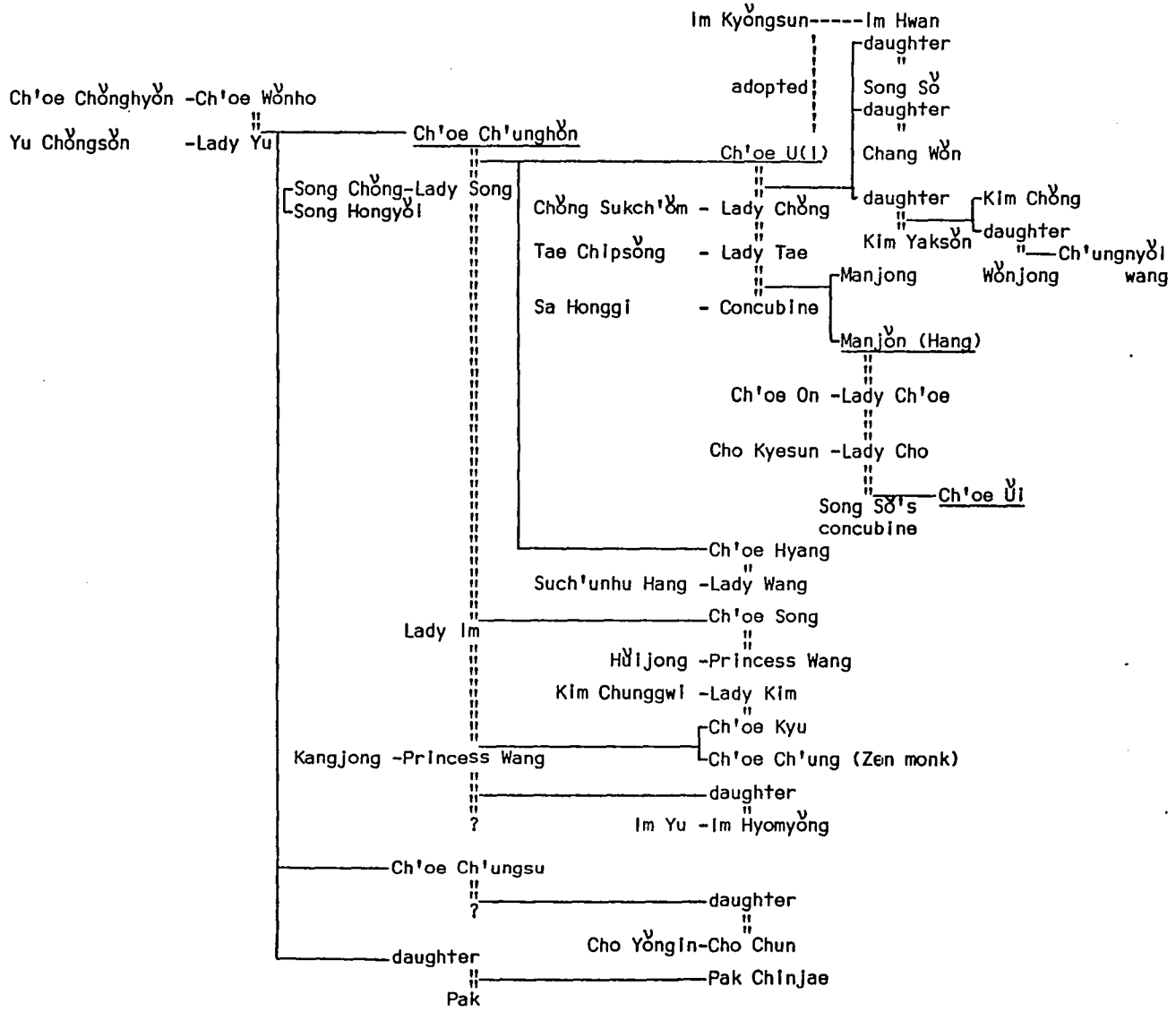
[90] See p. 120.

Geneology of the Ubong Ch'oe clan



his wife was the daughter of General Song Chŏng. Although the background of this particular man remains obscure, it is apparent that Ch'unghŏn had married with a family of strong military traditions much like his own.[91] Ch'unghŏn, once in power, then turned his attention toward the more prominent members of the old ruling structure. Of Ch'unghŏn's two new wives selected after 1196, one was a member of the Chŏngan Im clan. The Chŏngan Ims had been quite influential during Injong's reign, and the mother of kings Ŭijong, Myŏngjong, and Sinjong was a member of this particular family which continued to play a significant role throughout the entire military period. For his second marriage after 1196 Ch'unghŏn turned to the court and married the daughter of Kangjong (1212-1213). By marrying into these families at the start of his rule, Ch'unghŏn was able to associate himself and his authority with one of the most prestigious lineages as well as with the royal Wang clan.

Ch'unghŏn pursued very similar strategems in selecting spouses for his children. One of Ch'unghŏn's daughters married a Chŏngan Im and two of his sons married into the royal family. Ch'oe Hyang married Such'unhu Hang's daughter, and Ch'oe Sŏng married Hŭijong's daughter. Ch'unghŏn's heir, Ch'oe U, on the other hand, married the daughter of Hadong Chŏng clansman, Chŏng Sukch'ŏm. This family, like the Ch'oe clan, had established themselves as a military household. They first came into prominence during Ŭijong's reign when one of their clansmen, Chŏng Sonip, was a Grand General in one of the capital units.[92] The Hadong Chŏngs

[91] He might have been a member of the Chinju Song clan--a family that was quite prominent in the later Ch'oe period.

[92] MHP 48:14a.

were able to assert their influence throughout much of the Ch'oe period through this tie with Ch'unghŏn. In most of these relations, Ch'unghŏn's goals are evident. He was seeking to bring respect and dignity to the Ch'oe family in status conscious Koryŏ society by marrying with the high court and aristocratic families and in establishing ties with prominent military households, Ch'unghŏn was also assuring himself of additional sources of armed strength.

In the years immediately following his rise, however, Ch'unghŏn failed to contain the aspirations of his own immediate family. Ch'unghŏn's brother Ch'ungsu decided to force his own daughter's marriage to the crown prince in 1197, but Ch'unghŏn stubbornly resisted. It can be argued that Ch'unghŏn was jealous of his brother's attempt to become father-in-law of the crown prince, but it might also be because Ch'unghŏn did not wish to violate the rigid social mores of Koryŏ society so soon after his seizure of power, and when his authority was not yet absolute. Perhaps he realized that trying to marry one of his family members to the heir apparent would incur too much social indignation and foil his plans for the consolidation of his authority. Ch'unghŏn had just forced Myŏngjong to abdicate. Rather than permitting a suspicious population to question his integrity, he concluded that caution and compromise would be a sounder policy. Certainly Ch'unghŏn implied this when he spoke to his brother, saying.

> Although our power extends throughout the country, our lineage was originally poor, without influence. If your daughter marries the crown prince, will we not be criticized?... An ancient once said, "If the front carriage falls, the rear carriage should be careful." Earlier Yi Ŭibang married his daughter to

> the crown prince and then Yi was killed. Now do you want to follow this precedent?[93]

When his brother still attempted to pursue the marriage plans, Ch'unghŏn went to battle to stop him, and this disagreement cost Ch'ungsu his life. The picture is clear: Ch'unghŏn was cautious and paid close attention to each move he made lest it be imprudent. Even if Koryŏ social mores could permit the Ch'oes to marry with the high court families, at this stage marriage to the crown prince would have been politically unwise.[94]

This entire incident concerning Ch'ungsu's attempt to marry his daughter to the crown prince raises many questions on the role of the monarch in the Ch'oe government. While these issues will not be thoroughly investigated until the concluding chapter, it is helpful to remember that the royal family maintained its position as the supreme source of legitimacy throughout the entire military period. The king, though often little more than a figurehead, represented tradition, and his sanction was required on all activities. Ch'unghŏn, a very prudent man, always tried to secure royal consent and went to the paradoxical extreme of forcing the abdication of two monarchs to achieve this goal. Yet, he balanced this action with an aura of respect and adulation for the throne.

Ch'unghŏn's attitude toward other groups in society is an indication of his understanding of the needs of the day. He had purged a number of military officers because of their threat to his regime. On

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[93] KS 129:9b-10a, KSC 13:49a-b.

[94] None of Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's direct descendants in the Ch'oe clan married a crown prince. However, Ch'unghŏn's great granddaughter who was technically a Kyŏngju Kim clan member married a prince who became king Wŏnjong.

the other hand he sought ties with civilian officials and the royal family because they could bring him legitimacy, prestige and stability. He removed immediately individuals who threatened this system in any way, and Ch'unghŏn was especially strict with people who had been guilty of earlier misdemeanors. Ch'oe Pi, for instance, once had intimate relations with one of the royal concubines. When Myŏngjong had tried to punish the girl, his action was thwarted by Ch'oe Pi's enlistment of Yi Ŭimin's support. Ch'unghŏn, after coming to power, quickly banished Pi and others like him to remote parts of the kingdom.[95] He also forced many of the royal princes and monks to return to their resident temples and leave court politics to others better trained in administration.[96] Altogether Ch'unghŏn purged some fifty-six individuals at the start of his rule, and in the subsequent years he had many more men expelled.[97]

Ch'unghŏn's prudent but decisive action not only in the purges of his opponents but also in the consolidation of power through family ties was successful in preparing him to meet the needs of reform for his day. Through the stated goals as well as the actions which he pursued, it is evident that the early years of Ch'unghŏn's consolidation of power were not characterized by vendetta alone. Basic reform and growth were also part of his scheme, and in meeting the crises of his time, in reshaping

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[95] KS 100:27a-b, 129:4a-b, KSC 13:40a-b.

[96] Ch'unghŏn requested that monks be returned to their base temples, see KS 129:7a, KSC 13:42b. Monks were banished, see KS 129:8b, KSC 13:46a.

[97] KS 129:9a, KSC 13:47a.

the society, Ch'unghŏn met with some success. Suggestive of this is an incident occurring at a Buddhist P'algwan celebration in the eleventh month of 1196, some seven months after Ch'unghŏn gained control. The Kcryŏsa reported

> Cha Ch'ung saw p'anhammunsa Wang Kyu. He gave a long nod but did not bow. The officials censured him for his lack of propriety. The king said, "To enjoy music with the frontier people is a blessing. How can this be punishable?" The officials again requested (punishment) and it was accepted. When Cha Ch'ung first left his own chu (town), he addressed the toryŏng (Commandant) saying, "When the country summons us, it has something definitely in mind. When I enter the court, I want to test it with a trivial matter. If they punish me, the court has the right people; if not, then they would be cowered by me."[98]

As indicated, Cha Ch'ung was punished, showing that "the court has the right people."

Ch'unghŏn was ready to commence a lasting and unified rule over the kingdom. Through his well-defined and deliberate actions, he was able to establish his own authority and secure a bureaucracy that worked with efficiency and force. Ch'unghŏn was able to transfer his power to his descendants and they, U (also known as I), Hang, and Ŭi in that order, succeeded to the headship of the Ch'oe house and became rulers of the Koryŏ kingdom. The Ch'oe house survived until 1258 when it was toppled by a coalition of civilian officials and former Ch'oe attendants. But during the some sixty years of Ch'oe rule, Koryŏ witnessed many institutional and social departures from the traditional practice.

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[98] KS 20:37a-b, KSC 13:43b-44a.

CHAPTER III

THE CH'OE HOUSE MILITARY STRUCTURE

The foundations of Ch'oe authority rested ultimately in its military strength. By securing first the allegiance of the dynastic military establishment, and then the command of nearly all armed strength in the kingdom, Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were able to exert the necessary muscle to enforce their will and rule effectively. Foreign invasions led by both Khitan and Mongol tribes and local disturbances such as revolts and assassination attempts on the Ch'oe family charged the atmosphere, but its military base allowed the Ch'oe house to check possible opponents to the regime as well as to initiate many comprehensive reforms. Force is an element that nearly all societies and governments depend on to ensure the success of their designs. To the Ch'oe house--a product of an age that witnessed widespread instability, both domestic and international--military might became a vital ingredient in maintaining its rule.

Although after the 1170 revolt private military forces often became the arbiters of decisions, the Koryŏ dynastic military system--two guards, six standing armies and the emergency five armies--did not disappear. Indeed the role of the dynastic forces became especially important during the early part of Myŏngjong's reign because of the Chungbang's assumption of major responsibility for the administration of the kingdom. The subordinate capital units, trying to maintain order and enforce some semblance of law, performed their usual duties. But even while this was occurring, the established military order started to wither as the authority of individuals slowly replaced the

power of the dynastic structure. Strongmen relied on their own force to bolster their positions and neglected or bypassed the dynastic, military hierarchy.[1] One event led to another, in the face of the atrophy of the dynastic forces, more individuals relied on their own means of protection and authority. Physical might came to determine right and wrong. It was in such an environment that individuals like Yi Ŭimin flourished and then Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn took command of the dynasty.

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's pattern of consolidation has already been discussed. At the start of his rule Ch'unghŏn inaugurated major reforms in an alleged attempt to restore dynastic authority. Through this maneuver, which won him the support of the monarch and many ranking officials, he was able quickly to establish his control and strengthen his authority. On accomplishing this, Ch'unghŏn then allowed parts of the traditional order to decay while he developed his own institutions to supercede the dynastic system. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process through which the Ch'oe house replaced the royal armies with its own military system that included three overlapping units: general Ch'oe house troops, an elite guard detachment known as the Tobang, and patrols called Yabyŏlch'o. An assessment of the functions of these new Ch'oe units and their deployment in support of

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[1] Naito Shunpo in "Kōrai heisei kanken," Seikyū gakusō, 15(1934) delineates three stages in the evolution of the Koryŏ military system. During the early years of the dynasty, the six armies and two guards were used. As this system started to disintegrate, Koryŏ entered a new period characterized by conscript forces. The third stage starts when private forces evolved after the 1170 revolt.

Ch'oe authority will be made, followed by an examination of mun'gaek (retainers) who provided the staffing and coordinating of these Ch'oe military units and even Ch'oe administrative divisions. Then in concluding, the chapter will consider the gradual disappearance of the dynastic military units.

Development of Ch'oe Forces

The nucleus of Ch'oe force evolved before 1196 and only very gradually replaced the dynastic military structure. This process commenced in Myŏngjong's reign. As was seen in Chapter II, even before he assassinated Yi Ŭimin, Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, like other military leaders of the age, had a small group of followers who acted as his personal bodyguards and confidants. Once Ch'unghŏn assumed control of the dynasty, however, this small group of men rapidly grew. The reasons Ch'oe turned to building his own forces as a source of power were manifold. Like the military leaders that preceded him, he needed might to ensure his will and protect his life. Ch'unghŏn was constantly in fear of losing his power to others, and the greatest threat to his authority was latent in the dynastic troops which, nurtured by public taxation, were a mobilized, ready source of power. It was the dynastic troops' initial support that enabled Ch'unghŏn to consolidate his control, and these forces, especially their generals, as the greatest potential challenge after Yi Ŭimin, were therefore the logical object of Ch'unghŏn's purge in 1196. By neutralizing this force, Ch'unghŏn would have much wider control over the kingdom.

The dynastic military system had been constituted in a way that attempted to preclude any one man's assumption of control over it.[2] One of the reasons it was difficult for any military officer to emerge supreme during the early years of Myŏngjong's reign was because of this aspect of the dynastic structure. If Ch'unghŏn were to revitalize fully this system now, he would be guaranteeing the power of each of the generals in command of the capital units. This would have permitted potentially dangerous competition between himself and other military officers and would have sown the seeds for his own eventual overthrow.

The existence of dynastic armies, which had bewildered many men, also confronted Ch'unghŏn with another institutional dilemma. Namely, by supporting the dynastic troops the power of the king would be enhanced at the expense of individual influence. But Ch'unghŏn and his family resolved this by forming their own private force; the heads of the Ch'oe house, and not the king, would be at the apex of this novel structure, and as such would be able to command the loyalty of all their followers. By curtailing and weakening further the might of the dynastic forces, royal authority would atrophy, and Ch'oe with the only viable army could fill the vacuum thus created, having his forces fulfill the functions once carried out by the dynastic troops. This in brief was the path events took as the Ch'oe house matured. It was a natural, logical development which can be found in many other societies.[3]

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[2] See Chapter I, pp. 25-26. There was no one man, other than the king, in charge of all the dynastic troops,

[3] This whole development is reminiscent of similar events in Japan that ultimately saw much of the authority in the country in private hands.

The importance and inner operation of the Ch'oe forces are already apparent in 1197 when Ch'unghŏn and Ch'ungsu clashed over policy. At that time Ch'unghŏn's personal supporters had expanded from a handful to over 1000 men and Ch'ungsu also had his own cadre of followers.[4] It was these attendants who primarily fought the battle between the two brothers with the dynastic troops playing only a supportive role, which threw the advantage to Ch'unghŏn. Both Ch'unghŏn and Ch'ungsu appealed to their own men for help and discussed with them their plans for attack. When Ch'ungsu realized that he was greatly outnumbered and should surrender, it was his followers who admonished him saying, "We are your retainers because you have great potential to sway the world. Now, however, to be a coward like this (and not fight) means the extermination of our clans. We request that we fight to decide the winner and loser."[5] As in Myŏngjong's reign, retainers and private troops knew that their future depended on the success of their master. They fought not only to preserve their master's life, but their own future and their families' as well. The attendant, because of this bond, could be a trusted confidant and active participant in the power structure. Family ties were an additional link binding private forces into a cohesive unit. Yi Ŭimin had depended on the support of his children as well as his retainers. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, likewise used his followers and at this time relied on the aid of his relatives Pak Chinjae, Kim Yakjin and No Sŏksung to unite his private forces.

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[4] KS 129:11a, KSC 13:50a.

[5] KS 129:11b, KSC 13:50b.

During the subsequent twenty years of Ch'unghŏn's rule, the importance and influence of his troops increased, and with every attempt on Ch'unghŏn's life and with each political disturbance, the Ch'oe leader depended more and more on the support of his forces and less on the protection of the dynastic units. Ch'oe troops must have expanded considerably after Hŭijong attempted to assassinate Ch'unghŏn, for on several occasions the Koryŏsa mentions that Ch'oe forces stretched for several li.[6] By 1216 at the start of the Khitan invasions, Ch'unghŏn's troops, including the men of his son's and relatives' armies, numbered over 10,000 men.[7]

Ch'unghŏn, to win his soldiers' loyalty and encourage others to join, gave special treatment to them. Once when reviewing his men, the histories report that Ch'unghŏn's troops' "spears and poles held silver vessels to display and show to the kingdom's people in order to recruit soldiers."[8] On another occasion after a particularly rigorous training session, Ch'unghŏn had a group of kisaeng come and offer congratulations to his men.[9] A very happy Ch'unghŏn rewarded the participants with

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[6] KS 129:21b, KSC 14:33b, KS 129:23a-b, KSC 14:45a-b. As will be seen in subsequent pages, in addition to general private troops, the Ch'oe house also established a Tobang and other military units.

[7] KS 129:23b, KSC 14:46a-b.

[8] KS 129:23a-b, KSC 14:45a-b.

[9] Kisaeng are young women trained in music, drama and dancing who gave up lives as housewives to pursue these arts. Kisaeng, considered inferior in social status, commonly earned a livelihood through the entertainment of men. Their promiscuity has attracted the attention of many, but this should not obscure their abilities as superb artists.

silver vases and fine silk.[10] The special training and rewards were well calculated plans to provide Ch'unghŏn with an elite guard and assure him of absolute military might in the kingdom. He was so successful in this endeavor that the Koryŏ histories report that when Chŏng Sukch'ŏm reviewed the dynastic forces, he was dismayed to discover that the old and weak were in the government army while the bravest had become followers of Ch'unghŏn and U.[11]

Through careful grooming the Ch'oe forces were becoming an elite guard that would eventually assume many of the responsibilities of the dynastic troops. During the initial period of the Khitan wars, the Ch'oe house used its forces, however, to guard against possible attacks on Ch'oe personnel. When Ch'unghŏn left his house, his troops acted as an escort and once as an impending Khitan invasion threatened the capital, he mobilized his troops to protect the Ch'oe family.[12] U at this time vowed to banish anyone who attempted to go north and fight the enemy.[13] The Ch'oe house, with the strongest soldiers in its own army, must have realized that such a policy would hurt the dynastic forces.[14] But the Ch'oe house was pursuing at this time very logical,

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[10] KS 129:23b, KSC 14:46a.

[11] KS 81:15a, KSC 14:45a.

[12] KS 129:23b, KSC 14:46a-b, KS 129:25b, KSC 15:13b.

[13] KS 129:23b, KSC 14:45a-b.

[14] Ch'unghŏn and U must have also envisioned that such a strategy would ultimately leave their own troops with absolute control of the kingdom. One might argue that they were saving their soldiers as a reserve unit, but with the dynastic troops fighting the Khitan, Ch'unghŏn's own armies naturally had to take charge of domestic security. These points might indicate that Ch'unghŏn was more afraid of the Koryŏ armies than the invaders, and that he was maneuvering these two opponents into fighting each other to his own advantage.

sound policy. The dynastic forces were trained to meet these types of emergencies and serve the dynasty, while the Ch'oe troops still were essentially a personal guard designed to support Ch'oe authority. If any troops were to be dispatched to the northern borders, it would be the dynastic armies. The inevitable result of this policy, it is true, left the Ch'oe guards in a much more dominant position vis-a-vis the Koryŏ armies, but Ch'oe could not have predicted this. When rebellion aimed at assassinating Ch'unghŏn erupted in 1217, Ch'oe forces were quickly summoned to restore order to the capital.[15] On another occasion Ch'oe troops were dispatched to arrest a man who plotted against the dynasty.[16] When several soldiers in the dynastic units complained about the unequal distribution of rewards for military service, Ch'unghŏn again sent his troops to arrest and execute the critics.[17] Although the prime function of Ch'oe troops was to protect the Ch'oe house and its structure, as the dynastic forces atrophied, Ch'oe soldiers maintained order in the capital and soon became an unchallenged arm to Ch'oe power.

The Rise of U and the Expansion of Ch'oe Forces

Ch'unghŏn was wise enough to realize that the structure he had formed would not survive without an orderly transfer of power. To fulfill this end Ch'unghŏn groomed his oldest son U to succeed him. U starts to appear in the dynastic records in 1202.[18] By the middle of

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[15] KS 129:24a, KSC 15:1b.

[16] KS 129:13a, KSC 14:5b-6a.

[17] KS 129:26a-b, KSC 15:20b.

[18] KS 129:15a, KSC 14:12b-13a. At this time U was watching Ch'oe forces drill.

Hŭijong's reign, U, already a general, was meeting with the king and performing in such ceremonial capacities as presenting vases to successful examination candidates.[19] U had also managed by this time to assemble a military force as an additional prop to his command. When Ch'unghŏn was approaching death, he summoned U to warn him of a possible incident, and instructed him not to attend him in his illness. U followed his father's advice dispatching Kim Yaksŏn, his son-in-law, instead to attend Ch'unghŏn. As the senior Ch'oe had suspected, several leading men in the power structure attempted to trap the heir, but their plans were foiled by a well-prepared U.[20] Thus, Ch'unghŏn secured a relatively stable succession for his son and assured the continuation of many of the policies and dreams he had for thirteenth century Koryŏ society by enabling U to participate in governmental affairs, build his own private army, and then plan for any possible counter-revolts.

U proved equal to the challenges confronting him and consolidated his succession by quickly checking all opposition. The first casualties of the new rule were the men who attempted to kill U at the time of Ch'unghŏn's death. They had been among the closest military supporters of Ch'unghŏn's authority, but fearing U's ascendance would leave them without any real influence in the government, they chose rebellion but earned death.[21] These men were not the only victims of U's house-cleaning. Twenty-eight men in fact were dismissed during the initial

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[19] KS 21:23a, KSC 14:22b-23a, 14:24b.

[20] KS 129:27b-28a, KSC 15:20b-21b.

[21] KS 129:27b-28a, KSC 15:20b-21b. Included in this group were Grand General Ch'oe Chunmun, Supreme General Chi Yunsim and General Yu Sŏngjŏl.

months of U's consolidation of power. Among this number were many high military officers who had conspired against U. Others were slaves, household servants, friends and relatives of Ch'unghŏn.[22] Thus, U, by checking the authority of Ch'unghŏn's closest associates, was stating his intention to be in full control of the Ch'oe house and to tolerate no competition. Permitting no room for possible internal revolts against his power, he even exiled his brother Hyang. Once assured of support, he relaxed his grip, but was still alert to any possible opposition. Over the first twelve-year period of rule, U dismissed no less than thirty-one additional people. Like those previously ousted from office, many had schemed to thwart Ch'oe authority, while others were loyal followers of Ch'unghŏn who could not accept the command of U. Among this latter group, at least seventeen were of military background, while seven came from civilian households. To U, as to Ch'unghŏn, military men were still the greatest threat to his leadership.

On succeeding his father, U continued to have his house troops protect the Ch'oe family first and meet other emergencies if conditions permitted. U paid special attention to practicing and drilling his troops, who in return for their services were granted generous rewards.[23] When fires or attacks threatened the capital, rather than meet these dangers, the Ch'oe troops were enlisted to protect U and his family.[24]

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[22] See Appendix C

[23] KS 129:35b-36a, KSC 15:46a, KS 129:36a, KSC 15:46b. After several Ch'oe units played a game of polo, U gave them rewards and titles. A month later after reviewing his house troops, he presented them with food and wine.

[24] KS 129:36b, KSC 15:2a, KSC 129:37b, KSC 16:8b-9a.

But dynastic concerns were not ignored, in 1223 U used his troops as a corvee labor force to repair the outer wall of the capital.[25] Ten years later in 1233, with the near collapse of the government troops caused in part by continual battles with the Mongols, U dispatched his own private soldiers to pacify a rebellion in Sŏgyŏng.[26] From these entries it becomes apparent that the Ch'oe forces were accepting greater responsibility for the pacification and maintenance of peace even in more distant parts of the country. However, U did not permit his private forces to assume this type of responsibility until after he had secured himself on Kanghwa island and was quite certain there was no other competing domestic power. In brief, the Ch'oe house forces' primary responsibility was to protect the power of the Ch'oe house. But as the dynastic units deteriorated, Ch'oe troops, in addition to acting as an escort and bodyguard, arrested critics, pacified rebellions, and performed corvee labor functions. In fulfilling all of these duties, most Ch'oe forces, which numbered in the thousands, remained loyal to Ch'unghŏn and U, and by this allegiance assured their leaders of command over the kingdom.

As the strongmen in the country, Ch'unghŏn and U had large armies and loyal followers but there were other individuals who also were permitted to have private troops. Ch'unghŏn and U were anxious to preserve their military superiority, yet they also were surprisingly tolerant in allowing other people to have soldiers. Pak Chinjae,

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[25] KS 129:31a, KSC 15:31a-b.

[26] KS 130:3b-4a, 23:27a-b, KSC 16:17a-b.

Ch'unghŏn's nephew, Kim Yaksŏn, U's son-in-law, and Tae Chipsŏng, U's father-in-law, each had private forces, which they maintained. These men were all relatives and presumably loyal supporters of the Ch'oe house. Pak Chinjae's soldiers must have assisted Ch'unghŏn in his early consolidation and it would have been quite difficult as well as politically unwise for Ch'unghŏn to force their dispersal. The other men, as members of the extended Ch'oe family, perhaps needed protection from possible assassination attempts and private troops or bodyguards would provide this service.

Although the function and number of these troops is unclear, they generally seem to have been limited in number and in duties. Other than allowing them to act as a personal bodyguard and escort, the Ch'oe leadership was unwilling to have these units, all potential sources of opposition, grow too large or assume too many duties. Neither did any person not associated with the Ch'oe family have private troops, and the men mentioned who did mobilize their own soldiers were kept under constant scrutiny by the Ch'oe power structure.[27]

Elite Corps

Besides the general body of Ch'oe house troops, Ch'unghŏn also created two additional units, the Tobang and Yabyŏlch'o. (The Tobang also included a special horse patrol known as the Mabyŏlch'o). These three major units--the house troops, the Tobang and the Yabyŏlch'o--by the end of the Ch'oe rule, when the dynastic forces had nearly

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[27] When Tae Chipsŏng for example forced people into his services, Ch'unghŏn angrily stopped all activities. Ch'unghŏn was wary lest these troops cause too many disturbances and weaken his power structure. KS 129:25b-26a, KSC 15:13b-14a.

totally disintegrated, were basically all performing the same functions.[28] There are many areas where they shared responsibilities with each other and it is equally apparent that as their functions expanded, they gradually assumed the duties of the dynastic forces. Still subtle differences between these units are evident. The prime tasks of the Tobang and the general house troops was to protect the powerful Ch'oe family, while the Yabyŏlch'o concentrated more on the pacification of bandits and the preservation of domestic tranquility. The Yabyŏlch'o was also quite active in checking Mongols. The other Ch'oe troops did this rarely and when they did, usually it was in conjunction with the Yabyŏlch'o. Many of the Yabyŏlch'o officers held the toryong (Commandant), chiyu (Instruction Officer) or kyowi (Lieutenant) dynastic ranks.[29] Government titles were also given to members of the Tobang and in some instances the same men held positions simultaneously in the Tobang and Yabyŏlch'o. All the Ch'oe forces were important in checking possible opposition. Although during the early part of the Ch'oe rule the Tobang especially seems to have assumed this task, it became less involved with this function as the Yabyŏlch'o gradually became a center for Ch'oe counter-subversion activities.

The term Tobang was not original with Ch'unghŏn but had first been used by Kyŏng Taesŭng in 1181 when he assembled over one hundred men

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[28] Because these three units, along with the mun'gaek, were all performing similar duties, many scholars feel that at least the Tobang and the general private troops together with the mun'gaek were basically the same organization. See for example Yi Kibaek, "Military Tradition," pp. 21-22.

[29] KS 129:38a-b, KSC 16:15a, KS 103:37a-b, KSC 16:16b-17a, KS 127:11b, KS 23:32a, KSC 16:25a.

at his house to act as a guard and escort. In fact Ch'unghŏn during the first years after he came to power, evidently created no such special force but used his general house troops to satisfy his need for security. As attempts on his life became more frequent, however, Ch'unghŏn moved to establish such a personal guard. According to the Koryŏsa for the year 1200,

> Ch'unghŏn feared an incident he could not fathom. From the high and low civil and military officials and hallyang (Reserve officer) to the rank and file soldier, the strong and powerful were assembled and divided into six units. Changing daily as guards at his residence, they were called the Tobang. Whenever Ch'unghŏn entered and left (his house), they joined like an escort going into battle.[30]

Thus within four years of the assassination of Yi Ŭimin, Ch'unghŏn had begun to provide himself with an elite corps distinguished by its personal prowess and loyalty. This Tobang was to become the nucleus of his private army and one of the mainstays of Ch'oe power.

Charged with protecting the Ch'oe leadership, the Tobang seems to have had close and frequent contacts with Ch'unghŏn, and he in turn was careful to cultivate Tobang support. As with the general house troops, Ch'unghŏn would meet and drill the Tobang, and on one occasion he held a banquet for them offering rewards and positions in the dynastic forces to the strongest men.[31] This policy proved effective in 1211 when Hŭijong and various men plotted to kill Ch'unghŏn. Surrounded and helpless, the swift action of his relatives and the Tobang saved Ch'unghŏn. The immediacy of the situation is revealed

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[30] KS 21:11a-12a, 129:14a, KSC 14:8a-b.

[31] KSC 14:25b.

in the sources.

> Ch'unghŏn's relative, Supreme General Kim Yakchin, and Ch'oe U's father-in-law chiju (Administrator of Memorials) Chŏng Sukch'ŏm were in the Chungbang and hearing of the (Hŭijong) incident immediately entered the inner palace and helped Ch'unghon to exit. Ch'unghŏn's followers, chiyu (Instruction Officer) Sin Sonju, Ki Yunwi, and others, fought with the monks. The six units of Ch'unghŏn's Tobang all assembled outside the palace walls; they did not know whether Ch'unghŏn was dead or alive. One tabang (Royal Chamber of Recreation) member No Yongŭi . . . cried in a loud voice, "Our master is not harmed." Thereupon the Tobang fought to enter and aid him.[32]

This incident reveals several other facets of the Tobang and the Ch'oe military structure. Ch'unghŏn's relatives Kim Yakchin and Chŏng Sukch'ŏm, who were active in the Chungbang, seem to have been connected at the same time with the Tobang. In part through their swift responses and the mobilization of the Tobang, Ch'unghŏn was rescued from entrapment. The Tobang also had contacts in the royal staff as witnessed by the participation of No Yongŭi who cried that Ch'unghŏn was still alive.[33]

U, on succeeding his father, continued to foster the private troops, and especially the Tobang, as one of the foundations of his power, but in checking the direct influence of his father's closest aides, he also curtailed the authority of Ch'unghŏn's Tobang. Although he did assume command of it and incorporated it into his power structure, he probably divided the Tobang at this time into inner and outer units. The outer Tobang, which was Ch'unghŏn's original unit, guarded Ch'oe U's in-laws and relatives, while the inner Tobang, comprising men loyal to U alone,

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[32] KS 129:20a-b, KSC 14:29a-30a.

[33] No Yongŭi who helped rally the Ch'oe forces was a Tabang member. The Tabang office attended royal needs and acted as a type of escort. See Yi Kibaek, Yŏkchu, p. 96.

protected U and his immediate family.[34] Even though no record of the inner and outer Tobang was made until 1249, it appears that this division might have existed from the start of U's rule when U first combined his forces with his father's Tobang.

Under U's command the Tobang, expanding into thirty-six divisions, came to include the Mabyŏlch'o. The Mabyŏlch'o, first mentioned in 1229, was basically similar to the Tobang, both being honor guards and escorts. The Mabyŏlch'o were specially trained as horsemen and had a higher degree of mobility than the Tobang,[35] and thus were invaluable to the Ch'oe house as a supplement to the ordinary Tobang. During times of peace the Mabyŏlch'o performed with the Tobang as escorts and, when in ceremony, they wore fine armour and had elaborate saddles.[36] If danger appeared, the Mabyŏlch'o as a crack horse unit, would be deployed to join Tobang strategy, and together they could launch a decisive blow that would overpower opponents.

On at least one occasion the Tobang performed a type of corvee labor task when it constructed for Ch'oe U a private residence on Kanghwa Island in 1232.[37] Rather than interpreting this as an example

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[34] Kim Sanggi, "Koryŏ muin," p. 231.

[35] Kim Sanggi, Koryŏ sidaesa (Seoul: Tongguk munhwasa, 1961) p. 457; Min P'yŏngha, "Ch'oe ssi chŏngkwŏn ŭi chibae kigo," (hereafter cited as "Ch'oe ssi") in Han'guksa, vol. 7, p. 174; Ikeuchi Hiroshi in "Kōrai no sambetsusho ni tsuite," Shigaku zasshi, vol. 37 no. 9 (1926) offers a slightly different interpretation claiming that the Mabyŏlch'o became a part of the Sinŭigun (see discussion on Sinŭigun below). This is an intriguing but unsubstantiated thesis.

[36] KS 129:35b-36a, KSC 15:46b; KS 129:36a, KSC 15:46b.

[37] KS 129:39a, KSC 16:21b-22a.

of the degradation of the Tobang into an ordinary labor unit, the circumstances behind this incident should be understood. This particular type of work was highly unusual and not a permanent responsibility of the Tobang. When the Ch'oe house abandoned the capital at Kaegyŏng, the kingdom was in crisis. Emergency preparations had to be made and the new capital readied for the court and Ch'oe house. The Tobang, as a large mobilized unit was a natural choice to meet this emergency and even to provide services like the construction of houses. As a military unit, it could be easily organized and directed to handle these types of situations.

In conjunction with the growth of Ch'oe U's private house troops and Tobang, a new force, the Yabyŏlch'o (night patrol), which later evolved into the Sambyŏlch'o (three patrols) appeared as an additional base to Ch'oe authority.[38] An understanding of the Yabyŏlch'o has been complicated by the development of the Pyŏlch'o (special patrol) a few decades before the emergence of the Yabyŏlch'o. The confusion caused by this latter problem is unfortunate, for it becomes quite apparent that the Yabyŏlch'o, under Ch'oe control, was quite different in its composition and operation from the Pyŏlch'o which tended to be regional troops established on a temporary basis to check enemy and bandit uprisings.[39] A discussion of the Pyŏlch'o should be considered here

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[38] Ikeuchi in "Kōrai no sambetsusho ni tsuite," and Naito "Kōrai heisei kanken," have both studied the Sambyŏlch'o. Kim Sanggi in "Sambyŏlch'o wa kŭ ŭi nan e tae haya," (hereafter cited as "Sambyŏlch'o") Chindan hakpo 9(1939) has provided the most lengthy study in Korean. For further discussion see footnote 54.

[39] Kim Sanggi in "Sambyŏlch'o" p. 3 and Min Pyŏngha in "Ch'oe ssi," p. 180 both imply that the Pyŏlch'o was a forerunner to the Sambyŏlch'o.

to facilitate a clear delineation between it and the Yabyŏlch'o.

The first mention of the Pyŏlch'o appears in 1174 when the sources report that Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, rewarded for his bravery and merit, was appointed as a Pyŏlch'o toryong (Commandant of the Pyŏlch'o).[40] Although the information for this early period is scanty, it appears that the Pyŏlch'o grew out of the earlier Pyŏlmunban (special military corps)[41] and that the Pyŏlch'o was an elite vanguard force with a high degree of maneuverability. With the Khitan invasions at the start of Kojong's reign (1216), each of the hastily summoned three armies was given 100 Pyŏlch'o to perform scouting and intelligence tasks.[42] The sources are silent on further Pyŏlch'o activities until the Mongol invasions became quite intense in 1231. At this time regional Pyŏlch'o from a number of different areas fought against the invaders.[43] Local Pyŏlch'o units again played a similar role in the subsequent Mongol invasions which occurred sporadically over the next three decades.[44] Even with the collapse of Ch'oe power, the Pyŏlch'o continued to be used as a force against the Mongol attacks, but the Pyŏlch'o, rather

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[40] KS 129:1a, CK p. 442.

[41] Kim Sanggi, "Sambyŏlch'o" p. 17; Min P'yŏngha "Ch'oe sii," p. 180. For a discussion on the Pyŏlmuban see Yi Kibaek, "Koryŏ pyŏlmuban ko," Kim Chaewŏn paksa hwan'gap kinyŏm non'ch'ong (Seoul: Uryu munhwasa, 1968). William Honthorn in Korea: The Mongol Invasions (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963) pp. 228-229, suggests some alternate terms used for Pyŏlch'o.

[42] KSC 14:40b-41a.

[43] KS 103:23a-24b, 26b-27b, KSC 16:5a-6a.

[44] In 1249 see KS 23:41a, KSC 16:39a; in 1253 see KS 24:7a KSC 17:8b; KS 24:11b, KSC 17:13b; in 1254 KS 24:15b, KSC 17:18a-b, in 1256, KS 25: 25b-26a, KSC 17:25a; in 1257 KS 24:31b-32a, KSC 17:31b. Pyŏlch'o moves against the Mongols continued after the destruction of the Ch'oe house.

than revealing any sort of direction from the central government, generally acted quite independently carrying on their battles as a local militia, or acting as a force of stabilization whenever a local uprising occurred. Occasionally, men with low ranks in the dynastic military system led the Pyŏlch'o.[45] However, there is almost no evidence to link these units with the Yabyŏlch'o.[46]

The Yabyŏlch'o appeared during the early part of Ch'oe U's rule, sometime before 1232, the first date mentioned in the histories, and it assumed many duties for the Ch'oe house.[47] The Koryŏsa states that the Yabyŏlch'o was established from among brave soldiers to patrol and prevent crimes at night.[48] In contrast to the Pyŏlch'o, which had little central direction, the Ch'oe house administered Yabyŏlch'o activities and this force had an important role in the Ch'oe power structure. When U was discussing with his advisors the possibility of moving to Kanghwa island, it was a leader in the Yabyŏlch'o who entered the meeting to offer his unsolicited opposition.[49] Later,

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[45] KS 23:41a, KSC 16:39a; KS 24:15b, KSC 17:18a-b, KS 25:25b-26a, KSC 17:25a; and KS 24:31b-32a, KSC 17:31b.

[46] There are two entries which mention regional Yabyŏlch'o. In 1202 a Kyŏngju Yabyŏlch'o is mentioned; see KS 57:2b. In 1254, Kyŏngangdo and Chollado each sent 80 Yabyŏlch'o to guard the capital: see KS 24:15a, KSC 17:17b-18a. These seem to be part of a regional military system and not linked with Ch'oe U's Yabyŏlch'o.

[47] Yi Kibaek, Yokchu, p. 84.

[48] KS 26:33b, 81:15b, KSC 18:50a-b.

[49] KS 129:38a-39a, KSC 16:15a-16a. When U held a council to discuss the evacuation of Kaegyŏng, none of his advisors offered any opposition. Then one chiyu in the Yabyŏlch'o entered the meeting to present his objections. When the man was questioned further on strategy by U, he was unable to respond.

on several occasions, men who were both in the Yabyŏlch'o and simultaneously the Tobang are mentioned, indicating a similarity in functions and reconfirming the importance of the Yabyŏlch'o in the Ch'oe structure. It was the Tobang and Yabyŏlch'o together that bolstered the power of Ch'oe Hang on U's death in 1249. At this time the Tobang and Yabyŏlch'o were under the joint command of one supreme general Chu Suk.[50] When the Ch'oe house was destroyed in 1258, the Tobang again joined by the Yabyŏlch'o was hastily mustered to act as a royal escort for the king while simultaneously serving as an invaluable force in the new leader's consolidation of power.[51]

In contrast with the other Ch'oe forces, the Yabyŏlch'o, in addition to protecting the Ch'oe house, assumed greater responsibilities for the preservation of law and order in a variety of contexts, both domestically and internationally. The Mongol invasions were one of the most serious threats the Koryŏ dynasty ever encountered and the burden of resisting this onslaught fell almost entirely upon the Ch'oe family. Unwilling to risk his own security by dispatching his highly trained private house forces into battle, U augmented his troops with the Yabyŏlch'o. It was Yabyŏlch'o, more than any other group, that assumed the responsibilities left by the shattered dynastic armies. And it was the Yabyŏlch'o who were dispatched to pacify rebels when they appeared in the abandoned capital Kaegyŏng.[52] Once this task was completed, the Yabyŏlch'o repeatedly checked the Mongol invaders, in addition to continuing their

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[50] KS 129:43a, KSC 16:40a-b.

[51] KS 24:33a, KSC 17:37b.

[52] KS 103:37a-b, KSC 16:16b-17a.

regular responsibility of guarding the Ch'oe family. The Yabyŏlch'o also undertook the task of law enforcement and the prosecution of people for the Ch'oe house. The Ch'oe rule would enforce its will often through veiled threats or brute forces. These harsh tactics are still props to power employed by many contemporary regimes. During the Ch'oe period, the Yabyŏlch'o especially assumed these duties. When Ch'oe Hang sought to eliminate a possible opponent to his rule, he sent a Yabyŏlch'o soldier to drown his antagonist;[53] on another occasion a Yabyŏlch'o member is found interrogating a prisoner.[54] The Yabyŏlch'o's functions far exceeded those of a mere persona! bodyguard.

The Yabyŏlch'o, experiencing a number of subtle transformations, eventually appeared as the Sambyŏlch'o. During the middle of U's rule, the Yabyŏlch'o fulfilled its various functions alone and then gradually the Tobang joined it to check Mongols or to support Ch'oe authority. Toward the end of the Ch'oe rule, the Yabyŏlch'o included a right and left division and on Ch'oe Hang's death, these two groups joined the Tobang and Sinŭigun (Divine Righteous Troops) to maintain security.[55] The Sinŭigun, first appearing at this time, comprised men who had been captured and then escaped from the Mongols. On returning to Koryŏ they formed this unit of highly trained and skilled soldiers. Appearing randomly over the next decade as it checked Mongols and guarded leading figures, the Sinŭigun, when combined with the two divisions of the

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[53] KS 129:45b, KSC 17:1b.

[54] KS 122:28a-29a, KSC 17:32b.

[55] KS 129:51b-52a, KSC 17:28b-29b.

Yabyŏlch'o, was referred to as the Sambyŏlch'o.[56] The Korean schoolboy of today regards the Sambyŏlch'o as fervently loyal soldiers who refused to surrender to the Mongols, choosing a heroic death while trying to maintain the independence of the Koryŏ kingdom. These were the same forces that had been first soldiers of the Ch'oe house, and when it was overthrown, the new military leaders commanded them until the combined Mongol and Koryŏ forces captured them in 1270.

In sum, the Ch'oe military structure should be comprehended through three overlapping units: the general Ch'oe house troops, the Tobang, and the Yabyŏlch'o (Sambyŏlch'o). The first to appear was the general private troops that guarded not only the immediate Ch'oe family, but also pacified bandits and rebels. They occasionally even handled judicial matters. The conditions of the age then forced the establishment of a tightly-knit crack guard detachment: the Tobang and its subordinate Mabyŏlch'o. The Tobang's prime function was to escort the Ch'oe family and protect it from attacks, and supplement the general troops. The Yabyŏlch'o, which was the last to form, performed many of these same functions but its sphere of interest was broader as it often went to the provinces to enforce Ch'oe will. Perhaps the biggest difference between the other forces and the Yabyŏlch'o rests in just this fact.

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[56] KS 26:33b, 81:50a-b. Part of the trouble in understanding the composition of the Sambyŏlch'o rests in Yi Chehyŏn's description in Yŏgong p'aesŏl (hereafter cited as YP) in Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 1972). Yi claims that the Sambyŏlch'o was formed from the Sinŭigun, Mabyŏlch'o and Yabyŏlch'o. Today most scholars agree that Yi is in error and prefer to rely on the Koryŏsa version presented here. The Sinŭigun actually played an insignificant role and formed only at the end of the Ch'oe period. William Henthorn in The Mongol Invasions of Korea (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1962) p. 232 suggests that the Sinŭigun might have formed out of the Singigun (Cavalry Corps).

The Yabyŏlch'o acted much more as a constable force for the Ch'oe house. The Ch'oe house had no model to use in designing its military structure. Experimenting through trial and error, it formed units to meet emergencies and Ch'oe needs. This rather amorphous military system was an inevitable result.

All of these units were funded in very similar ways. To support his institutions Ch'unghŏn relied on dynastic stipends. By giving his men military titles he was able to transfer to them the economic privileges that came with the rank. Thus even though the dynastic armies as a military force had all but disappeared in this age, the Ch'oe house maintained and used Koryŏ ranks and titles to finance Ch'oe troops. The Ch'oe house, fully aware that it depended on the loyal service of its men, also granted them lavish gifts. The histories recount the numerous parties and rewards all of the Ch'oe leaders showered on their troops.[57] They also state that these forces, and especially the Yabyŏlch'o, "were paid generously, given favors and granted riches. . . ."[58] Additional distribution of rations from public granaries occasionally supplemented these payments.[59] The Ch'oe forces were well paid from dynastic and private sources, and in return for

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[57] KS 179:35b-36a.

[58] See note 56.

[59] KS 129:24a, KSC 15:1b, KS 24:27a, KSC 17:26b.

their generous support the Ch'oe house secured the allegiance of its troops.[60]

Mun'gaek

The Ch'oe military structure was coordinated in its operation through the responsible work of the Ch'oe house retainer (mun'gaek). The mun'gaek, individuals recruited and selected by Ch'oe leaders to serve their needs, usually performed staffing responsibilities and were active in coordinating the operations of the Ch'oe system. Other prominent men also had mun'gaek but the Ch'oe house retained the largest following. The bond of loyalty, as first seen in chapter two, was close between the lord and retainer, enabling the Ch'oe leaders to place full confidence in these people to enforce Ch'oe designs. As this system evolved apart from the established dynastic order, it is not described in the histories in any detail, and consequently there is very little information on mun'gaek. Furthermore, this retainer phenomenon historically lasted less than a century, and its development was incomplete leaving us with a paucity of documents. By reflecting on the evolution of this system in other countries, we may gain a better grasp of its operation.

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[60] The financial support of these units has provoked some discussion over whether the Yabyŏlch'o-Sambyŏlch'o was a public or private organization. Kim Sanggi in "Sambyŏlch'o" pp. 27-28 asserts that the Sambyŏlch'o was a public unit in contrast to the private Ch'oe Tobang. Institutions evolving at this time should not be judged in this public-private scheme, for such an issue was not relevant to the Ch'oe period. Rather the Ch'oe house and the structure it erected was an extra-legal organization that superimposed its power and administration on the established order.

The idea of pledging allegiance to another is not unique to Korea. In Western Europe this type of structure developed, but over a period of several centuries. During early medieval Europe the idea of vassalage was very broad, carrying the notion of subordination and service between two people.[61] By Charlemagne's time vassalage and benefice (tenement held on easy terms) gradually were combined, but there was no guarantee of some sort of fiscal renumeration in return for service. It was not until the classical age of feudalism in Western Europe, as Ganshof calls it, that elaborate contracts regulating the ties and responsibilities between lord and vassal evolved.[62] Then the obligations of both the lord and retainer stated this entire relationship in a legal context.

Japan, too, had a form of vassalage, but it never developed into a system as well-defined and restricted as that in Western Europe. The Japanese variety appeared in an informal manner with the rise of the bushi during the ninth or tenth century. But even when this system had reached its maturity during the Ashikaga period, it was still quite different from its European counterpart. In Japan the vassal was subordinate to the lord, but the relationship was based often on unwritten or oral contracts specifying individual duties and privileges.[63] There was a "consensus of common behavior" which both parties followed but duties remained vague. In the Japanese military house a pattern of fictive or natural kinship practices formed the underlying principle

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[61] F.L. Ganshof, Feudalism (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) p. 15.

[62] Ganshof, Feudalism, p. 70.

[63] John W. Hall, "Feudalism in Japan--A Reassessment," in Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan, ed. by John W. Hall and Marius B. Jansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) p. 33.

of the lord-vassal relationship.[64] Although the allegiance of the vassal rested ultimately on the lord's military strength, there was often a bond of personal feeling that was cemented by material rewards--e.g., land rights.[65] To secure his command Minamoto Yoritomo placed his followers in various strategic posts in the local government and through these men he was able to control the country. Followers would often carry out the personal needs of a lord in his residence, and on a higher level they would aid the lord through public service. This type of order did not reach its maturity in Japan until the fourteenth century.

Korea in many ways paralleled Japan's medieval development, but the lord-vassal relationships that formed there were much less common and involved than those found in either Japan or Western Europe. Instead of vassals, men had retainers. These lord-retainer ties start to appear in Koryŏ during the military period, but, cut short by the collapse of the Ch'oe house and return to the relatively sophisticated, strict Confucian bureaucratic system, they were never able to form into an intricate hierarchy. Rather they developed little beyond the state that France had achieved before the Carolingian or even Merovingian period. As in eighth century France or twelfth century Japan, there were no written contracts or elaborate ceremonies involved in becoming a retainer during the Ch'oe period. Being a retainer carried the idea of subordination and service, but there was no promise of a benefice to the Koryŏ retainer.

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[64] Hall, "Feudalism--A Reassessment," p. 34.

[65] Peter Duus, Feudalism in Japan (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 50.

The retainer received only his lord's support and assistance.[66] The pattern of fictive kin relations, which appeared with the Japanese retainer tie, was present also in the terminology of the time as the Ch'oe retainers were often referred to as mun'gaek (house guests) or chokin (family person), but this, too, was only in its initial stage of growth. If the military period had continued for another century beyond 1270, and if the Ch'oe house had not depended so heavily on civil institutions, presumably Koryŏ, too, might have developed a much more elaborate lord-retainer nexus, but this did not happen.

During Myŏngjong's reign many important personages had retainers and it was through these men, who were often little more than close confidants, that leaders like Yi Ŭibang or Yi Ŭimin were able to bolster their authority and construct their personal power structure. The retainers were joined by other men such as house slaves (kadong) who performed menial functions and together they were able to serve the needs of their lords.[67] Retainers as seen earlier remained with their masters in both success and failure.

The mun'gaek system expanded with Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's consolidation of power. Ch'unghŏn alone had some 3,000 retainers and his nephew Pak Chinjae is reported also to have had a significant number.[68] This was a sizeable increase from the handful of retainers that usually accompanied the military leaders during Myŏngjong's reign. Retainers

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[66] Yi Kibaek, "Military Tradition," p. 22, and Kim Chongguk in "Korai bushin," find no evidence of any oaths of allegiance being made between lords and retainers.

[67] Kim Chongguk, "Korai bushin," pp. 64-65.

[68] KS 129:18a, KSC 14:21b.

also started to play a significant role in the administration of the Ch'oe house military structure. Much like Yoritomo's men, the retainers, as loyal followers and confidants of Ch'unghŏn, would meet in council to plan strategy for the kingdom. Once decisions were reached, the retainers, who were simultaneously the ranking members of the various Ch'oe military units, could enforce policy in a unified and orderly manner. In this way directives from the Ch'oe house could be efficiently transferred to the various military organizations and communications among the units facilitated. This type of system helps to explain the overlapping functions of the Tobang and Yabyŏlch'o, and the apparently blurred distinctions between the various Ch'oe forces. Retainers during the early years of Ch'unghŏn's consolidation fulfilled other military functions like acting as escorts when Ch'unghŏn entered the royal palace.[69] They also guarded favored personages such as monks. Ch'oe U provided Chonggak kuksa, a famed and respected Chogye (Zen) cleric, with his personal retainers as bodyguards.[70] The mun'gaek was also a ready force that could be dispatched to meet a crisis or alleviate emergencies. When Ch'oe U had to evacuate to Kanghwa Island, he dispatched his mun'gaek as well as the Tobang to prepare the new capital for habitation.[71]

With the maturity of the Ch'oe house, many civilian officials also became retainers and performed needed administrative functions for the Ch'oe leadership. Civil retainers, the Koryŏsa reports, were in the

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[69] KSC 14:20b.

[70] CK vol. 1, p. 577.

[71] Ch'oe Cha, Pohanjip in Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip, 2:1a.

Sŏbang (Chamber of Scholar Advisers) where they performed needed functions for the Ch'oe house.[72] The Ch'oe leaders also sent retainers to temples to study and learn under famous monks.[73] The organization of these non-military retainers was rather novel. One Kim Ch'ang was U's sanggaek (lead retainer) and in this position he was responsible for recommending and advancing men. When Ch'ang took charge of the examinations, he selected one Han Yusŏn, who wrote an especially fine paper, to be one of U's retainers.[74] Many of the men who served in the Ch'oe family Chŏngbang (Personnel Chamber) as well as the Sŏbang, were loyal retainers.

Of the handful of men presented in the histories as Ch'oe house mun'gaek, all of the men appearing during Ch'unghŏn's period were noted for their military functions while in U's rule we see the rise of more civil retainers. Ch'unghŏn's relatives, Kim Yakchin and No Sŏksung were both retainers and instrumental and discharging military duties and constructing a solid base for Ch'oe power. Pak Sungbu, a general in U's government is another example of a retainer.[75] A few of the Ch'oe civilian retainers, who all appear during or after U's regime, include men like Pak Hwŏn, Kim Ch'ang and Han Yusŏn. All of these men, who will be considered in the next chapter, passed the state examination and held ranks such as Minister of Punishments in the dynastic

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[72]See Chapter IV.

[73]Pohanjip 2:22a-b, CK, vol. I, p. 593.

[74]Pohanjip 3:11b.

[75]KS 129:39a-b, KSC 16:32b.

structure. As with the case of the military retainers, these people offered their services to the Ch'oe house and advanced through the officialdom into positions of power in the Ch'oe organization.[76]

Dynastic Troops

The growth of Ch'oe forces must also be understood in terms of developments and changes in the dynastic military units. Even though the strength of the central armies had been seriously challenged during Myŏngjong's reign, they provided a crucial element of support and were instrumental in winning the day for Ch'unghŏn in the months and years after the assassination of Yi Ŭimin. In 1196 and 1197 the capital units appear in the records, parading on display for Ch'unghŏn or in camp for drills.[77] These forces, as the king's army, gave a stamp of legitimacy to Ch'unghŏn's tasks, demonstrating that he had royal favor in his endeavors. But their military importance was even greater. With his own forces still too small at the time to guarantee absolute stability and security for the kingdom. Ch'unghŏn relied on the capital units to act as his military arm. It was in part the strength of the dynastic troops that enabled Ch'unghŏn to check the designs of his brother Ch'ungsu, and guarantee Ch'unghŏn's authority late in 1197.[78]

Coupled with the resurgence of the dynastic forces during this time is the reappearance of the Chungbang. From the start Ch'unghŏn gave the

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[76] Each of these men held concurrent positions in the Chŏngbang and six ministries.

[77] KS 20:36b-37a, KSC 13:43b, KS 129:9a, KSC 13:46a.

[78] KS 129:9b-12a, KSC 13:48b-51b. In this case Ch'unghŏn went to the king to enlist his support. Royal troops, by augmenting Ch'unghŏn's own forces, assured him victory.

Chungbang a more prominent role in politics. By presenting a semblance of reviving the traditional order, Ch'unghŏn could cloak his actions with more legitimacy and ensure greater domestic stability and support for his rule. Ch'unghŏn also might win the allegiance of even reluctant military officers who attached significance to reviving the Chungbang. But in restoring the Chungbang, Ch'unghŏn did not neglect to assure its subservience to his command. The purge of many of the leading generals at the start of his consolidation was both to neutralize his opposition and to bolster the position of loyal Ch'oe followers in the dynastic military structure. The role of the Chungbang in the subsequent years lends further evidence demonstrating Ch'unghŏn's efforts to subordinate it under his authority. Although the Chungbang was a very important symbol, in reality it came to play an increasingly insignificant role in court politics.

When Sinjong ascended to the throne in late 1197, the Chungbang assumed minor, mostly ceremonial functions. Rather than administering problems of law and order, it discussed the nation's landscape, prolonging the kingdom's foundation, geomancy and rituals.[79] Though these issues were important to twelfth century Koryŏ society, the Chungbang was only invited to discuss them, not to decide them. Furthermore, the Chungbang rarely met alone, but almost always joined other groups, such as the chaesang, to participate in meetings with Ch'unghŏn or the king. The Chungbang, during this time seems to have been an honorary council, reserved for senior military officers, carrying little influence in

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[79] KS 21:21a-b, KSC 14:36a-b, KSC 13:29a-b, 14:21b.

dynastic politics. When emergencies confronted the dynasty, seldom did the Chungbang assume any major function. The Chungbang was noticeably absent from a conference attended by the chaesang and Ch'unghŏn shortly after Sinjong died.[80] In addition to reducing its functions, Ch'unghŏn sought to control the Chungbang through relatives and retainers. In 1211 when Hŭijong (1204-1211) plotted and nearly succeeded in killing Ch'unghŏn, Ch'unghŏn's relative Kim Yakchin and his son's father-in-law Chŏng Sukch'ŏm, both in the Chungbang, rushed to his aid saving his life.[81] These two men were key figures in Ch'unghŏn's inner structure and they performed a valuable link by providing a means to oversee the activities of the Chungbang.

Ch'oe U, rather than affecting a radical break with his father's policies, continued subtly to curtail the influence of the Chungbang. Both Ch'oes, father and son alike, had learned their lessons from the errors of Yi Ŭimin, and while they were in much stronger positions than Ŭimin, neither of them was anxious to discredit totally the eminence of the Chungbang. But in 1223 when several generals met in the Chungbang offices to plot the murder of all civilian officials, this was too much even for U, and he promptly banished all conspirators.[82] This act indicates that the Chungbang was a potential source of friction and opposition to Ch'oe schemes. Yet it continued to function for at least several more years. The Ch'oe private units were gaining rapidly in

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[80] KS 21:17a-18a, KSC 14:15b-16b.

[81] KS 129:30a, KSC 14:29a-30a.

[82] KS 129:31a, KSC 15:30a.

prestige and influence,[83] however, and after 1230 the Chungbang disappears from the record for over twenty-five years or until after the collapse of the Ch'oe house.

The capital units, the two guards and six standing armies, during much of the Ch'oe period are nearly absent from the dynastic sources. By 1225 it is quite clear that Ch'oe U had established total control over the royal escorts and presumably all of the capital units. In that year U said, "Because the front horsemen escort the king, I should personally select them." Afterwards he reviewed them at his house and their saddle decorations were twice as elaborate as those of earlier days.[84] In the next month U was also deciding the type of apparel the royal guards should wear.[85] Although their operations fell under Ch'oe house purview, the functions of the capital units became increasingly honorary and rarely did they assume military duties.[86]

As with the Chungbang and the capital units which were restored to a modicum of power at the outset of Ch'oe rule, and then circumvented and checked, the emergency armies experienced a similar but slower decay. When the Khitan invasions occurred in 1216, the Ch'oe house hastily mobilized and dispatched the three emergency armies to check the attacks. It became apparent within a month that these forces were

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[83] Naito Shunpo in "Kōrai jidai no jūbō oyobi seibō ni tsuite," Inaba hakushi kanreki kinen mansenshi ronsō (Seoul, 1938) claims that as the Chungbang lost power, the Chōngbang of the Ch'oe house was gaining in influence. Actually the functions of these two agencies were quite different. For further discussion see Chapter IV.

[84] KS 129:31b-32a, KSC 15:35a.

[85] KS 22:25a, KSC 15:35a.

[86] KS 102:19a-b, KSC 16:43b.

insufficient to resist the invasions so the authorities formed an additional two armies. By 1218, after a number of advances and retreats, the dynastic forces ultimately halted the Khitans and returned to the capital. This entire period was critical for Ch'unghŏn. Rather than give too much support to the dynastic troops, who could easily become a power of their own, Ch'unghŏn first chose to strengthen his own private forces. When the wars were completed, rather than allow the victorious generals like Cho Ch'ung to gain too much acclaim, he quickly summoned them to return to the capital and rewarded those who presented little threat to Ch'oe authority.[87] In addition to these tactics, Ch'unghŏn seems to have been very careful in selecting men to lead the dynastic forces against the Khitans.

The Ch'oe house dispatched thirty-nine men to command the dynastic armies in their battles against the Khitans.[88] Of this number twenty-one have been identified positively as men from military ranks while eleven were from civilian families. Each of the Military Commissioners (pyŏngmasa), in this case the commanders of the various armies, was originally from a military household, but quite often a civilian deputy carrying the title of pubyŏngmasa assisted. Even though Ch'unghŏn was in control of the dynastic machinery and had purged nearly all opposition by this time, when dispatching the dynastic troops, he sought to prevent any particular clique from dominating the armies. By sending civilians who were literate and undoubtedly familiar with military

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[87] KS 129:26a, KSC 15:20a.

[88] See Appendix D.

strategy (traditionally it was the civilians who devised strategy), Ch'unghŏn assured a balance between civilian and military influences in the top ranks and thus was able to neutralize potential opposition through a system of checks and balances. Another method to maintain his authority was to dispatch relatives and close associates to watch over the armies. Ch'unghŏn sent two of his key aides to act as wŏnsu and puwŏnsu (commander and deputy commander) of all dynastic forces when Koryŏ resistance lagged toward the end of 1216. Chŏng Sukch'ŏm, Ch'oe U's father-in-law, was sent as wŏnsu. Chŏng, if only because of his marriage ties, was close to the inner circle of the Ch'oe command. He had assisted Ch'unghŏn several years earlier when Hŭijong attempted to overthrow the Ch'oe house, and now he commanded Koryŏ's defenses. As his deputy Chŏng had Cho Ch'ung, a passer of the state examination and son of the eminent minister Cho Yŏngin. Ch'ung was a member of a civilian family that had been closely associated with the Ch'oe power structure since 1196. Cho family members, able in letters and valiant fighters, were loyal supporters of the Ch'oe house. In addition to these men, the leadership also included men like the successful examination candidate Ch'oe Chonjung of the prominent Tongju Ch'oe family, General Kim Ch'wiryŏ of the Onyang Kim clan and Ch'unghŏn's confidant Ch'a Ch'ŏk. Ch'unghŏn also enlisted relatively unknown figures, but by sending men loyal to him, he intended to maintain absolute control over the dynastic armies and check any possible rebellions.[89]

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[89] In the middle of one of these operations Sukch'ŏm was recalled to the capital and implicated in an anti-Ch'oe plot. KS 110:28a-b, KSC 15:2a-b. Obviously Ch'unghŏn watched closely all of his men.

The dynastic troops gradually disappeared as the northern invasion became more intense under Ch'oe U. U, first confronted with Eastern Jurchen attacks in 1222, reluctantly released the central army to check the invaders. With the subsequent Jurchen incursions in 1226 and 1227, he dispatched another army but by this time regional troops played a more important role in checking the assaults. A lack of Ch'oe interest and continual battles weakened the dynastic troops so when the Mongols commenced their attacks, the Ch'oe house, drained by earlier fights, perhaps aware of the ferocity of the Mongols, and uncertain of its own political position, was even less eager to organize resistance. As these invasions became severe in 1231, U and his son-in-law Kim Yakson had their well-trained house troops protect their own persons while the old and weak or young boys and girls were left to guard the capital.[90] Although U dispatched the three dynastic armies at this time, the chu (regional) defense units seem to have assumed most of the responsibility for the resistance. Rather than commit his funds and men to fight directly with the Mongols to the bitter end and thereby risk his own life, Ch'oe U elected to move the court and his household to Kanghwa Island and continue opposition to the Mongols from a more insular, protected capital than Kaegyong. Within a few years of the retreat to Kanghwa, the three armies disappear from the records and no central dynastic force is mentioned until the end of the Ch'oe rule. Except for the pyongmasa, who made occasional appeals for aid, the defense of the kingdom seems to have been relegated to local Pyolch'o that carried

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[90] KS 129:37b, KSC 16:8b-9a.

on sporadic guerilla-like tactics in an effort to foil Mongol maneuvers. Regional fortresses, joining the Pyŏlch'o, also waged valiant, independent defenses of their own regions. What coordinated central resistance can be found appears only in random forays by some of the Ch'oe troops onto the mainland to harass the Mongols.

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, because of the nature of the dynastic institutions in which the monarch was the focus and recipient of all loyalty, had to sidestep the established military structure and devise his own machinery. The military organs that he and his descendants designed were hastily formed over a period of several decades to meet the emergencies of the times. They were novel departures from the recognized norm but in serving the Ch'oe house, they became effective arms to its power. With the passage of time and the gradual weakening of the dynastic troops, the Ch'oe forces assumed responsibility for the kingdom's security as well as the needs of the Ch'oe family. Accompanying the reduction in the importance of the dynastic machinery was the appearance of a new type of personnel. The Ch'oe rule needed men who could give uncontested loyalty to their house and not the king, and the retainer played an indispensable role in fostering this change. With the evolution of the retainer, a new system of authority had been established. Men no longer achieved their power through family ties and bureaucratic positions alone. Now by a judicious relation with a strategically centered official, a retainer could be assured of continual advancement. The source of prestige and influence no longer rested solely with the king and the dynastic structure but instead had shifted to individuals. The

Ch'oe house encouraged this change. The confusion and need for urgency caused by the collapse of dynastic military institutions sped these developments.

CHAPTER IV

THE CH'OE HOUSE CIVIL STRUCTURE AND PERSONNEL

In the early Koryŏ period prestige and authority rested with men who held civil positions in the dynastic structure. Even though Ch'unghŏn placed considerable attention on constructing a solid military base, he also nurtured and won the support of the elite civil elements of society. That is, it was through the employment of civilian administrative talents as well as military force that the Ch'oe house was able to rule the kingdom. In a pattern similar to their use of existing military institutions, the Ch'oe leadership at first depended upon the dynastic bureaucracy, but gradually it constructed its own private agencies. In the end, the Ch'oe house used its own units, both military and civil, superimposed on the formal dynastic structure, to act as a brain trust at the nucleus of the entire Ch'oe system. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the operation of the Ch'oe house through its manipulation of both the existing civil dynastic structure and the new administrative institutions Ch'unghŏn and U devised. To understand this novel system, an examination of the actual men who assisted the Ch'oe house and enabled it to govern will be attempted. In the composition of the ruling structure, there were departures from the trends established during Myŏngjong's reign. Although the Ch'oe house recruited men who had bureaucratic ability, it also sought to secure its position in society by employing men with prestigious social backgrounds. The Ch'oe house did not encourage men of low social origins to participate in this new ruling structure.

Ch'unghŏn, as he commenced his consolidation of power, depended heavily on the established dynastic order. Rather than erect a completely new administrative body, he used traditional channels to govern. It would have been foolish to eliminate these units at this time for through them Ch'unghŏn began to inaugurate the necessary changes and reforms that he envisioned. The dynastic structure evolved during the tenth and eleventh centuries to meet the challenges of the Koryŏ kingdom. Furthermore if he had tried to eliminate the established centers of control in the early years of his rule, he would have encountered the united objections of the civilian officials. The civilian official, trained in Confucian ideology, believed that the preservation of the dynastic structure was tied to legitimacy. These men had been instrumental in the establishment of military rule and the administration of the kingdom during Myŏngjong's reign and thus looked to Ch'unghŏn as a possible remedy to the abuses perpetrated under Yi Ŭimin's rule. Ch'unghŏn spent a considerable amount of time and effort on placating this particular group and winning it to his cause. Alienating them unnecessarily at this stage would have only hindered his long range goals. Ch'unghŏn was essentially a conservative man who depended upon compromise as a means to co-opt opposition and gain followers. He was demonstrating his support for the civilian leadership by using the traditional dynastic structure. Furthermore he realized that his own position was still insecure and by linking his cause to that of the dynasty, he would be able to use Confucian ideological foundations to bolster Ch'oe authority.

The dynastic system of offices and ranks also provided a force of legitimacy, much like the monarch, which the Ch'oe house could use to sustain its policies when handling domestic and international problems. It played an integral role in meeting Ch'oe fiscal needs. Ch'unghŏn would pay for his own troops and administrators from dynastic funds by simply assigning men in his power structure a dynastic title. With a formal office and rank, the Ch'oe official was eligible to receive rents from a land allotment under the chŏnsikwa. Rather than depleting his own wealth to support his bureaucracy, Ch'oe could simply depend on the existing system of stipends to meet many of his financial obligations.

In fostering the dynastic civil structure, Ch'unghŏn also subtly tried to guarantee his control over the formal hierarchy of the kingdom. Ch'unghŏn himself consciously sought and received appointments to the major agencies of the dynasty and through this slow but deliberate infiltration and advancement into the ranking dynastic offices, he was able to control many positions and regulate policy. He also attempted to restructure various established offices to fulfill better his own needs. Within four years of coming to power, Ch'unghŏn was appointed concurrently to the command of the Ibu (Ministry of Civil Personnel) and Pyŏngbu (Ministry of Military Affairs). Dual appointments were not uncommon in Koryŏ political life, and in taking charge of these two ministries he was able to control the appointment and advancement of all men in the civil and military branches. Ch'unghŏn also decided at this time that he would perform his official duties at his private residence, and from his home he recruited and selected civil and

military officials, and then presented his roster to the king for approval.[1] By doing this Ch'unghŏn introduced a striking change into the established structure, for he radically altered the procedure of the ministries' operations to realize Ch'oe needs, even though their functions remained intact. They would still meet in dynastic buildings but decisions would be made at the Ch'oe house with Ch'unghŏn himself directing affairs and deciding who was fit for advancement. Thus by compromise and by dependence on established agencies, Ch'unghŏn won the support of many officials, used and altered effective administrative units, and at the same time maneuvered himself into a dominant position of power within this whole structure. But it is also apparent that Ch'unghŏn was not totally satisfied with the operation of the formal dynastic structure.

When Ch'unghŏn announced his reform proposals soon after taking power in 1196, he stated his dissatisfaction with bureaucratic inefficiency and ostentatious behavior. Bureaucratic inertia is not a modern phenomenon. To Ch'oe, too, a man impatient to enact his will, the desire to streamline his administration and to settle quickly any possible conflicts must have always been present. Furthermore, he would never be able to exercise total control over the kingdom as long as he remained dependent on the formal structure.

The monarchy posed a unique dilemma to Ch'unghŏn. As with the earlier military leadership, it would have been unthinkable to eliminate the monarch, and yet some sort of system had to be devised to bypass

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[1] KS 129:13a, KSC 14:5a, 14:10b-11a.

him. The king, as the supreme authority, was theoretically in control of all policy. He personified the political, social and ideological structure of the kingdom. The legitimacy of all acts and the rights of all men also depended on the sanction of the king. Ch'unghŏn had to devise a method to divest the monarch of authority, while still maintaining a symbolic royal position. By building his own sector to meet emergencies and administer the government, Ch'unghŏn would be able to control and govern more efficiently and completely. There was nothing novel about this idea. "Kitchen cabinets" are not unique to any period. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and his descendants merely formalized their "kitchen cabinets" into a private organization which acted as a brain trust for the Ch'oe house--a power behind the throne. There had been people and families who briefly enjoyed this position of power and influence in the Koryŏ kingdom previously. The Kyŏngwon Yi clan was perhaps the most noted example. But Ch'unghŏn's action was unique for several reasons. He was a dictator, a military official, and not from a civilian family. He chose to institutionalize his private administration, and not control the dynasty by having his children marry the monarchs. And where other families had failed in establishing their power, Ch'unghŏn was able to supplement the normal dynastic operations with his private administration. By superimposing his own structure on top of the dynastic administration, and by having Ch'oe followers (mun'gaek) control major dynastic operations, Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were able to divert power and authority from the monarch to themselves, and by this to secure a position of supreme authority in the kingdom.

The Ch'oe Organization

The first and most important Ch'oe civil agency to evolve was the Kyojŏng-dogam (Directorate General for Policy Formulation). Established in 1209 after an assassination attempt against Ch'unghŏn, its immediate duties, although unclear, seem to have been to expedite Ch'oe responses in meeting unanticipated events.[2] Kyojŏng-dogam offices are mentioned again in 1215 when one Yun Seyu requested that he be made a Kyojŏng-byŏlgam (Special Commissioner for Policy Formulation) to check several people who were plotting treason.[3] From these two incidents it appears that this office dealt with judicial and police matters, and especially with activities relating to treason or assassination attempts. A much clearer view of the role of the Kyojŏng-dogam emerges in 1227 when Ch'oe U was in command. The sources relate,

> Ch'oe U had the Kyojŏng-dogam dispatch messages instructing all high ranking and court officials to recommend those with ability who had passed the state examination but had not received a post. Earlier Ch'unghŏn established the Kyojŏng-dogam. All that was done was carried out from the Togam. U also did this.[4]

As the most powerful arm of the Ch'oe house, the Kyojŏng-dogam was the center of all major decisions. It processed not only functions related to punishments, but even personnel matters such as recruitment and promotions. This prestigious body did not overlook economic matters

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[2] KS 129:18b-19a, KSC 14:25a-b. The histories merely indicate that at this time Ch'unghŏn, on hearing of an assassination plot, had the Kyojŏng-dogam formed and then closed the city gates searching for the plotters.

[3] KS 96:37b-38b, KSC 14:35a-b.

[4] KS 129:32b, KSC 15:38a.

either. A Kyojŏng-dogam directive, for example, called for the reduction of various taxes all over the country in 1250.[5] The Kyojŏng-dogam also managed provincial as well capital affairs as both this event and an incident in 1228 demonstrate. In the latter, U's father-in-law Tae Chipsŏng tried to use the Kyojŏng-dogam to reprimand a functionary in the provinces for disregarding his orders.[6] As the Koryŏ histories state, "All that was done was carried out from the Togam." The Kyojŏng-dogam seems to have served under the direction of the Ch'oes as their supreme legislative, executive and judicial body. Although the Ch'oe house did not eliminate the regular dynastic institutions, their primary functions became more perfunctory as the real focus of authority in the kingdom converged in the Kyojŏng-dogam. It was such an important office that the successors to the Ch'oe regime even used it until 1270 when the traditional dynastic structure regained all responsibilities.

The military influence on this council was omnipresent. The position of pyŏlgam, leader of the Kyojŏng-dogam, seems to have been a military office and similar in status to changgun (general). The Ch'oes themselves, who were all generals, each held this post.[7] Furthermore,

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[5] KS 129:44a, KSC 16:39b.

[6] A monk asked Tae Chipsŏng to obtain permission from one Pak Pongsi to cut timber in Kangumhyŏn in Hwanghae. Pongsi refused so Chipsŏng in anger sent him a kyojŏng letter. KS 129:35a, KSC 15:43a.

[7] Yun Seyu, a yebu wŏnoerang who requested to be a Kyojŏng-byŏlgam, is an exception. Why he felt he could be a pyŏlgam while all other men in this office were the most powerful military officers of the age is unclear. Yun requested this post and was refused. See note three.

the initial functions of this agency were quite similar to the Tobang.[8]

The office of Togam (Directorate-General) was not new to Koryŏ administration. Many other Togam had evolved in the past as ad hoc agencies vested with extraordinary power to handle various emergencies, but what is unique about this Togam is that Ch'unghŏn had this originally supplementary dynastic office transformed into a major, permanent arm of his administration. As with all Togam the king established the Kyojŏng-dogam and because of the peculiar nature of the institution, it was able to by-pass traditional channels. With the formation of this legal, dynastic agency, Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were able to use it to work within the traditional order to meet their own aspirations.

In the Ch'oe house the Kyojŏng-dogam, as the paramount brain trust, comprised the leading men of the age who would meet under the leadership of the Ch'oes themselves to deliberate on policy. Similar bodies were apparent during earlier periods. First the chaesang and then the Chungbang had been used to formulate group decisions. Now the formation of the Kyojŏng-dogam preserved this oligarchical nature of Koryŏ administration. Through sessions which included both military and civilian leaders, the Ch'oe house could make decisions based on a broad consensus and win wide support. Once the Ch'oe house reached decisions, it could have its designs executed by returning to the dynastic structure which seems to have been under the control of many of the same individuals who

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[8] Min P'yŏngha, "Ch'oe ssi," p. 149. Kim Sanggi in Koryŏ sidaesa, p. 455, offering a similar analysis, has suggested that the Kyojŏng-dogam actually replaced the Chungbang.

occupied posts in the Kyojŏng-dogam.[9] The men in the Kyojŏng-dogam and other Ch'oe units, commonly referred to as mun'gaek (retainers), like their military counterparts, usually held offices simultaneously in both the Ch'oe and dynastic machinery, and pledged in theory their ultimate loyalty to the Ch'oe house not the king. Thus, through this system the Ch'oe house was able to maintain the dynastic structure, and control it through the Kyojŏng-dogam at the top and the loyalty of the mun'gaek who worked within it.

The Ch'oe house also had several other units within its civil structure in addition to the Kyojŏng-dogam. The second most important body was the Chŏngbang (Privy Council) which had the major duty of supervising recruitment and appointments. Although the Chŏngbang's development started as early as 1199 when Ch'unghŏn brought the Ministry of Civil Personnel (Ibu) and the Ministry of Military Affairs (Pyŏngbu) into his residence, it was not until 1225, under the auspices of U, that personnel matters were institutionalized under its jurisdiction. The Koryŏ records recount, "U established the Chŏngbang in his private house. To propose official appointments, he selected civilian scholars to be in charge of it."[10] An additional entry provides more information on the operation of the Chŏngbang.

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[9] There is no evidence to prove that the men in the Kyojŏng-dogam also held dynastic ranks. However, since this type of scheme did exist for the Chŏngbang where there is more information available, presumably the same pattern evolved for the Kyojŏng-dogam.

[10] KS 129:31b, KSC 15:34b. As mentioned above, the Kyojŏng-dogam also had some personnel responsibilities. The inference is that the Kyojŏng-dogam, as the supreme Ch'oe council, had ultimate control over selection, but the processing of actual recommendations for appointment and advancement was done in the Chŏngbang.

> Ch'oe U established the Chŏngbang in his private residence; it determined recommendations and the selection of civilian scholars. It was called the Pijach'i...Since Ch'unghŏn took power he set up a pu administration. He privately established policy, recommendations and appointments. He took from his group men, making them sungsŏn calling them chongsok sungsŏn. Those with administrative responsibility were third rank and called chongsok sangsŏ. Those of fourth rank and below were called chongsok sogyŏng and they handled writing. Below them, those who managed general affairs were called chongsok soje. The place where they met was called the Chŏngbang.[11]

The personnel responsibilities of the Chŏngbang are clear. The delineation of authority within the Chŏngbang is also apparent as Ch'unghŏn established names and ranks on a pattern reminiscent of the formal dynastic titles. Although the size of the Chŏngbang is not as well defined, the sources do mention several people who participated in the Chŏngbang and by examining them one can arrive at a better estimate of the composition and functions of this chamber.

Five men who were found to have held positions in the Chŏngbang appear below; all were successful examination candidates. Three of them also were definitely identified in the histories as retainers of the Ch'oe house and all but one of them seem to have held a high rank in the ministries. Two of the men were directly responsible for recommendations and personnel matters and one was in the National University.

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[11] KS 75:2b-3a, Yi Chehyŏn, YP 1:8b-9a. The term "Pijach'i" evolved from the Mongol language, and seems to have been attached to the Chŏngbang in its later evolution after the Ch'oe house disappeared. A pu was an administrative unit given to men with enfeoffments. See Chapter VII on Ch'oe finances for further discussion of this.

name	entrance	relation to Ch'oe	formal office	miscellaneous
Kim Ch'ang	exam	retainer		in charge of recommendations
Pak Hwŏn	exam	retainer	Hyŏngbusangsŏ (Minister of Punishments)	
Song Kukch'ŏm	exam		Chŏngŏn; Hyŏngbusangsŏ (Policy Monitor; Minister of Punishments) Kamch'alŏsa (Investigating Censor)	
Yu Kyŏng	exam		Taesasŏng (Superintendent of the National University)	
Yu Ch'ŏnu	exam	retainer	Ibusirang (Executive of Civil Personnel) Pyŏngbusirang (Executive of Military Affairs)	

The high calibre of men in the Chŏngbang is immediately apparent. Through the utilization of this particular group in the Chŏngbang, the Ch'oe house was clearly recruiting the talent of the kingdom into its structure. Although it is impossible to state with any precision, it is quite conceivable that the Chŏngbang, much like the Department of Ministries (Sangsŏsŏng) and six ministries in the traditional dynastic structure, administered and enforced Ch'oe house policy.

The Ch'oe leaders considered recruitment and appointment such an important process in the operation of the government that they chose to separate the Chŏngbang from the Kyojŏng-dogam. Undoubtedly some men served simultaneously in both agencies, but the latter was concerned more with general policy for the kingdom, and the former specifically took charge of personnel matters and was subordinate to the Kyojŏng-dogam. Because Chŏngbang members also held offices in many of the ministries it is probable that through them the Chŏngbang administered and enforced much Ch'oe policy. The Chŏngbang was also different from

the Kyojŏng-dogam in another respect. It was not established by royal command but was formed by Ch'oe U. U, in a much more secure position than Ch'unghŏn, did not depend so heavily on royal fiat, and so when he needed to erect an agency to oversee personnel matters, he simply created his own organization.

A final civil organ of the Ch'oe house was the Sŏbang (Chamber of Scholar Advisers). Again there is virtually no information on the functions of this particular agency and consequently the following conclusions were derived primarily through inference. The Koryŏsa states, "Ch'oe I (U's) retainers were all famous Confucian scholars of the age. They were divided into three divisions, the Ch'ebang, Sukpang and Sŏbang."[12] Thus, U's role in establishing the Sŏbang is evident, but its size, the number of people who participated in it and even possible members of this group are all obscure. As stated it was a body for Ch'oe civil retainers, and thus many of the people who served in the Chŏngbang and the Kyojŏng-dogam as Ch'oe retainers also probably were active in the Sŏbang. Three divisions made up the Sŏbang by 1257 when it is mentioned as joining Ch'oe military units to guard the capital on Ch'oe Hang's death.[13] From this particular entry, as well as an item for the following year (1258) when the Sŏbang joined the same groups to accompany the king,[14] it is evident that the Sŏbang was playing a role in bringing peace to the capital. By bringing the

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[12] KS 129:32b. The meaning of Ch'ebang and Sukpang are unclear. There is no further mention of them in the histories.

[13] KS 129:52b, KSC 17:28b.

[14] KS 24:33a, KSC 17:37b.

Sŏbang into public view at these two critical moments, the new leaders, first Ch'oe Ŭi and then Kim Injun and Yu Kyŏng, were able to demonstrate that the Ch'oe power structure, as represented in the Sŏbang and other Ch'oe units, endorsed the new leadership.

The Sŏbang in more tranquil times seems to have acted as a center for major military decisions. In earlier periods in the dynasty, civilian scholars devised military strategy during emergencies. Classical treatises on war, which only the Confucian scholar could understand and translate into sound policy, were the sources for military strategy.[15] It was during Ch'oe U's rule, when the Mongol invasions became especially severe that the Sŏbang first appeared, and perhaps needs evolving from this emergency forced the formation of the Sŏbang. Scholars who had knowledge of military matters, probably men of high learning and certainly Ch'oe retainers, met at this agency to plan Ch'oe military tactics. Many of the men who were active in the Sŏbang undoubtedly held concurrent posts in the dynastic structure as well as the Kyojŏng-dogam or Chŏngbang. These joint appointments assured greater continuity and coordination in administration. Also the top civilian personnel in this way became quite familiar with the pressing military problems facing the nation and thus much more understanding regarding the issues and circumstances confronting the soldier or guard. These developments also somewhat blunted the power of the military official for they no longer could exercise total control over the military establishment. By having his civilian scholars

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[15] The Sun Tzu, a classical Chinese treatise on war, was the basis for much military strategy. This particular volume has been translated into English. See Samuel B. Griffith, trans., Sun Tzu: The Art of War (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

devise military strategy and work with officers, Ch'oe U and his descendants were doing much to bridge the barrier of social differences and suspicions between the military and civil elements of Koryŏ society in keeping with traditional practice.

Dynastic Administration Under Ch'unghŏn

Although following no preconceived format, Ch'unghŏn and his son U superimposed the Ch'oe agencies, and particularly the Kyojŏng-dogam and Chŏngbang, on the top of the entire dynastic structure. But they maintained the established dynastic ranks and offices below, for through these offices, the Ch'oe leadership could administer the kingdom. Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were skillfully merging the two systems to operate as a smooth efficient organization. As with the formation of the military establishment, it was a very natural, rational system that slowly evolved and an analysis of the dynastic structure will facilitate an understanding of this new order. Since many of the men who held dynastic offices also became Ch'oe mun'gaek and participated in Ch'oe house units, this examination will present a more accurate picture of the men who filled the offices of the Ch'oe house, as well as a better assessment of the entire ruling structure. At the same time this inquiry into the personalities of the period will demonstrate the intermingling of the Ch'oe system and the dynastic offices.

Ch'unghŏn sought to incorporate many civilians into the administration of the kingdom. Among those who held prominent dynastic offices during the twenty-three years Ch'unghŏn was in power some seventy-seven men can be identified.[16] Of these seventy-seven men, twenty-four (31%)

[16] These men appear on Chart D, p. 178-181.

CHART D: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's regime (1196-1219)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Chaesang																	
Chungsŏmunhasŏng																	
Ki Hongsu	M		A	K	1	Kim Wŏnŭi	M			K		Ch'oe Sŏn	C	E	AA		
Yi Munjun	M					No Hyodon	M		AA			Ch'oe Tang	C	E	AA		
Chŏng Kŭgon	M		AA		2	Ch'oe Hongyun	C	E	A			Im Yu	C	E	AA		
Chŏng Sukch'ŏm	M		A			Chŏng Kukkŏm	C					Yi Kyejang	C	E	AA		
Chŏng Ŏnjin	M					Kŭm Kŭgŭi	C	E	A		3	U Suryu	C				
Ch'a Yaksong	M		A		2	Yu Kwangsik	C		A			Kim Chun	?				
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn	M		A			Yi Ch'ullo	C		AA			Kim Pongmo	C		A		
U Sŭnggyŏng	M				3	Cho Yŏngin	C	E	A	K							
Tu Kyŏngsŭng	M		A	K		Wang Kyu	C		A		2						
Ch'umirwŏn																	
Paek Chonyu	M					U Sŭnggyŏng	M					Kŭm Kŭgŭi	C	E	A		
Min Konggyu	C	E	AA			Ch'oe Sŏn	C	E	AA		1	Yi Kyejang	C	E	AA		
Sa Hongjŏk	C					Kim Chun	?					Yi Kyŏng	C		A		
Chungsŏmunhasŏng (3-7 p'um grade)																	
Kim Yanggyŏng	C	E	A			Ch'oe Posun	C	E				Min Sik	C	E	A		
Yi Tŭkso	C	E				Yi Kyubo	C	E	A			Min Konggyu	C	E	AA		
Wang Ŭi	C	E				Chang Yunmun	C	E	A			Yi Yusŏng	M		A		
Yi Illo	C	E	A			Cho Chun	C	E	AA		2	Wang Kyongŭi	C				
Yi Tallim	C	E				Pak Hyŏn'gyu	C	E				Kim Kunyu	C	E	AA		

CHART D: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's regime (1196-1219) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Ch'umirwŏn (3-7 p'um grade)																	
Song Hongyŏl	M					Yi Chŏk	?		A			Kim Pongmo	C		A		
Chong Pangbo	M					Kim P'yŏng	C	E	A			Mun Yup'il	C		AA		
Ch'a Yaksong	M		A			Cho Ch'ung	C	E	AA			An Yubu	C	E			
Ch'a Chŏk	M					Ch'ae Chŏng	C	E	L			Yi Yŏnsu	C				
Sin Sŏnju	M					Ch'oe Hongyun	C	E	A			Yi Chajŏng	?				
Ch'ae Sunhŭi	M					Yu Tukŭi	M					U Sŭnggyŏng	M				
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn	M		A			Chŏng Sukch'ŏm	M		A								
Sangsŏdosŏng																	
Pak Chinjae	M					Chŏng Chin	M					Han Ki	?				
U Suryu	C			K		Chŏng Kŭgon	M		AA		I						
Six Ministries																	
Personnel																	
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn	M		A			Ki Hongsu	M		A			Cho Yŏngin	C	E	A		K
No Kwan	M		?H			Yu Tŭgŭi	C					Ch'oe Sŏn	C	E	AA		
Tu Kyŏngsŭng	M		A	K		Chŏng Kukkŏm	C										
Punishments																	
Kim Chujong	C		A			Min Sik	C	E	AA			Chang Yunmun	C	E	A		
Chŏn Wŏn'gyun	C		A			Pak Insŏk	C		AA								
U Suryu	C			K		Pak Chinjae	M										

CHART D: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's regime (1196-1219) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Rites					
Yi Kongno	C	E	A		
Yun Seyu	C		A		
Pang Ŭnggyo	C				
Wang Ŭi	C				
Military					
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn	M		A		
Ki Hongsu	M		A	K	
Yi I	?				
Yi Chŏk	C		A		
Ŏsadae					
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn	M		A		
Kang Sunŭi	M				
Kim Ch'ŏkhu	M				

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Yi Illo	C	E	A		
Yi Tanim	C	E			
Ch'oe Hongyun	C	E	A		
Yi Kyubo	C	E	A		
Public Works					
Chong Chin	M			2	
Kŭm Kŭgŭi	C	E	A		
Wang Kyu	C		A		
Yun Seyu	C		A		

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Kim Kunyu	C	E	AA		
Kim Wŏnŭi	M			K	
Kim Ch'ŏkhu	M				
Revenue					
Yom Kungmo	C		AA		
Cho Chun	C	E	AA		I
An Wan	C				
Pak Tungmun	C				

CHART D: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's regime (1196-1219) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	miscellaneous
Chigonggŏ																	
Yi Chamun	C	E				Yi Kyejang	C	E	AA			Ch'oe Tang	C	E	AA		
Kŭm Kŭgŭi	C	E	A			An Yubu	C	E				Cho Chun	C	E	AA		
Pak Hyŏn'gyu	C	E				Yi Tŭkso	C	E				Cho Ch'ung	C	E	AA		
Paek Kwangsin	C	E				Ch'oe Posun	C	E				Ch'ae Chŏng	C	E			
Kim P'yŏng	C	E	A			Ch'oe Hongyun	C	E	A			Im Yŏngnyŏng	C	E	A		
Yu T'aek	C	E	AA			Im Yu	C	E	AA			Min Konggyu	C	E	AA		
Ch'oe Sŏn	C	E	AA			Ch'oe Hyojŏ	C	E									
Kongsin																	
Chŏng Kŭgon	M		AA			Kŭm Kŭgŭi	C	E	A			Im Yu	C	E	AA		
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn	M		A			Cho Ch'ung	C	E	AA			Cho Yŏngin	C	E	A		
Ch'oe Sŏn	C	E	AA														

Totals:

Total	77
C	48 (62%)
M	24 (31%)
?	5
E	31 (40%)
A	40 (52%)
AA	17 (22%)
H	1

(all symbols explained in Chart A, p. 35)

had military backgrounds and forty-eight (62%) came from civilian families. The service background of five was unclear. Military officials, while in the minority in the overall structure, seem to have been fairly equal in terms of numerical strength to the civilian officials in the top ranks of the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat (Chungsŏmunhasŏng), the lower offices of the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn) and the Ministry of Civil Personnel and the Ministry of Military Affairs. Civilians clearly controlled the other ministries, and especially the lower offices at the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat. Ch'unghŏn thus seems to have established a balance between military and civilian officials. In the prestigious chaesang offices, military and civilian officials were equally represented. In the lower offices of Royal Chancellery and Secretariat, which traditionally handled much of the administration of the kingdom, however, there was only one man of military lineage and only two who had not passed the state examination. Although the new Ch'oe agencies might have altered its duties, Ch'unghŏn was maintaining this post to continue many of its traditional functions of basic planning and administration. Military officials balanced this civilian prominence in the lower offices of the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn) as they played a more active role in this agency that customarily deliberated much of the military policy. A similar equilibrium is seen in the men who earned the honor of nomination as ch'ehyŏp kongsin, meritorious subjects. Two men from every reign were granted this title in recognition of their merit and efforts on behalf of the dynasty. Ch'unghŏn, as the ultimate power in the dynasty, probably conferred these honors on men who were important in

his own power structure. Five civilian scholars and two military leaders, Ch'unghŏn himself and one other general, received these titles of eminence during this time.[17]

Many successful examination candidates also performed valuable functions in the dynastic structure. At least thirty-one such men were found in dynastic offices. This figure represented 40% of all officials and at least 65% of civilian officers alone. Although the completion of the examination might not have been an absolute requirement, if a civilian had passed this academic hurdle, he had a much greater chance to participate in the bureaucracy. It seems evident that Ch'unghŏn sought men of talent to fill the offices in the dynastic structure.[18]

A vast majority of the civil offices were in the hands of men from old families. Surprisingly few officials had inferior backgrounds. Of the seventy-seven men listed, forty (52%) identifiably came from families in which the father had held the fifth p'um rank or above, and at least seventeen (22% of the entire group) also had grandfathers with high dynastic rank. Some men such as Kim Pongmo or Ch'oe Hongyun came from aristocratic clans that were among the ruling elites of the

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[17]See Chart D for these people. Cho Ch'ung was also a ch'ehyŏp kongsin from Kojong's reign.

[18]The contents of the examinations do not seem to have changed during this period. Although one could claim that standards for the successful completion of these examinations were rather subjective, it is impossible to say whether these examinations were more difficult or easier during this period.

kingdom during the early years of Koryŏ.[19] Having one's father already in office enhanced the son's chances of success. This becomes even more apparent when recalling that only one man with humble origins and nine men with functionary backgrounds were found to have reached top posts.[20] The one man of alleged inferior origins was No Kwan who received his position in the Ministry of Civil Personnel in part because of his close ties with Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn. The average office was not accessible to men of humble origins. Ch'unghŏn was evidently suspicious of the people who Yi Ŭimin had incorporated into the ruling structure. Thus, he reversed the trend toward social mobility that had started during Myŏngjong's reign. He limited mobility and depended more on men with distinguished social backgrounds.

When one examines the men of civilian origins to answer the question of whether the ruling elite was bureaucratic or aristocratic, the answer is mixed. The system incorporated men from old families, men whose fathers or forefathers had previous service in the dynasty, but officials were still more successful and gained more prominence if they passed the examination and were of proven ability. For the Ch'oe house--for in fact the entire Koryŏ period or nearly any traditional

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[19] Kim Pongmo was a member of the famed Kyŏngju Kim clan and entered the state bureaucracy through the yin principle. See CK vol. 1, pp. 430-433, and KS 101:21a. Ch'oe Hongyun was from the Haeju Ch'oe family that had been so prominent during the early Koryŏ dynasty. Hongyun passed the state examination and was married to the daughter of Tongju Ch'oe member Sŏn. P'ahanjip in Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip, 3:10a-b. Haeju Ch'oe ssi chokp'o, pp. 2-3.

[20] Ch'ae Chŏng is an excellent example of a man with provincial origins. Originally an Umsŏnghyŏn clerk, he studied hard and was able to pass the state examination. KS 103:23a.

society--birth was always an important criterion for office, but if one possessed ability in addition to birth, one's opportunities for success were even greater.

The traditional dynastic structure, as described in the first chapter, continued to operate along its established general patterns and as reflected in Chart D. The chaesang, at the top of the order still approved decisions. The major difference is that rather than deliberating on policy they merely consented to Ch'oe inaugurated plans. Once approved by the chaesang, who also often were Ch'oe retainers, these same men would then enforce policy through the customary dynastic channels. The chaesang also performed many ceremonial functions, and throughout the Ch'oe period they attended Ch'oe-sponsored banquets or listened to important discussions. The lower offices also functioned generally in the manner they had earlier. Some changes, such as the incorporation and operation of the Ministry of Civil Personnel and the Ministry of Military Affairs into the Ch'oe house did occur, but generally where less vital functions were concerned, the structure was allowed to continue unaltered.

Ch'ungŏn's "Inner Chamber"

Having established the general character of the men who filled the dynastic offices during Ch'ungŏn's regime, an investigation of the men who were the brain trust, the confidants of Ch'ungŏn, is needed to reflect on the types of people Ch'ungŏn worked with and had help formulate policy. Most of the men who held dynastic ranks did so through the acceptance of and acknowledgement of Ch'oe Ch'ungŏn. If

these people had not been satisfactory to Ch'unghŏn, they would have been purged. But as in many systems there was a hierarchy. Although many of the men presented in Chart D served the Ch'oe house, a nucleus of ten men surrounded Ch'unghŏn: Kim Yakchin, No Sŏksung, Ki Hungsu, Paek Chonyu, Chŏng Kŭgon, Chŏng Sukch'ŏm, Ch'oe Sŏn, Im Yu, Cho Yŏngin and Kŭm Kŭgŭi (Ŭi). These men were identified as possible members of Ch'unghŏn's elite "inner chamber" on the collective basis of their positions in the official hierarchy, their family ties with the Ch'oe heads, and specific references in the histories to their ties with Ch'unghŏn. This same criteria will be used again in establishing the composition of U's and Hang's select followers. It was with this group of six military officers and four civilian scholars that Ch'oe met to discuss the major problems confronting his regime and it was presumably these men who participated in the Kyojŏng-dogam. Five of them, Chŏng Kŭgon, Kŭm Ŭi, Ch'oe Sŏn, Im Yu and Cho Yŏngin were also rewarded for their loyal service with the title of ch'ehyŏp kongsin (meritorious subject). They all had fathers who held the fifth rank or above and the last four men, all civilians, had passed the state examination and represented the elite civilian leadership of the day. Through these men that Ch'unghŏn had invested with power, he was able to win the respect of many and manage the kingdom with greater efficiency and acumen.

Included among Ch'unghŏn's six military confidants were No Sŏksung and Kim Yakchin. These two men, relatives of Ch'unghŏn, were important in assisting Ch'unghŏn and his brother when they originally plotted to assassinate Yi Ŭimin. Once Ch'unghŏn had consolidated his authority,

Yakchin continued to advance reaching the post of supreme general (sang-changgun). When Hŭijong's supporters nearly assassinated Ch'unghŏn in 1211, Yakchin rushed from the Chungbang to rescue the endangered Ch'oe.[21] Less is known about No except that during the early years of the Ch'oe consolidation he played an instrumental role in assuring the success of the Ch'oe house.

Ki Hungsu of Haengju, already a prominent military officer before Ch'unghŏn came to power, advanced to Assistant Executive in Political Affairs and Superintendant of the Ministry of Military Personnel (ch'amjijŏngsa pa'n byŏngbusa) in 1197, and then continued to reach even higher offices until his death in 1209. These key offices in the dynastic structure allowed Ki to exercise considerable influence in the operation of the formal administration and by having a confidant occupy them Ch'unghŏn strengthened his own power. The histories relate that "When Hungsu was young he was good in reading and skilled in writing. On becoming an adult he put writing aside and followed the military."[22] Hungsu was a man who had combined both military and civilian elements, a type of person Ch'unghŏn found invaluable, and an individual who must have helped Ch'unghŏn in his overthrow of Yi Ŭimin. Hungsu also played an important role in the Ministry of Civil Personnel and when there were crucial matters to discuss Ch'unghŏn summoned him to join in the deliberations.[23] When Sinjong, because of ill health, suggested his own

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[21] KS 129:20b, KSC 14:29a-30a.

[22] KS 101:11a, KSC 14:26a.

[23] KS 101:11a, KSC 15:19b.

abdication, Ch'unghŏn summoned Ki Hungsu and Ch'oe Sŏn to his house for a secret discussion of this request.[24]

Paek Chonyu, while not having such a highly educated background, was a general at the time of Yi Ŭimin's assassination. And at a strategic point he had supported Ch'unghŏn by summoning troops to check Ŭimin's sons. Ch'unghŏn rewarded Paek's efforts almost immediately by promoting him to be grand general (tae-changgun) and subsequently advancing him to supreme general (sang-changgun), Sŏbukmyŏn pyŏngmasa (Military Commissioner of the Northwest Frontier Province) and then tongji ch'umirwŏnsa (Co-administrator of the Security Council).[25] This last post was a ranking office in the Security Council and carried the status of a chaesang. By having this trusted lieutenant high in the Security Council as well as a chaesang, Ch'unghŏn was more certain of absolute control over these agencies.

Chŏng Sukch'ŏm, related to the Ch'oe house through the marriage of Sukch'ŏm's daughter to Ch'oe U, was another prominent member of Ch'unghŏn's close advisers. Sukch'ŏm, a member of the rising Hadong Chŏng clan, has already been singled out for his importance in the Ch'oe military structure. It was Sukch'ŏm who came from the Chungbang with Kim Yakchin to help rescue Ch'unghŏn when Hŭijong attempted to assassinate him. Sukch'ŏm also led the dynastic troops when they fought against the Khitans in 1216. He was equally active in the civil structure first holding the post of Transmitter (sŭngsŏn) in the Security Council and then advancing to the office of Assistant Executive

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[24] KS 21:17a, KSC 14:15a-b.

[25] KS 20:36a, 21:5a, 21:15a-b, KSC 14:13a.

(ch'amjijŏngsa) in the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat.[26] Through this position, as with Paek and Ki, Sukch'ŏm was able to piay an influential role in dynastic decisions as chaesang. But Sukch'ŏm's success story was not without its blemishes. Implicated in a plot in 1217, Ch'unghŏn banished him to his home in Hadong and only because of his relation to Ch'oe U did he manage to avoid death.[27] Sukch'ŏm's case illustrates that even Ch'unghŏn's trusted aids were not always free from guilt or suspicion.

The final military officer, Chŏng Kŭgon of the Chŏnju Chŏng clan, first appears during Myŏngjong's reign. Although the histories are unclear on the point, he may have followed the same path of advancement as Ch'unghŏn, for in Myŏngjong's reign he distinguished himself in the subjugation of Sŏgyŏng and later advanced to the rank of general. The histories relate that civilian and military officials alike respected him and he reached ranking positions.[28] Chŏng, the son of a grand general, bringing status, merit and respect to Ch'unghŏn's organization, had his efforts rewarded when he was enshrined in Kangjong's prayer hall.[29]

The civilian advisers had even more prominent social backgrounds and records of proven ability than their military counterparts. Im Yu, as the son of Wŏnae and the uncle of kings Ŭijong, Myŏngjong and Sinjong, was perhaps the most esteemed member among Ch'unghŏn's

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[26] KS 100:27a-28b.

[27] KS 100:28a-b, KSC 15:2a-b.

[28] Tongmunsŏn (hereafter cited as TMS), (Seoul: Taehan Kongnongsa, 1970) vol. 9, p. 650; KS 21:30a-b, 101:11a-12a, KSC 14:32a.

[29] KS 60:36a, 101:12a.

confidants. During much of Myŏngjong's reign, Im Yu rendered service as Executive of the Ministry of Rites (yebu sirang). With the rise of Ch'unghŏn to power, however, Yu advanced to Executive of the Royal Secretariat (chungsŏsirang p'yŏngjangsa)--a chaesang position of prestige and respect.[30] Yu played a prominent role supervising the state examinations, and many of the people he recruited into the Ch'oe structure through the examinations and his personal recommendations became renowned officials.[31] Yu, bringing esteem, ability and able followers into the Ch'oe system, also solidified his personal relationship and commitment to the new power structure by having his son marry one of Ch'unghŏn's daughters. Yu's sons, continuing the traditions started by their father, all had close ties with the Ch'oe house. The Ims of Chŏngan, clearly one of the most aristocratic of Koryŏ houses, and one of the families isolated from authority by Ŭijong, played a prominent role in the 1170 revolt and remained active in politics throughout the entire Ch'oe period.

Ch'oe Sŏn, a Tongju Ch'oe clan member and the son of Yuch'ŏng, came from a background similar to Im Yu. The Tongju Ch'oes like Im Yu's family were involved with the forces that ultimately saw Ŭijong removed from the throne and the military leadership rise to influence. But during Myŏngjong's reign Sŏn was in disfavor, and once after censuring a royal monk's misconduct, the court banished him.[32] Although eventually he returned to serve in the dynastic structure, it

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[30] KS 21:4b, KSC 13:52a.

[31] P'ahanjip (hereafter cited as PH) in Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip, 1:6b.

[32] KSC 12:47b.

was not until a year after Ch'unghŏn came to power that he was promoted to be Administrator of the Security Council (chi ch'umirwŏnsa) and became active as a chaesang.[33] He then made further advances from this rank, and as mentioned earlier, when discussing Sinjong's abdication, Ch'unghŏn summoned him to participate in the discussion. Like the Chŏngan Im clan, the Tongju Ch'oe family continued to play a prominent role in the Ch'oe power structure until its overthrow in 1258.

Cho Yŏngin and Kŭm Ŭi were two additional civilian scholars. Cho, as a member of the Hoengch'ŏn Cho clan and the son of Sion, came from a family that had influence and bureaucratic experience.[34] Yŏngin advanced to become Assistant Executive (ch'amjijŏngsa) during Myŏngjong's reign and as soon as Ch'unghŏn took control, Yŏngin took charge of the Ministry of Civil Personnel and became a chaesang.[35] Cho must have aided Ch'unghŏn in the assassination of Yi Ŭimin, and then through his new offices continued to work closely with Ch'unghŏn. His son Cho Ch'ung became a leading figure also during Ch'unghŏn's regime and became a ch'ehyŏp kongsin like Yŏngin.[36] A Cho family member also married one of Ch'unghŏn's daughters, again demonstrating this family's intimate ties with the Ch'oe house. Kŭm Ŭi, the final man who rose to prominence in the close Ch'oe circles, passed with the top score in the

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[33] KS 21:4b, KSC 13:52a.

[34] Mansŏng taedongbo (hereafter cited as MS)(Seoul: Hangmungak, 1972), vol. 2, p. 185.

[35] KS 20:36a.

[36] KS 60:36a.

state examination in 1184 and soon after became a palace attendant (naesi).[37] When Ch'unghŏn came to power, Kŭm Ŭi received an office in the Censorate and then he gradually advanced into positions of influence as a chaesang. Kŭm, much like Im Yu, was especially active in recruiting many men of talent into the new regime and he soon ingratiated himself with Ch'unghŏn.[38]

Although it is difficult to know precisely what functions these men filled in the private sector of the Ch'oe system, their importance in the dynastic structure, with the notable exception of Ch'unghŏn's two relatives No Sŏksung and Kim Yakchin, is apparent. Some served in important positions in the Ministry of Military Affairs (Pyŏngbu) or the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn) handling military affairs, and the civilian members were often prominent in selecting and recruiting men of talent into the Ch'oe structure. Eight of these men also held ranks as chaesang and took concurrent offices in other agencies of the dynasty. Most of them, and especially the civilians, came from families with prestigious backgrounds, but often received only inconsequential posts during Myŏngjong's reign. Several men were members of clans that had sought to check the ills of Ŭijong's reign and when Myŏngjong's rule proved to be equally degenerate, they again became disillusioned with the regime. Ch'unghŏn incorporated many of these men into his organization. This group in general reflected the characteristics that were already apparent in the general dynastic structure, except that it was of a still higher calibre in terms of ability and a slightly

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[37] KS 20:17a, 99:23b, KSC 13:3a.

[38] KS 102:1a-3a.

higher level in terms of social background. Clearly through this core, Ch'unghŏn was able to maintain his contacts with the many varied elements vying for power in Koryŏ society. The operation of the Ch'oe polity encompassed Ch'oe family members and prominent military and civilian leaders. By bringing these forces into his structure, he was assuring a peaceful succession of power to his son U.

Rise of Ch'oe U and Dynastic Administration Under U

When Ch'oe U inherited the leadership of the Ch'oe house in 1219, to assure his own succession, he quickly had to balance many competing military and civilian interest groups.[39] Having secured his military position and checked possible opponents to his command, U then sought to rectify the errors of his father's administration. The changes he brought to land and fiscal policy will be studied later. Still it is clear that he tried to improve the management of the kingdom and increase the effectiveness of the officialdom. One of the first steps U initiated was to eliminate men with poor administrative records and men who had achieved their appointments through irregular means. Of the twenty-eight people purged at the start of his rule, at least twelve were dismissed for misdeeds while in office.[40] The histories indicate that U sought to end opportunities to gain office through purchase, and in 1220, only three months after U came to power, they reported that

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[39] See Chapter III.

[40] See Appendix C. For example, one No Serim, along with twelve other men were banished by U at this time for flattering Ch'unghŏn and exploiting people. KS 130:1b, KSC 15:22b-23a.

"The custom of giving bribes for office gradually diminished."[41]

The marriage ties U established for himself and his children were quite similar to those forged by his father Ch'unghŏn, and demonstrate U's desire to have close contacts with a broad range of people.[42] His first wife was the daughter of General Chŏng Sukch'ŏm of Ch'unghŏn's "inner chamber". After Lady Chŏng died, U married the daughter of Tae Chipsŏng, another man with a military background. Little is known about the Tae family except that once they established marriage ties with the Ch'oe family, Chipsŏng became exceedingly arrogant and did not hesitate to rely on his son-in-law to achieve his own selfish ends. U also had a number of concubines and one of these women, the daughter of Sa Honggi, bore him two sons--Manjong and Manjŏn (Ch'oe Hang).[43] Sa Honggi was a civilian who as a chaesang held the office of Administrator of the Department of Chancellery (chimunha sŏngsa) and Minister of Civil Personnel (ibu sangsŏ).

U was less modest than his father in choosing the spouses of his children and went to the leading Koryŏ families for their mates. U's daughter married Kim Yaksŏn of the Kyŏngju Kim clan. Yaksŏn could boast of former Silla kings as his ancestors. U, originally intending that Yaksŏn would succeed him, went to great extremes to promote him into positions of influence and also guaranteed him a private military force. When Yaksŏn became involved in a dispute, leading to his

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[41] KS 22:18b, KSC 15:23a-b.

[42] See chart on marriage ties, Chapter II, p. 120.

[43] Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wolamsaji...", p. 23.

banishment and finally execution, U turned to his own son Hang, who had been sent to live in a temple, as a potential heir.[44] Summoned back to lay life, and then groomed as a successor, Hang married Ch'oe On's daughter. On, a member of the Tongju Ch'oe clan, had passed the state examination and was the son of Chongjae. Through marriage ties with the Tongju Ch'oe family, U was resecuring the support of an old ally and esteemed Koryŏ clan.

In expanding his family ties, U also adopted Im Hwan, the son of the Chŏngan Im clan member Kyŏngsun. This clan was one of the most powerful civilian families during much of the Ch'oe period. Through these ties, U was not only giving an opportunity to some of the more prominent civilian and military families in the dynasty to play an influential role in his administration, but he was also guaranteeing their support for his regime.

Even though U was in a much stronger position from the start of his rule than his father had been, he was still cautious. To solidify his control over the bureaucracy, he followed his father's method of advancing slowly through the bureaucracy into the top civil positions. U had already achieved the rank of general (changgun) by 1217 and then in the following year he assumed the civilian post of Administrator of Memorials (chijusa). After his father died, U entered the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn).[45] By the end of 1221, or one and one-half years after he started his own consolidation of power, he became ch'amjijŏngsa ibyŏngbusangsŏ p'anŏsadaesa which gave him supreme, direct control of

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[44] KS 129:42a, KSC 16:36a-37a, KS 101:22b.

[45] KS 129:28b, KSC 15:28b.

the military and civilian personnel appointments and promotions.[46] With this appointment he also was able to take direct command of the Censorate and as a chaesang become one of the ranking policy formulators in the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat (Chungsŏmunhasŏng). Although the appointments he received were similar to those his father took, U in contrast to Ch'unghŏn took ranking positions almost immediately. In the subsequent years U received one honor after another, but already by the second year of his rule, he was able to shroud his real power with all the legitimacy and prestige of the leading dynastic offices. In this way he could use the established dynastic institutions as an additional prop to his power. He would not have to fight tradition but could use it to effect his strategies for power.

U employed many civilians in his structure. Of ninety men found to have held dynastic civil ranks (from 1219-1249), sixty-three (70% of all officials) were men with civilian backgrounds.[47] This was a slight increase from the 62% found during Ch'unghŏn's regime. Twenty-four men (26%) were military officers and the background of three men is unclear. The military officers were in the minority, but they were definitely a force that had to be considered in the administration. At least forty-one men (46%) were found to have completed successfully the state examination.[48] This is similar to the figure for Ch'unghŏn's period. Of the civilians, at least 64% passed the examination, a percentage

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[46] KS 22:21b, 129:30b, KSC 15:29a.

[47] These men appear on Chart E (pp. 197-200).

[48] The role of the state examination does not seem to have changed significantly from the earlier period.

CHART E: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe U's regime (1219-1249)

	service	examination	background	concurrent office		service	examination	background	concurrent office		service	examination	background	concurrent office
Chaesang														
Chungsŏmunhasŏng														
Kim Ch'wiryŏ	M		AA		Yi Yŏnsu	C			K	Pak Munsŏng	C			
Chŏng Pangbo	M				Mun Yup'il	C		AA	K	Pak Sŏ	C		AA	
Ch'a Ch'ŏk	M				Sa Honggi	C				Song Sun	C	E		
Kim Ŭiwŏn	M			K	Wang Kyu	C		A		Yu Sŭngdan	C	E		
Kong Ch'ŏnwŏn	M			K	Yi Hang	C		A		Yi Kyubo	C	E	A	
O Ŭngbu	M				Cho Ch'ung	C	E	AA		Ch'oe Chongjun	C	E	AA	
Ch'oe U	M		AA		Ch'oe Posun	C	E	A	K					
Kim T'aesŏ	C	E	AA		Ch'oe Chŏngbun	C	E	A						
Ch'umirwŏn														
Kim Ch'wiryŏ	M		AA	K	Yu Inch'ŏm	C		AA	K	Chŏng T'ongbo	C			K
Mun Han'gyŏng	M				Ch'oe In	C	E	AA		Ch'oe Chongjun	C	E	AA	
Min Hŭi	M				Ch'oe Chŏnghwa	C			K	Han Kwangyŏn	C	E	AA	K
Song Sin'gyŏng	M				Hong Kyun	C	E			Ch'oe Chongbun	C	E	A	
Yi Ch'ŏgyu	M				Ki Chŏ	C				Son Pyŏn	C	E	A	
Kim Chunggwi	M													
Ch'ungsŏmunhasŏng (3-7 p'um grade)														
Yi Ch'ŏgyu	M				Yu Kyŏnghyŏn	C	E	AA		Ch'oe Imsu	?			
Kim Sujŏng	C				Yu Chunggi	C	E			No Yŏn	C			
Mun Yup'il	C		AA		Paek Ton'gwi	C				Kim Kyŏm	C			
Sa Kwangbo	C			K	Yu Sŭngdan	C	E			Pak Munsŏng	C			
Sa Honggi	C			K	Yi Illo	C	E	A		Ch'oe Chongjae	C	E	AA	
Yi Sehwa	C	E	A		Cho Su	C	E			Ch'oe Cha	C	E		

CHART E: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe U's regime (1219-1249) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Ch'umirwŏn (3-7 p'um grade)				
Kong Ch'ŏnwŏn	M			
O Sugi	M			
Ch'oe U	M		AA	
Kim Sungnyong	M			K
Ch'a Ch'ŏk	M			
Kim Yaksŏn	M		AA	
Ch'ae Songnyŏn	M			
Kim Kyŏngson	M		AA	
Ch'oe Hang	M		AA	
Cho Paekki	C	E	AA	
Yi Kŭksŏ	?			
Sangsŏdosŏng				
Mun Yup'il	C		AA	
Yu Charyang	C		AA	
Yu T'aek	C	E	AA	
Six Ministries				
Personnel				
Song Sin'gyŏng	M		A	
Kong Ch'ŏnwŏn	M			K
Kim Sungnyong	M			K
Ch'oe U	M		AA	K
Chu Suk	M			
Kim Chunggwi	M			K
Sa Kwangbo	C			K
Ch'oe Ch'unmyŏng	C		A	
Ki Cho	C			
Kim Yanggyŏng	C	E	A	
Chin Sik	C	E	AA	
Yu Kyŏnghyŏn	C	E	AA	
Im Kyŏngsuk	C	E	AA	
Yu Hong	C		AA	
Yi Chŏk	C		A	K
Song Kyŏngin	C			
Song Yun	C			
Yi Yŏnsu	C			K
Sa Honggi	C			
Ch'oe Posun	C	E	A	K
Ch'oe Chongjun	C	E	AA	
Yu Sungdan	C	E		
Yi Kongno	C	E	A	
Yi Kyubo	C	E	A	
Ch'oe Chongjun	C	E	AA	
Yi Chŏk	C		A	K
Ch'oe Chongbŏn	C	E	AA	
Kim Ch'ang	C	E	A	
Song Kyŏngin	C			
Im Kyŏnggyŏm	C		AA	
Yi Yŏnsu	C			
Im Kyŏngsuk	C	E	AA	
Kim Yŏnsŏng	C	E	AA	
Ch'oe Chongjae	C	E	AA	
Chŏng T'ongbo	C			K
Yu Ch'ŏnu	C	C		

CHART E: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe U's regime (1219-1249) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Rites				
Kim Chŏng	M		AA	
Kong Ch'ŏnwŏn	M			
Cho Yŏmgyŏng	M			
Pak Chonggyu	C	E		
Military				
Ch'oe U	M		AA	K
Kim Ch'wiryŏ	M		AA	K
Kim Ŭiwŏn	M			K
Public Works				
Mun Han'gyong	M			
Kim Sungnyŏng	M			K
Han Kwangyŏn	C	E	AA	
Sa Honggi	C			K

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Mun Yup'il	C		AA	K
Paek Punhwa	C	E	A	
Yu Ŏnch'im	C		AA	K
Pak Sŭngyu	C	E		
Kim Chunggwi	M			K
Sa Kwangbo	C			
Hong Kyun	C	E		
Revenue				
Ch'oe Chŏnghwa	C			K
Han Kwangyŏn	C	E	AA	
Ch'oe Hang	M		AA	

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Son Pyŏn	C	E	A	
Chŏng T'ongbo	C			
Kwŏn Kyŏngjung	C	E		
Song Ŏngi	C	E	A	
Punishments				
Kim Yŏnggyong	C	E	A	
Yu Ŏnch'im	C		AA	
Pak Hwŏn	C	E	A	
Song Kŭkch'om	C	E		
Im Kyŏngsŭk	C	E	AA	
Ch'oe Poyŏn	C		A	

CHART E: Composition of the dynastic civil structure during Ch'oe U's regime (1219-1249) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Ŏsadae														
Tae Chipsŏng	M				Wang Yu	M				Yu Kyŏnghyŏn	C	E	A	
Ch'a Ch'ŏk	M				An Sŏkchŏng	?		H		Chin Sik	C	E	AA	K
Kwŏn Wi	M				Kim Hyoin	C	E	A		Song Ŏn'gi	C	E	A	
Kim Kyŏngson	M		AA		Sŏl Sin	C	E			O Ch'an	C			
Ch'oe U	M		AA	K	Song Kukch'ŏm	C	E			Wang Hae	C	E		
Min Hŭi	M													
Chigonggŏ														
Kim Yanggyŏng	C	E	A		Ch'oe Chongjae	C	E	AA		Sŏl Sin	C	E		
Yu Sŭngdan	C	E			Han Kwangyŏn	C	E	AA		Song Sun	C	E		
Yu T'aek	C	E	AA		Yi Paeksun	C	E			Im Kyŏngsuk	C	E	AA	
Yi Kyubo	C	E	A		Ch'oe On	C	E	AA		Ch'oe In	C	E	AA	
Ch'oe Posun	C	E	A		Kim Ch'ang	C	E	A		Min In'gyun	C	E		
Ch'oe Chŏngbun	C	E	A		Pak Sŭngyu	C	E			Pak Hwŏn	C	E	A	
Hong Kyun	C	E			Kim T'aeso	C	E	AA		Pak Chonggyu	C	E		
Yu Ch'unggi	C	E			Ch'oe Pak	C	E							
Kongsin														
Kum Kŭgŭi	C	E	A		Cho Ch'ung	C	E	A		Yi Hang	C		A	

Totals:							
	Total	90	?	3	AA	25 (27%)	
	C	63 (70%)	E	41 (46%)	H	I	
	M	24 (26%)	A	46 (51%)	(all symbols explained in Chart A, p. 35)		

identical to that in Ch'unghŏn's rule. U, like his father, sought to improve the quality of the men appointed. In meeting this goal he continued to rely on the state examinations and maintained a regular schedule for their completion. He venerated scholars and expanded the ceremonies to honor those who successfully completed the kwagŏ.[49] U also encouraged respect for civilian officials and institutions by reverting to a greater dependence on Chinese traditions. In 1225 he memorialized, "I request that our dynastic institutions and rites of music entirely honor Chinese systems." At the same time, the histories go on to report that U permitted men who came from China to enter important dynastic offices, selecting them on the basis of their talent.[50] Realizing that good administration begins with the recruitment of able men, U continually sought to achieve this goal.[51]

The social background of the men who entered the dynastic structure at this time appears to be identical to that of Ch'unghŏn's rule. At a minimum forty-six men (51%) were found to have had fathers who held the fifth p'um rank or higher in the dynasty. And over half of these men or at least some twenty-five also could claim to have had grandfathers who held the fifth p'um rank or above. At a minimum 27% of the people who held dynastic offices could claim this distinction.

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[49] KS 74:6a, KSC 16:1b.

[50] KS 129:32a, KSC 15:35b.

[51] The Koryŏsa tells how U once ranked his administrators. Those who were able in civil and clerical matters received top ranking. Those who were able in civil affairs but not in clerical concerns were placed in the second spot. Those who excelled in clerical but not civil matters in the next, and those who lack ability in both clerical and civil matters were placed at the bottom. See KS 102:15a, KSC 18:8a-b.

This slight increase from Ch'unghŏn's rule might be attributed to the maturity of the military rule. By U's regime twenty years had already elapsed since Ch'unghŏn came to power and close to fifty years had passed since the 1170 military revolt. Authority was becoming re-entrenched in established families. This trend is revealed in the fact that only one person was found to have come from humble origins. And that one man, An Sŏkjŏng, received his post because of special ties with U and in spite of widespread objections.[52] When compared to the period shortly after the 1170 coup when at least four men of stated low social status reached positions of political prominence, the trend of limiting social mobility is evident. Birth and ability, as was true for Ch'unghŏn's period, were still important criteria for recruitment and promotion into positions of power during Ch'oe U's leadership.

There was no one area or office where military officers alone exercised prime control, rather military men appeared throughout the entire system, though they especially congregated around the most prestigious agencies. Twelve of the thirty-eight men found in chaesang positions were originally military officers. Nearly one third of the lower offices of the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn), the Ministry of Civil Personnel and Ministry of Military Affairs included military officials. These same agencies in the preceding fifty years already had many military officers, and Ch'oe U continued the pattern. Several military officers were also found in the Yebu (Ministry of Rites), a ministry that had previously been reserved almost exclusively for

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[52] KS 129:31b, KSC 15:26b. People felt since An was the son of a private slave, he was not suited for a position in the censorate (Taegak).

civilian officials who had successfully completed the state examination. However, the lower offices of the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat (Chungsŏmunhasŏng), which traditionally was also a center of civilian officials and perhaps the administration's most important agency in the dynastic bureaucracy, remained under civilian auspices. Membership in the Department of Ministries, usually extended as an honor to some established personage, also seems to have been filled exclusively by civilian officials.

The composition of the chaesang, in terms of successful examination candidates and the lineage of the men, is a microcosm of the entire dynastic structure. The social and political prestige of this elite group does not seem to have been diminished during Ch'oe U's rule. Men of high social backgrounds and ability were present. The chaesang continued to meet to discuss state affairs and were summoned to attend many Ch'oe functions. Men who held positions in the chaesang also retained concurrent posts in the ministries or other dynastic agencies. The dynasty in general functioned much in the same manner as when Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn was in command. Although all major decisions were made in the Ch'oe units, the dynastic structure remained necessary in the execution of policy.

U's "Inner Chamber"

The men who filled the Ch'oe offices were often the same men who held dynastic ranks. There is no exact record of whom all these personages were, but there are indications that certain men, all possible candidates for membership in the Kyojŏng-dogam, were prominent in U's

administration. Of some twelve men discerned to be in this category, four were military officers and the remaining eight were civilians. All but three, Song Kukch'ŏm, Chu Suk and Pak Hwŏn, were identified as coming from families with previous government service. As with Ch'unghŏn's inner council, all of these men were chosen as possible members of U's elite group on the basis of their prominence in the Ch'oe structure and their personal ties with U.

The military confidants included Kim Yaksŏn, Kim Kyŏngson, Kim Ch'wiryŏ and Chu Suk. Two of these, Kim Yaksŏn and Kim Kyŏngson, were brothers and from the esteemed Kyŏngju Kim clan. U made Yaksŏn his son-in-law, demonstrating, as in Chŏng Sukch'ŏm's case, the importance that marriage ties held as a link to power in the Ch'oe structure. During the early years U promoted Yaksŏn, his heir-apparent, to serve in the Security Council, but then exiled and killed him. Kyŏngson, related to U through Yaksŏn, as a general held a position in the Censorate (Ŏsadae) and then in the lower offices of the Security Council, and played an important role in the Ch'oe power structure until Ch'oe Hang banished him in 1250.[53] Kim Ch'wiryŏ, a member of the Ongwang Kim clan, the son of Kim Pu, and a prominent official in the Ministry of Rites, was an important commander and adviser. As a chaesang with an office in the Security Council he held a concurrent post in the Ministry of Military Affairs.[54] For his service the king subsequently named him a Meritorious Subject. These three men had obvious elite backgrounds,

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[53] For Kim Yaksŏn's biography see KS 101:21b-22a. For Kim Kyŏngson see KS 103:26a-29a.

[54] KS 103:7a-20a, KSC 16:20b-21b.

but one Chu Suk, who was simultaneously the commander of the Yabyŏlch'o and Tobang, came from obscure origins. As a supreme general, a member of the lower offices in the Scurity Council and directly responsible for Ch'oe private troops, Chu was an important member of the inner circles of Ch'oe power. Furthermore, he was indirectly related to Ch'oe U for they both married daughters of Tae Chipsŏng.[55] Ch'oe U used each of these men in his own inner structure and simultaneously gave them appointments in the dynastic agencies. As military officers they were all active in the Security Council, an office that administered much of the dynasty's military policy.

The civilian leadership was an equally distinguished group. Three of them, Pak Hwŏn, Song Kukch'ŏm and Kim Ch'ang, have already been mentioned in relation to their roles in the Chŏngbang. Pak Hwŏn, a scholar from a Kongju family, was a retainer to the Ch'oe house. Besides passing the state examination and serving in the Ch'oe units, Pak also became a Minister of Punishments (hyŏngbusangsŏ). Song Kukch'ŏm, a Chinju Song clan member, came from a family that had close links with the Ch'oe house as a number of its clansmen held ranking posts under both U and Hang. Kukch'ŏm, active in the Censorate, lower offices of the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat, and Ministry of Punishments, held administratively important posts in the dynastic structure and through these offices was vital in coordinating the dynastic and Ch'oe bureaucracies. Kim Ch'ang, an Andong Kim and descendant of the Silla royal family, handled recommendations and many

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[55] KS 129:43a, KSC 16:40a-b. For Chu's relation to the Tae family see KS 26:14a-b, KSC 18:25a-b.

saluted him for his strong memory and ability to recall all the names of the people he had recruited into the Ministry of Civil Personnel and Ministry of Military Affairs.[56] He also was active in the Security Council.

Other men of similar experience and lineage joined this elite group. Although it is impossible to state whether they participated in the Chŏngbang, it is quite probable that they held important positions there and in other Ch'oe units also. Yi Kyubo is perhaps the most renowned member of Ch'oe U's administration. Kyubo, one of Koryŏ's foremost writers and poets, after passing the examination in Myŏngjong's reign did not receive a prominent post until Ch'unghŏn came to power. Then Ch'unghŏn, discovering his literary talent, employed him in a number of different functions, and when U inherited the leadership, Kyubo continued to play an active role in the administration first as a member of the lower offices of the Security Council, and then as Executive (p'yŏngjangsa). Kyubo had a brilliant literary style, and supposedly his written appeals for a cessation to the invasion brought tears to the Mongol emperor. Kyubo was able to exert considerable influence over dynastic policy through his appointment into a chaesang position, and he also supervised the examinations several times bringing many talented people into the Ch'oe administration.[57]

Ch'oe Chongjun, Ch'oe In and Im Kyŏngsuk were all members of civilian families that had achieved prominence during Ch'unghŏn's rule

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[56] For Pak Hwŏn's biography see KS 125:6b-7a. For Song Kukch'ŏm see KS 102:14a-b. For Kim Ch'ang see KS 102:13a-b.

[57] KS 102:3a-5b.

and now were active in U's administration. Chongjun and In, both members of the Tongju Ch'oe family, were successful examination passers and related to Ch'oe U through marriage. Chongjun, who was a Military Commissioner (pyŏngmasa) when the Khitans invaded in 1216, became a Transmitter (chwa sŭngsŏn) in the Security Council (Ch'umirwŏn) and then advanced into a chaesang rank with a concurrent position as Minister of Civil Personnel (ibusangsŏ) under Ch'oe U. Chongjun, like the others, was an important official in both the Ch'oe and dynastic ranks.[58] Ch'oe In, who also played a prominent role in Hang's regime, was a Transmitter and then a chaesang. In, while holding these posts, was also supervising recruitment as an examiner (chigonggŏ).[59] Im Kyŏngsuk of the Chŏngan Im clan seems to be the epitome of the membership of this elite Ch'oe group. As a relative of the Ch'oe house, an examination passer, and an obvious member of the high Koryŏ ranks, he served as a Minister of Punishments and in the lower offices of the Security Council during U's rule. It is reported that he managed the examination four times and within several years, of those who passed under him, ten had received dynastic posts, three were generals, and one was a junior colonel.[60] One final person, Kim Yanggyŏng (Ingyŏng) should also be mentioned. Kim, another member of the Kyŏngju Kim clan, successfully completed the state examination and advanced to serve on the Security Council as a Minister of Punishments, and as a chaesang.

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[58] KS 99:9b, KSC 16:30b.

[59] KS 99:4a-5b.

[60] KS 73:37a-38a, Pohanjip (hereafter cited as POH), Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip, 1:7a-b.

Like most of the other men mentioned here, he also assisted in the administration of the examinations and recruitment.[61]

In examining this group that comprised the closest associates of Ch'oe U, the overwhelming weight of old families, many who could be labeled aristocratic, is apparent. Kyŏngju Kims, Chŏngan Ims and Tongju Ch'oes all played prominent roles in this top echelon of the power structure. Equally conspicuous is the role of marriage ties. Six members of this group or half of the total had some sort of family relation with the Ch'oe house. Seven of these associates were also examination passers. This group, which held top posts in the formal dynastic structure and seems to have been equally prominent in the Ch'oe house organization, reflects the general composition of the Ch'oe administration. But here even more than in the lower levels, birth was an important criterion, and if a man could complement his birth with ability, he achieved even greater success in the system that Ch'oe U developed. U, like his father, by placing men both of known military backing and civilian prestige into his closest ranks, ensured these two groups participation and prominence in his system. He further guaranteed the support of these blocs by binding them to himself through marriage ties. He had made the Ch'oe house an integral part of Koryŏ society, at the center of both political and social influence. By this he also assured the successful transfer of power to his son Hang.

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[61] KS 102:7a-9a, KS 73:35b-36b.

Rise of Ch'oe Hang

As U began to approach is twenty-fifth year in office, he realized that it was time to secure an heir. After exiling his son-in-law Kim Yaksŏn, U then considered his grandson Kim Chŏng as a possible successor, but early in 1243 U also banished the younger Kim.[62] Then U decided on Hang as the new heir, and placing him under the tutelage of several leading scholars, promoted him to be Minister of Revenue. Hang did not get a chaesang office, but was put in charge of one of the ministries and in this position U probably intended that Hang should receive training and experience in dynastic politics. Then within a year Hang entered the lower ranks of the Security Council and at the same time U sought to enhance Hang's military position by giving him 500 of his own personal house soldiers.[63] Thus, before U died he clearly demonstrated through his own open support and advancement of Hang that Hang was to be the heir, and on his death in the eleventh month of 1247, the Ch'oe bodyguards immediately went as a protection unit to Hang's house.

On succeeding to power, Hang immediately embarked on policies quite reminiscent of those of his father. Hang quickly isolated and removed from office all opponents. Included in this group were men and concubines who had been loyal to U. Officials who had supported Kim Chŏng as U's heir and Ch'oe U's second wife's family were special targets of attack. The Tae family seems to have had some covert ties with Kim Chŏng, and Hang with considerable tenacity sought to eliminate

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[62] KS 101:22a-b, KSC 16:31a.

[63] KS 129:42a, KSC 16:38a.

this clique completely.[64] In his attempt to maintain absolute control over the kingdom, Hang also sought to neutralize the power of many of the important men who had been in U's Chŏngbang.[65] Even though this policy might have been an honest attempt to check any possible opposition, Hang purged some very respected civilian officials who would have been invaluable in his consolidation of power. He also exiled people such as Min Hŭi or Kim Kyŏngson simply because they were popular.[66]

With the rise to power of each new Ch'oe leader, the heads removed many established officials from office bringing abrupt changes in the power structure. This seems to suggest that each leader had created a cadre of people who were loyal to the Ch'oes as individuals, but held little allegiance to the Ch'oe house. Reflecting briefly on the role of the retainer, this type of situation would indicate that loyalty was still very much a personal thing. A bond of fidelity could be worked out between individuals, in this case the Ch'oe leader and his followers, but a man could not be loyal to the Ch'oe system. This must have posed a serious dilemma to the Ch'oe house, for the very success of the Ch'oe rule would then depend on the ability of each new Ch'oe leader to consolidate rapidly his followers and firmly establish his own power. Part of this problem undoubtedly rests in the fact that the dynastic structure had never been eliminated and that the Ch'oe house was never able to

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[64] Chu Suk was included in this Tae clique. See Appendix E for those eliminated during Hang's rule.

[65] Song Kukch'ŏm, Pak Hwŏn, and Yu Ch'ŏnu were members of U's Chŏngbang, but once Hang was in power these men were isolated from influence.

[66] KS 129:43b, KSC 16:39a.

make a clean break with the old order. In the Koryŏ context it appears men could be loyal to individuals and to the monarch who was the embodiment of the dynastic order, but it was difficult for most people to be loyal simultaneously to individual Ch'oe leaders and the Ch'oe house as well as the king and his administration. The ramifications of this are manifold and will be considered in the concluding chapter.

Hang had sufficient political knowledge to realize that he would have to make some sort of accommodation with the civilian elite if his leadership were to be at all effective. He consequently made overtures to the king who would be instrumental in bringing legitimacy to this new Ch'oe regime. Shortly after Hang inherited his father's position, the king declared,

> Since my father, and then I, have occupied the throne, Chinyangkong I (Ch'oe U) has assisted us and worked for the Three Hans. Now suddenly he has died without appointing an heir. His son ch'umirwŏnbusa Hang has inherited the responsibilities and protects all. He should be summoned and given the position of minister.[67]

Some may claim that the king was only a figurehead, speaking on Ch'oe command, but by this sort of declaration the monarch was adding his voice and providing royal sanction and legitimacy to bolster Hang's newly acquired authority. For his aid, the king in the following years received a number of treasured gifts and Ch'oe blessings.[68] Hang also showered royal clansmen with parties in an additional effort to win a broader base of support for his regime. Throughout the early months

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[67] KS 129:43b-44a, KSC 16:39a-b.

[68] Hang gave the king a cart, KS 24:5a, KSC 17:6a. He also constructed a palace for him. KS 129:48a, KSC 17:7b.

of 1252, Hang continually entertained the royal family.[69]

Unlike his father or grandfather who were reluctant to marry with ranking civil lineages, Hang from the start married into the highest civilian families. U had arranged that Hang marry Ch'oe On's daughter. When this marriage failed because of the girl's constant illnesses, Hang selected a new wife--the daughter of Cho Kyesung. Cho, a member of the Hoengch'ŏn Cho clan, was similar in terms of social background and prestige to Hang's first father-in-law Ch'oe On. Kyesun, the son of Ch'ung, was a respected civilian official and for years his family had been closely associated with the Ch'oe house. Through these two marriages, Hang was binding the prominent civilian households into supporting his power structure.

Hang's advancement in the dynastic structure, although reminiscent of his two immediate predecessors, was much more rapid and complete. Even before he became sole master of the kingdom, he had already reached a post in the lower ranks of the Security Council. Shortly after his father died, Hang promoted himself into the top civil positions in the dynasty when he became concurrently ch'umirwŏnbusa ibyŏngbusangsŏ ŏsadaebu tongbungmyŏn pyŏngmasa,[70] or in effective control of the Security Council, the Ministries of Civil Personnel and Military Affairs, and the Censorate. In the following year Hang advanced further, into a top position of prestige, becoming chancellor (munhasijung), a post traditionally reserved for ranking elder statemen.[71]

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[69] For example see KSC 17:15a-16b.

[70] KS 129:43b, KSC 16:39a.

[71] KS 129:45a, KSC 16:44a-b.

This new leader depended heavily on civilian officials. Thirty-five men were located in the dynastic offices at this time in contrast to the higher figures for Ch'unghŏn's and U's periods. This difference can be explained by recalling that Hang ruled for only eight years while the other men served over twice as long. Of these thirty-five men, twenty-six (74%) came from civilian families, seven (20%) from military families and the background of two men could not be discerned.[72] These were about the same percentages that were found in Ch'oe U's period, demonstrating that there had been little shift in the balance between civilian and military forces. As under U's rule, there was no one sector of the administration where the military was especially strong, rather they were spread sparsely over the entire administration. When one remembers the high positions that they had achieved at the start of the military period, it is clear that the military officials were playing a much less significant role in Hang's dynastic structure. One possible explanation for this change might be that the tensions between the military and civilian elements had lessened. As was seen earlier, the civilians were playing a positive, military role in their work in the Sŏbang. Perhaps with over sixty years of ultimate military control there was no need to accent the differences between these two divisions, as with the passing of time the differences had been diluted. After two generations in power the Ch'oe leaders were less martial in outlook. Ch'oe Hang, for example, had been trained in a Zen monastery and learned the tactics of a general only late in life. Men who chose the military profession now even successfully completed the state examination which

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[72] These men appear on Chart F (pp. 214-215).

CHART F: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ch'oe Hang's regime (1249-1257)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Chaesang														
Chungsŏmunhasŏng														
Ki Yunsuk	M				Song Sun	C	E	A		Im Kyŏngsuk	C	E	AA	
Kim Pojŏng	M				Ch'oe In	C	E	AA		Ch'oe Cha	C	E	A	
Yi Chasŏng	M		A		Chŏng An	C	E	AA		Kim Kison	C		AA	
Kim Ch'ang	C	E	A	K	Kim T'aesŏ	C	E	AA						
Ch'umirwŏn														
Kim Chidae	C	E	L		Cho Su	C	E							
Chungsŏmunhasŏng (3-7 p'um grade)														
Song Kukch'om	C	E			Yi Chu	C	E			Hong Chin	C	E		
Ch'umirwŏn														
Kim Hyoin	C	E	A		Yun Kungmin	C	E			Yi Po	M			
Sŏl Sin	C	E			Ch'oe Cha	C	E	A		Ch'oe Hang	M		AA	K
Cho Kyesun	C		AA		Ch'oe P'yŏng	C	E	AA		Yi Sejae	M			
Yu So	C		AA		Yi Changyong	C	E	AA		Yi Hyŏn	M			
Ch'oe On	C	E	AA		Chong Chun	?								
Sangsŏdosŏng														
Kim Pojŏng	M				Kim Kison	C		AA		Son Pyŏn	C	E	A	
Hwangbo Ki	C	E												

CHART F: Composition of the civil dynastic structure during Ch'oe Hang's regime (1249-1257) (Continued)

name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office	name	service	examination	background	concurrent office
Six Ministries														
Personnel					Military					Punishments				
Kim Ch'ang	C	E	A	K	Kim Hyŏin	C	E	A		Yu Sŏk	C	E	A	
Ch'oe Hang	M		AA	K	Yu Ch'ŏnu	C	E							
					Ch'oe Hang	M		AA	K					
Ŏsadae														
Yi Sejae	M				Kim Sugang	C	E			Song Kŭkhyŏn	?			
Ch'oe Hang	M		AA	K										
Chigonggŏ														
Kim Chidae	C	E	L		Im Kyŏngsuk	C	E	A		Ch'oe Cha	C	E	A	
Kim Hyŏin	C	E	A		Cho Su	C	E			Hwangbo Ki	C	E		
Yun Kŭngmin	C	E			Ch'oe On	C	E	AA						

Totals:

Total	35		A	17 (49%)
C	26 (74%)		AA	11 (31%)
M	7 (20%)		L	1
?	2			
E	23 (66%)			

(all symbols explained in Chart A, p. 35)

had once been reserved for the civilian scholar. The aristocratic Kyŏngju Kim clan had members who were military and civilian officials, and the Hadong Chŏng clan, once a prominent military family, now had clansmen passing the state examination. Whatever reasons one will submit, there was a blurring in distinctions between military and civilian, and out of this the scholar official was achieving a much more prominent role in the administration of the kingdom.

Men of talent were sought by Hang. Twenty three officials (66%) were found to have passed the state examination. Stated in another way, at least 88% of all civilians presented here completed the examination successfully. This is a sizeable increase from the earlier Ch'oe periods. During Ch'oe U's rule the state examination (kwago) had been held with much more frequency than in earlier times. When one compares the Ch'oe period and the three reigns preceding 1170, there is an increase in both the number of successful candidates and the frequency of the examinations. During the reigns of Sukjong, Injong and Ŭijong, a total of sixty-five years, forty-four examinations were held in which 1248 people passed or about 19.2 per year. From 1196-1258, during the rules of Myŏngjong, Sinjong, Hŭijong, Kangjong and Kojong, a period of sixty-two years, forty-two examinations were held with 1468 people passing or an average of 23.7 per year--a modest but still significant increase of 25 per cent. Even more dramatic increases can be found when tallying figures on the Kukchagam (National University) examination. In the Ch'oe period fifty-three men on the average passed the examination every year, compared to 33.2 passing per year for the

preceding civilian period.[73] It is quite possible that Hang was now reaping the benefits of the expanded examination system.

The social background of the men in power reflects similar trends observed during Ch'oe U's regime. None of the thirty-five men was described as coming from humble or socially low families, while at least seventeen (49%) of them had fathers who had previously served in a dynastic office of the fifth p'um rank or above, and eleven (31%) also claimed grandfathers with this distinction.

Hang's "Inner Chamber"

Although the composition of the top ranks in the dynasty contained many men of respectable birth and academic ability, the men Hang recruited into his private circle, those whom Hang had chosen to be his trusted confidants, appear to have come from a wider background. Criteria similar to those used in defining Ch'unghŏn's and U's inner council was employed here. Of those who were Hang's closest associates two, Ch'oe Yangbaek and Ch'oe Yong, served in distinct military capacities at this time. Ch'oe Yangbaek also was one of the first men of slave origins to reach the upper echelons of power in the Ch'oe house. Yangbaek's role in Hang's structure is not defined, but the Koryŏsa indicates that he went to Hang shortly after U's death, and then when Ŭi succeeded to power, Yangbaek continued as one of his confidants, too. Hang appointed Yangbaek as a pyŏlchang (Sub-Colonel), and Yangbaek

[73] Min P'yŏngha, "Musin chŏng," pp. 62-63. The examination to enter the Kukchagam, although not as prestigious or rigorous as the kwagŏ, still required a great deal of preparation. Those who successfully passed it were able to enter the National University and were well prepared for government service.

proved his loyalty by aiding Hang's designated heir Ŭi.[74] Ch'oe Yong, a grand general, was the other important military figure in Hang's power structure. In addition to his defense against the Mongols, Yong, as one of Hang's retainers, transmitted this dying leader's testimony to others in the Ch'oe power structure, and by his allegiance, he enabled Ŭi to consolidate his command over the kingdom when Hang died.[75]

The civilian associates also carried diverse credentials. Three of them, Yi Sunmok, Yu Kyŏng, and Ch'oe In, successfully completed the state examination. Yi Sunmok who taught Hang to write after Hang had returned to lay life, was one of the more renowned scholars of the age. Once Hang came to power, the Koryŏsa indicates that Hang "depended upon him for rites and selected him to be sangsŏ chwabogya (Senior Executive), but before he could assume that office, he died."[76] Although Sunmok never handled the state examination, he did once supervise the examinations for entrance to the National University and seems to have been important in advising Hang. Another leading civil scholar in Hang's rule, Yu Kyŏng, the son of Yuju clan member T'aek, served in the Chŏngbang and Hang treated him quite generously.[77] But once Ŭi came to power, Kyŏng changed his stance and joined Kim Injun to set the stage for the assassination of Ch'oe Ŭi. Ch'oe In was the third man who completed the examination. In was a member of the prominent Tongju

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[74] KS 129:43a, KSC 17:34a-36a.

[75] KS 24:20b-21a, 129:52a, KSC 17:21a.

[76] KS 102:12a-b.

[77] KS 105:1a.

Ch'oe family that had been so intimately involved with the Ch'oe house from Ch'unghŏn's time. During U's rule In participated in recruitment and served on the Security Council. Once Hang was in authority, In, as assistant executive in Political Affairs (ch'amjijŏngsa) handled relations with the Mongols. Through his family ties, In contributed a strong conservative influence and brought respectability to Hang's power structure.[78]

The remaining civil officials include Son Inyŏl, Yu Nung, Ch'ae Chŏng and Cho Kyesun. The histories refer to all of these men, with the exception of Cho, as retainers or confidants of Hang. Cho was a member of the Hoengch'ŏn Cho clan which had figured so prominently in the earlier Ch'oe regimes. Once again this family played a significant role in Hang's power structure as Kyesun assumed the dual roles of father-in-law to Hang and a member of the Security Council and then a chaesang with the position of chancellor (munhasirang).[79] Son Inyŏl's role is unclear. Aside from being a confidant to Hang and participating with Yu Nung and Ch'oe Yangbaek in the transmission of Hang's last injunctions, there is little information on this particular man.[80] Although not as obscure, Yu Nung, as one of Hang's retainers, was also invaluable in securing Ch'oe Ŭi's succession to the Ch'oe seat of power. Nung, in Hang's regime, was a trusted aide and continued in this capacity for Ch'oe Ŭi. The histories however draw a very unflattering picture of this man claiming that "those whom Ch'oe Ŭi trusted

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[78] See note 59.

[79] KS 103:6b, 129:44b, KSC 16:41a-b.

[80] KS 24:31b, 129:51b, KSC 17:31b.

were all like Yu Nung's group--mediocre and worthless."[81] Ch'oe Chŏng, a final member of this group, first entered the bureaucracy through the yin regulation but there is no record of the positions he held or the duties he fulfilled until Wŏnjong's reign, after the fall of the Ch'oe House, when he became a ch'umirwŏnbusa ŏsadaebu or in both the lower ranks of the Security Council and Censorate.[82]

It is unfortunate that there is so little material available to delineate in clearer terms the responsibilities and functions that the men in Ch'oe Hang's inner council performed. Rather we must be content to generalize from broad statistics. Four of the ten men came from families whose fathers had served in the fifth p'um rank or above, two were from the well-established Tongju Ch'oe and Hoengch'ŏn Cho clans. When compared to the composition of U's inner group, there seems to have been a subtle decline in quality and ability in terms of the men whom Hang selected as his confidants. This is especially apparent when one notices that by the end of Hang's rule, Yi Sunmok and Ch'oe In had died, and many of the more eminent figures of Ch'oe U's rule, such as Pak Hwŏn or Yu Ch'ŏnu had been already dismissed from positions of authority and replaced by such "mediocre men" as Ch'oe Yangbaek and Yu Nung. Below the surface of Hang's power structure, there seems to have been a subtle deterioration. Although Hang undoubtedly attempted to include important Tongju Ch'oes and other prominent clan members, and he did recruit men who had passed the kwagŏ, his inability to

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[81] KS 129:53a, KSC 17:34a.

[82] KS 129:52a, 102:16b-17a.

balance all the counter forces, his failure to recruit and promote top talent, and the deterioration of his administration, in part owing to the severity of the Mongol invasions, further undermined his position and left his son Ch'oe Ŭi in an untenable position when the latter assumed the leadership of the Ch'oe house in 1257.

Hang lacked political talent. His policies were much more rash, his actions much less elastic and his personality more arrogant than U's. When the prestigious Board of Astronomy (Sach'ŏndae) continued to present memorials on their observations of the heavens, Hang urged that the Censorate reject this unsolicited advice and at the same time dismiss two men from the board.[83] Hang took a similar attitude toward the compilation of history. In order to assure his own proper place in history, Hang made the unprecedented move of supervising the compilation of the histories.[84] This was a grave act not lightly accepted on any Confucian standard. The writing of history was in theory done with total objectivity, free from any personal prejudices. Tradition supposedly never allowed even the strongest monarchs to interfere with the writing of their own official records. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and Ch'oe U, showing respect for the Confucian customs and institutions, never overtly attempted to control these matters. Ch'oe Hang, coming to power some forty years after his grandfather Ch'unghŏn, failed to realize the

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[83] KS 129:45a-b, KSC 16:44b. At this time the Sach'ŏndae became quite daring. On reporting that the moon had crossed the path of several stars, it explained that this phenomenon indicates that an individual has overextended his power and replaced in actuality the king. Hang saw in this charge a threat to his position.

[84] KSC 17:21b.

value of compromise and mutual respect. Although depending on dynastic institutions, he was unwilling to sustain the traditional checks that remained even in the Ch'oe system.

Hang, although trained by his father and leading scholars, lacked the intelligence and the will to operate effectively the Ch'oe system of rule. He became too power hungry and failed to foster the important military--Confucian consensus that lay behind the power of the Ch'oe house. He removed respected scholars, curtailed civilian traditions and alienated prestigious military men.

When Hang died eight years after coming to power, the Ch'oe house was in a vulnerable position. Ŭi, Hang's son by a concubine, succeeded him in 1257 and was even less adept than Hang at confronting the problems of the age. Still Hang's followers rallied to the Ch'oe heir, and together they initiated steps to rectify the deteriorating conditions in the kingdom. Within days of achieving power, Ŭi opened the granaries to feed the starving and paid the ranking officials each thirty sŏk of grain.[85] Besides placating the populace and officialdom, Ŭi also returned some lands to the court and presented it with rice, cloth, honey and oil.[86] Although he might have won some support through this action, Ŭi had poor advisers who presented short-sighted, conflicting policies. Six months after offering aid and land to the poor, the histories report that Ŭi had 3000 kyŏl of Kanghwa land placed under his own control.[87] Early in the following year he dispatched a number of

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[85] KS 129:52a, KSC 17:29b.

[86] KS 129:52a-b, KSC 17:29b.

[87] KSC 17:32a.

his associates to act as suhoeksa (tax collectors) of Kanghwa Island, and they seized any profits that the peasants might have acquired.[88] Ŭi's alienation of the people by these policies, coupled with the errors of his inexperienced and unenlightened associates and the trials of war, contributed to the quick demise of his regime.

Ŭi held a number of posts in the civil structure. Before Hang died, he appointed Ŭi to several and had him study with the leading scholars of the kingdom,[89] and then immediately on Hang's death Ŭi assumed the position of ch'a changgun kyojŏngbyŏlgam.[90] The former appointment was in part honorary, but the latter position was the most important seat in the Ch'oe house government. Shortly after assuming this post, Ŭi also took posts in the Security Council, Ministries, and Censorate becoming ch'umirwŏnbusa p'anibyŏngbu ŏsadaesa[91]--all positions that his forefathers had held as they advanced in the dynastic bureaucracy, and ranks that assured him of a dominant voice in the formal administration. Several months later Ŭi advanced in the Censorate (panŏsadaesa) and also became a Transmitter (ubu sŭngsŏn).[92] Through these offices Ŭi was able to have direct contact with the Censorate and Security Council. Although these two appointments were in lower ranking positions, in general these types of offices were quite important in the Koryŏ structure as the seats of real political activity

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[88] KS 129:52b-53a, KSC 17:33b.

[89] KS 129:51b, KSC 17:22b-23a.

[90] KS 129:52a, KSC 17:28b-29b.

[91] KS 129:52a-b, KSC 17:29b.

[92] KS 129:51b, KSC 17:30b.

and decision making.

Ŭi, inexperienced, unable to mastermind delicate, political matters, and surrounded by poor advisers who were often seeking prestige and power for themselves, was in a precarious position. The dynastic histories describe Ŭi as

> young, foolish and stupid. When meeting nobles to discuss contemporary affairs, he was without propriety. Those whom he personally trusted were like Yu Nung and Ch'oe Yangbaek's group; all were worthless and mediocre. His uncle Kosong Wŏnbal with his (Ŭi's) own favorite (concubine) Simgyŏng terrorized the countryside and in the court slandered (people) and seized property without limits.[93]

There had been many attempts on the lives of the Ch'oe leaders, yet all in the past had failed because of the preparations made and support secured. Ŭi was not to be so fortunate. The leadership of the opposition to Ŭi came from two segments of thirteenth century society that Ŭi and his father Hang had alienated most--the Confucian scholars, represented by Yu Kyŏng, and the underprivileged military upstarts seen in the leadership of Kim Injun. These two groups were in effect the total power structure and with their disaffection, Ch'oe Ŭi could not survive. Yu Kyŏng had already achieved note under Hang, and through his lineage and ladder to success, he is a prototype of the Confucian scholar who emerged under the late Ch'oe system. He worked with the Ch'oe house and he benefited from Ch'oe favors, but as the effectiveness of the Ch'oe regime declined, he along with many Confucian scholars joined the other potent force in the Ch'oe power structure, the military, to

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[93] KS 129:53a; KSC 17:34a provides a slightly different interpretation, but the meaning is the same.

assassinate Ch'oe Ŭi.

Kim Injun, the descendant of a slave who had betrayed his own master to serve Ch'unghŏn, represents the other group that was rising to prominence during Hang's regime. Kim actually represents two sub-elements--the military sector of the Ch'oe structure and the men of obscure or humble origins that were appearing during Hang's regime. The military, which became quite important after 1170, seems to have played a less active role in late Ch'oe politics. Hang never took a wife from a military clan and only seven military officers were found in the dynastic structure during his rule. The social origins of military personnel also seem to have been declining. No longer the sons of generals but also descendants of slaves were reaching prominence under Hang. The military had always been a potential threat to the Ch'oe power structure. Now, probably sparked into resistance because of the deteriorating domestic scene caused in part by the Mongols and in part by Ch'oe Ŭi's inadequacies, they collaborated with the Confucian scholars to remove Ŭi.

Confucian Scholars

Before concluding this chapter some assessment must be made of the Ch'oe house relations with Confucian scholarship and Chinese learning. It is quite apparent that the Ch'oe house depended upon scholar officials and tried to co-opt them into their power structure, but in Ch'unghŏn's period not all men willingly participated in the Ch'oe regime. One Han Yuhan lived in the capital and when he saw Ch'unghŏn usurp authority, he concluded that trouble would soon follow. The

histories note that Yuhan, taking his wife and sons, set off to hide in the Chiri mountain range. Even though Ch'unghŏn summoned him to return, he refused and eventually died in the mountains.[94]

In addition to Han Yuhan there were other men and groups who remained aloof from the Ch'oe house during its initial consolidation. "The Seven Wandering Sages," a group of famous writers who prided themselves on their knowledge and insights into the Confucian classics, generally seem to have maintained a separate identity and did not associate themselves with the Ch'oe rulers. Of its seven members, only two, Yi Illo and Cho T'ong, actually took civil positions. That only two of the men in this literati group joined the Ch'oe house was unusual for at least five of the seven successfully completed the state examination and many of them came from esteemed families. The dynastic records indicate, however, that some men such as Im Ch'un, perhaps by choice, wished to have no ties with the military. Not only had Im refused to sit for the kwagŏ, but also many of his family had been killed or forced out of office in the 1170 revolt. Ch'un, alienated from the military leadership, chose to wander and write poetry with such men as O Sejae.[95] O Sejae, even though he had passed the state examination, and had been recommended several times for a post by Yi Illo, never received an appointment. In disgust, he, too, joined other members of the group spending time writing and drinking.[96]

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[94] KS 99:42b-43a, KSC 14:18a-b.

[95] KS 102:11a-b.

[96] KS 102:10b, PH 3:9b-10a.

Once the military period ended, these sages and people who did not join the Ch'oe house were acclaimed, while others such as Yi Kyubo who had close links especially with Ch'oe U was criticized.[97] Although this attitude might indicate that there was a degree of enmity between men who worked with the Ch'oe house and those who chose not to, as the Ch'oe rule matured differences were muted.

Men like Han Yuhan did exist, but most other scholars, even many of the Seven Wandering Sages, occasionally had dealings with the Ch'oe power structure and scholars who supported the Ch'oe house. After O Sejae died, Yi Kyubo was offered O's vacated seat in the Seven Wandering Sages.[98] Ch'unghŏn himself, in an earnest attempt to support the arts and develop literature, held several writing contests to which all scholars, those who collaborated and those who did not collaborate with the Ch'oe house, were invited. In 1205 when Ch'unghŏn constructed a pavilion at Namsalli, he summoned Confucian scholars for a poetry contest[99] and similar events occurred repeatedly during Ch'unghŏn's reign.[100] Men who had no positions in the government, but simply had established themselves as renowned scholars, participated in these occasions. Ch'unghŏn was making himself not only the dominant political force in the kingdom but also the chief patron of the arts. When one

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[97] Tongguk Yisanggukchip (hereafter cited as YS) in Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip, huhu: 1a-3b.

[98] KS 102:3a-5b.

[99] KS 129:16b-17a, KSC 14:19a.

[100] Similar gathering were held in 1199, see POH 2:17a, and in 1207, see introduction to YS: 9b.

recalls the vast amount of literature that was written at this time and is still extant today, one can only marvel at the productivity of the age.[101] Even though a few men by choice remained aloof, many more scholars had either formal political ties or less regulated literary contacts with Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn. U perpetuated these and seems to have been still more successful in recruiting the leading scholars into his structure. In fact, by U's regime there seem to have been no Confucian mavericks separated from the power structure, but rather all famed scholars were co-opted into supporting U's system. By this time Ch'oe power was firmly established; everybody accepted it.

The Ch'oe house supported scholar-officials and Confucian learning in other ways, too. The expansion of the examination system has been discussed as well as the role of the civil official in the Ch'oe house. Ch'unghŏn when confronted with complaints from students on losing a hall, which had been sold illegally to a general, settled the matter quickly by setting a fine and imprisoning the accused.[102] The students presumably recovered their hall, and Ch'unghŏn's popularity soared. Under Ch'unghŏn's rule men with the position of haksa (academician) also received an additional promotion. In 1200, the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat (Chungsŏmunhasŏng) memorialized,

> In the old system, if those who were in the haksa post did not have a Taegan or chigonggŏ office, they could not participate in the ranks of the leading officials. We

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[101] Some of the major writers of this period in addition to Yi Kyubo were Im Ch'un who wrote Sŏhajip, Yi Illo who wrote, P'ahanjip, Ch'oe Cha who wrote Pohanjip, Kim Ku who wrote Chip'ojip and Chin Hwa who wrote Maehoyugo. For a complete compilation of these works see Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip.

[102] KS 21:20a, KSC 14:19a-b.

> request from now that all those who have the position of haksa at the same time be permitted to attend royal audiences at the rank of a royal attendant.[103]

This proposal was accepted and the prestige of the haksa further increased. This pattern continued after U came to power. U accorded the civil scholar benefits and respect, and, as was seen earlier, he openly acclaimed Confucian institutions as the foundation of the Koryŏ dynastic structure.

The Ch'oe house through a well-structured framework was able to incorporate under its control two systems. It fostered and maintained the dynastic order as its foundation and source of legitimacy, but superimposed on this base the Ch'oe private system. The real locus of power was in the latter structure but men were placed simultaneously in both units. The dynastic system was used to pay Ch'oe retainers salaries and provide them with recognition and rewards for their labors. Their actual work and effectiveness was undoubtedly streamlined through the operation of the private Ch'oe structure. No longer dependent upon routing decisions through customary dynastic channels and facing delays by bureaucratic inertia, Ch'unghŏn and his son U had established an order under which they could confront crises as they arose. And to increase the effectiveness of the system and to promote their control over the kingdom, the Ch'oe house sought to recruit men skilled in administration, and yet representative of the major political sectors of the kingdom. Ch'unghŏn and U depended most upon Confucian scholars who had been successful in the examination and were also from families that had proven their ability through previous dynastic service.

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[103] KSC 14:5a.

Furthermore, by maintaining the semblance of the dynastic order with the monarch still the paramount authority in theory, Confucian scholars with few qualms could serve the king while working for the Ch'oe heads. Koryŏ society was essentially conservative. Revolution is seldom as revolutionary as many suppose. Ch'unghŏn was basically a traditionalist for he used techniques with proven effectiveness. When he sought to recruit personnel, he adhered to established Koryŏ norms but allowed room for the military. However, when compared to the role the warrior had assumed at the start of the Koryŏ dynasty, or even at the start of the military period in 1170, Ch'unghŏn and U curbed the power of the military leadership and reverted to a heavier dependence on the civilian scholar. Hang, politically inert, perhaps because of his religious training, weakened this structure. Ŭi was unable to cope with it at all. The joint action of scholars and soldiers overthrew the Ch'oe house, so much had these roles been balanced.

The relationship of the Ch'oe authority to the entire structure of government in thirteenth century Korea must be clearly understood. Ch'unghŏn had acquired powers that operated alongside, and only incidentally in competition with, those exercised by the court. The Ch'oe position was not a usurpation, but a growth within the established dynastic order. Through this new system, and through the calculated support of its retainers, the Ch'oe house was able to superimpose its will on the dynasty. It was able, through these dual organizations,

to support Confucian ideology and the power of the king, while simultaneously constructing its own independent authority.[104]

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[104] These developments are in many ways similar to events in Japan at about the same time. See John W. Hall, Government and Local Power in Japan, 500 to 1700 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 153-154.

CHAPTER V

PEASANTS AND CH'ŎNMIN UNDER THE CH'OE HOUSE

The political leaders of Koryŏ generally came from one of three social groups: powerful local clans, military officer clans or central aristocratic clans. In terms of political leadership, peasants and ch'ŏnmin were relatively unimportant as social codes, Confucian ideological prerequisites and dynastic institutions curtailed their access to power. The term ch'onmin is elusive. Basically ch'ŏnmin were people of inferior birth, lower than peasants, that the Koryŏ dynastic system had denied free advancement into high-ranking dynastic offices. This group would include such people as nobi (slaves), eunuchs, chinch'ŏk (ferrymen), yŏkchŏng (station attendants), yangsuch'ŏk (weavers), chaein (actors), and akkong (musicians).[1] Generally ch'ŏnmin were also considered to be residents of such specifically designated localities as hyang, so or pugok.[2] The purpose of this chapter is to study the peasants and ch'ŏnmin to understand their functions in this period and their interaction with the Ch'oe house. Such an examination will reveal the methods the Ch'oe house employed to enforce its designs and will enable a more accurate assessment of the successes and failures of the Ch'oe house. This inquiry will also consider the local and

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[1] Kuksa taesajŏn, Yi Hongjik, ed. (Seoul: Paekmansa, 1974), p. 1632.

[2] Hatada Takashi in "Kōrai jidai no semmin seido 'bukyoku ni tsuite,'" (hereafter cited as "Bukyoku") in Chōsen and Wada Hakushi kanreki kinen tōyōshi ronsō, 1951, pp. 501-520, discusses ch'ŏnmin but never offers a satisfactory definition. Rather Hatada suggests that ch'ŏnmin were people who lived in special designated areas such as pugok. This argument is supported by Kim Yongdŏk in "Hyang, so, pugok ko," Paek Nakchun paksa hwan'gap kinyŏm nonmunjip (Seoul: Sasanggye sa, 1955), pp. 171-246.

regional power structure and its relations with the peasants and ch'ŏnmin and the Ch'oe house.

Even though the peasants were subordinate to the politically powerful ruling elites (and the ch'ŏnmin were still lower), they had important functions in Koryŏ society. It was their labors that fed this agrarian country and their taxes that financed the administration. The ruling elite, by impeding the advance of most people from the lower levels of society, was able to enjoy a monopoly of power and prestige in the kingdom. The leadership did not ignore the needs of the peasant, however, for they acknowledged that their own fortunes ultimately rested on the tacit support of the peasants. This meant that the welfare of the masses had to be considered in political decision making, and that agriculture had to be encouraged and aided. Officials had to be dispatched to ensure the proper management of the localities and the integrity of local government operations. In short, conditions that might spark peasant indignation and revolt had to be alleviated to assure the efficient operation of the dynasty. Peasants were the base of the nation, as the Confucian dictum goes, and if that base were upset, the dynasty would be in turmoil.

The central government rarely had direct contact with the peasantry, but preferred to work through the local power structure, the hojang (township headman) and his associates, to initiate and enforce its policies. The local leaders and men appointed by the central government to inspect the local administration generally attended to peasant needs and thus averted peasant uprisings. The society was stable as peasants and ch'ŏnmin acknowledged their subservient

positions. During Myŏngjong's reign, however, this order began to crumble. The local power structure had changed fundamentally, starting as early as the beginning of the twelfth century when the central government took a more direct role in local politics by establishing many new district offices and dispatching a plethora of central inspectors to the rural areas. With increased central supervision, the local leaders subsequently had less responsibility for regional affairs. This transformation, which reached a peak early in Myŏngjong's reign with the establishment of still more district offices, might have succeeded if the central government were able to retain some vitality. But just at this time the breakdown in central leadership, coupled with resistance from peasants, monks and civil officials, caused Koryŏ's once stable regional system to disintegrate. By the middle of Myŏngjong's reign, the central administration seems to have abandoned its direct responsibility over local affairs, leaving the rural areas leaderless and without support. With local administration in shambles, there was little direction or order. Peasants were left to manage themselves, draught and famine raged, and dishonest officials took advantage of the uncertainties of the age, hastening disaster. Finally there came equally significant developments in the central political and social structure for ch'ŏnmin and peasants started to reach ranking dynastic positions and to assume offices of authority in the kingdom. Men who had once been children of slaves and farmers challenged and broke the ruling elites' monopoly.

Ch'unghŏn, on assuming command, had to confront these new developments. He had to balance these centrifugal forces that had stripped

the central authority of its power in the provinces, and try to restructure Koryŏ society to make it more amenable to his control. Ch'unghŏn had to seek a resolution to the causes of peasant unrest; he had to resolve the problems posed by the breakdown of the social system; and he had to assert his authority over the kingdom.

As was seen in earlier chapters, Ch'unghŏn opted for the most expedient move. That is, he sought a restoration of the former dynastic order. Essentially, he tried to reassert central authority over the local areas to allay peasant grievances, and to reestablish the former social hierarchy by limiting the mobility of ch'ŏnmin. Violent opposition by peasants and ch'ŏnmin hindered the realization of these goals. A number of revolts erupted in the first decade of Ch'oe rule and they were both symptoms and causes of discontent. An understanding of these revolts, their causes and the Ch'oe resolution of them will clarify the conditions of the age. The Ch'oe house responded by first seeking to co-opt peasants and ch'ŏnmin into supporting its new system, and if resistance still flourished, it then used more forceful means to crush opposition. In pursuing its policies, the Ch'oe house assured a greater degree of social mobility for only the few people at the bottom of the social order who could serve its particular needs.

Peasant Revolts and the Status of Peasants

During the years Ch'unghŏn was in command of the kingdom, there were at least eight peasant rebellions in various parts of the country.

Major Peasant Disturbances during Ch'unghŏn's Rule

date	place
1199	Kangnŭng-Kyŏngju
1200	Kimhae
1202	T'amna (Cheju)
1202-4	Kyŏngju
1203	Kigye (near Kyŏngju)
1208	Munŭng
1217	Chinwihyŏn
1217	Sŏgyŏng

The possible causes for these peasants disturbances are not always clear. The economic situation of the peasants, already desperate because of the fiscal collapse that occurred during the latter part of Myŏngjong's reign is one possible factor. The economy did not immediately improve with the rise of the Ch'oe house. Ch'unghŏn acknowledged that part of the woes stemmed from the breakdown of the land system, and in part three of his ten point proposal of reform issued in 1196, he sought to restructure the dynastic land system and ensure the peasants' means of survival.[3] This was a slow process and Ch'unghŏn could not restore economic vitality merely by redrawing land boundaries, for the dynastic fiscal problems were too serious. Economic chaos continued as Ch'unghŏn came to power when many of the ruling elite, anxious to secure their own fiscal well-being, seized land, thus robbing the peasants of their

[3] For further discussion see Chapter VII on Ch'oe finances, and KS 129:5a, KSC 14:2b-3a.

livelihood.[4] Peasants at this time, forced off the land and without recourse, would revolt if only to steal grain from central or local granaries.

A second cause may have been that peasants resented the rapid rise of slaves and other ch'ŏnmin in Myŏngjong's reign. Peasants probably questioned why they should not also be able to improve their status. If men of humble birth, by this logic, could achieve prominent offices, peasants, too, should no longer be forced to toil and accept humiliating positions as laborers. Once the social system began to show signs of weakness, it could not contain all the various forms of social aspirations.

Political developments in the kingdom, playing into the hands of malcontents, form a third set of factors. The forced abdication of Myŏngjong at this time might have disturbed the peasants and opened the gates for new waves of social release.[5] Ch'unghŏn in 1197 abruptly replaced the king. The removal of the monarch who was at the apex of the social order and represented many of the abuses of the system, might have been an incentive to peasants to rectify injustices. Demonstrating the demise of the old order, this might have encouraged peasants and ch'ŏnmin to rebel to establish a new society in which they, too, would have opportunities for wealth and political might. Peasants aggravated this unstable political environment still more by taking advantage of the fledgling Ch'oe rule. It required several years for Ch'unghŏn to construct a stable order, and until he was able

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[4] Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Nongmin," p. 230.

[5] Hatada Takashi, "Nonmin," pp. 7-8.

to assert and demonstrate his absolute authority, there would be peasants and even ch'ŏnmin who would dare to challenge the house in hopes of improving their lot.

A number of peasant revolts erupted because of other causes and perhaps the most salient reason was the general breakdown in local government. The disappearance of a strong central authority during the late Myŏngjong period curtailed state intervention into local matters and local leaders were thus able to assume more autonomy. Ch'unghŏn, in his endeavor to reassert central power, must have either collided with the local leaders or, having won the support of the local elite, then conflicted with the peasants who were enjoying a relative degree of freedom from state meddling. In Kimhae in 1200 the latter emerges when state and local leaders joined to suppress peasants. At that time a group of men rebelled and tried to kill the local community leaders. The government official immediately assisted the local leaders in quelling the revolt. The peasants then complained to the official, "We wanted to eliminate those who are powerful and greedy to clean out our village, why do you attack us?" Their pleas were to no avail for the local leaders and dynastic official were working together, and judging from the complaints of greed registered by the peasants, the local elite must have drained considerable wealth from the countryside.[6] To bring a degree of stability and order to the kingdom, central leadership had to be reasserted and often this meant working with the local elite. It was the peasants who resisted these changes for they ended by paying more to state and local leaders as they lost their

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[6] KS 21:11a-b, KSC 14:7b-8a.

relative autonomy.

Regional aspirations coupled with subtle political overtones were also apparent in some of the revolts. Four peasant revolts took place in southeastern Korea over a period of five years (1199-1203) and two slave revolts occurred there at the same period. Although many of the conditions described above were also present in this area, the region was unique for several reasons. First, it was the site of the former Silla capital and because of this Kyŏngju was made a subsidiary capital in the Koryŏ dynasty. Even after nearly three centuries, loyalty to the old Silla kingdom and Sillanese traditions were still latent in the area.[7] Kyŏngju was also the power center of Ch'unghŏn's arch rival Yi Ŭimin. Yi Ŭimin had built on this Silla sentiment in constructing his own power base during the latter part of Myŏngjong's reign. In 1193, Ŭimin's son and one of his associates, Kim Sami, a local hoodlum, indicating that the power of Koryŏ had wained, tried to revive pro-Silla loyalism to enhance their control.[8] Once Ch'unghŏn was in command he made several attempts to eradicate any lingering vestiges of Ŭimin's power and sent a number of expeditions to the Kyŏngju area. By removing Ŭimin's clique, he was also attacking the local power structure in the Kyŏngju district which Ŭimin had used to dominate the area. Kyŏngju revolted in part because of these Ch'oe measures and once again the rebels, reminiscent of Ŭimin's ploys, claimed, "The Koryŏ mandate is completely exhausted, Silla must be restored."[9] Finally it was

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[7] Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ chibang chedo ŭi ilyŏn'gu," Sahak yŏn'gu, vol. 14 (Nov., 1962), p. 96.

[8] KSC 13:30a-b. See also Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Nongmin," pp. 238-239.

[9] KS 100:31a-b, KSC 14:12a.

relatively easy for Kyŏngju residents to consider revolt, because of the remoteness of the area from the capital at Kaegyŏng.

In two of the revolts that occurred during the end of Ch'unghŏn's rule there was still another factor that sent peasants into resistance: foreign invasions. The uprisings in Chinwihyŏn and Sŏgyŏng, while expressing peasant distress, would probably not have occurred without the turmoil caused by foreign attacks. These areas, like others across the country, had been subjected to increased intervention and control from the central government, but through the Ch'oe house's more efficient administration, peasant discontent was gradually being controlled. Now, foreign invaders suddenly overran these two areas in the north and the country in that area was laid waste in the wake of war. The initial shock of battle and defeat left local administration in a shambles, and the Ch'oe house was unable to respond rapidly enough to stave off open insurrection. Peasants, destitute from battle, without leaders, homes, or food, were an easy prey to the urgings of malcontents.

Ch'unghŏn, from the start of his rule, confronted the peasant disturbances by seeking a speedy solution to them. In his response he demonstrated not only a keen understanding of the opposing power configurations and pursued ruthless forms to suppress this opposition, but also attempted to win the support of his antagonists through compromise and the amelioration of their grievances. In the ten proposals Ch'unghŏn submitted to the king shortly after his seizure of power, his concern for peasant life, and especially the vitality of local government, is revealed. In proposal four, Ch'unghŏn recounted the harsh conditions facing the peasants because of corruptable clerks and

officials.[10] Before the nation can be ordered, the grievances of the peasants must be met. To alleviate these problems, Ch'unghŏn suggested that better administrators be dispatched, that the presentation of gifts be curtailed and that ostentation and luxury be forbidden.[11] Immediately after he presented these proposals, Ch'unghŏn dispatched court officials to the various circuits in the kingdom to talk to the people and soothe their fears.[12] He also sent anch'alsa (Commissioners) to the countryside on numerous occasions to inquire into the problems of the peasants.[13] Besides dispatching officials, Ch'unghŏn sought to raise the integrity and administrative talents of the officialdom in general. The previous chapter discussed the high quality of the Ch'oe bureaucracy. As Ch'unghŏn reinvigorated the central dynastic institutions he seems to have tried to reassert central power over the local administration. This policy is particularly evident in his manipulation of area designations such as chu and hyŏn as a reward or punishment and his constant dispatch of central officials to investigate outlying areas.[14] These officials, concerned with peasant needs, sought to regulate government policy in a just manner by curtailing extortions and excessive taxation. The Ch'oe house, in restocking

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[10] KS 129:5a-6a, KSC 13:41a-b.

[11] Ibid.

[12] KSC 13:42b.

[13] KS 22:5a, KSC 14:37a.

[14] For example Ŭisŏnghyŏn was lowered in Sinjong's reign for suffering a defeat, TYS 25:13b. Chŏngju on the other hand was advanced in 1231, TYS 53:31a-b. By looking at the TYS one is left with the distinct impression that regional designations were enforced and their earlier meanings reasserted.

granaries to meet emergencies and encouraging agriculture, restored stability to the countryside.

Ch'unghŏn also used measures such as geomancy to curtail peasant and other disturbances. The Koryŏ histories report,

> Yi Ŭimin's gravel dike was destroyed. Earlier Ŭimin constructed a dike from Nakt'a bridge to Cho bridge. Bordering the dike he planted willow trees. People did not dare utter any criticism but praised him as the "new road minister." Later, when the southeastern bandits had a great uprising and slaves planned to rebel, a diviner indicated this (dike) to be the cause. Therefore they destroyed it.[15]

Topographical abuses were held accountable for many problems.[16] This is one more example of Ch'unghŏn's use of geomancy as an aid in resolving peasant grievances. The authorities also sought divine aid through prayers to Buddha to resolve these constant uprisings. The king, for example, made at least one journey to Pojesa temple to pray for the extinction of bandits.[17]

Reward and punishment were traditional methods employed to pacify peasants and suppress banditry. In 1199 the Royal Chancellery and Secretariat memorialized that, "even though the remaining cliques of bandit officials, Cho Wŏnjŏng and Sŏk Ch'ung, have received royal pardon, avoided banishment and been freed, to reprimand bandits we request that they not again be given chikchŏn (office land)."[18]

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[15] KS 128:23a, KSC 14:2b-3a.

[16] In proposals one and nine Ch'unghŏn listed how various topographical abuses had caused dynastic problems, and warned that these must be corrected. See Chapter 11.

[17] KS 21:13b, KSC 14:13b.

[18] KS 21:8b-9a, KSC 14:5a.

Although this particular measure did not bring an immediate halt to peasant trouble and banditry, the administration continued to use similar ploys of reconciliation to bring stability to the kingdom. When several bandit leaders surrendered in Sinjong's reign, the King gave them wine, food, and clothing and sent them home.[19]

Ch'unghŏn resorted to more extreme action when his softer, more tempered policies failed. On a number of occasions, he countered forceful resistance with decisive military attacks. He repeatedly dispatched troops during his early period of rule to quiet one uprising after another. For example, in 1198, Ch'unghŏn sent troops to quell a slave revolt in the capital and then in the following two years 1199 and 1200, he again mobilized troops to end uprisings in the Kyŏngsang area. He made additional dispatches in 1202 and 1204. In some of the more extreme cases he demoted the regional status of an area.[20] His policies were relatively effective, for after he died there was a lull of about ten years when few peasant uprisings or other domestic disturbances occurred.

Ch'unghŏn's descendants U and Hang followed these policies of stabilization inaugurated by Ch'unghŏn. U sought to bring order to the peasants' life by sustaining the dynastic land system and returning

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[19] KS 21:7b, KSC 14:4b.

[20] When Kyŏngju (Tonggyŏng) was punished in this way, Ch'unghŏn stated, "Tonggyŏng people speak of restoring Silla and send decrees to the chu and kun plotting rebellions. We cannot but punish them." To some men, this was drastic action because of the capital status of the area, but Ch'unghŏn, weary of constant revolt and intrigue, was anxious to end further banditry and peasant disturbances. See KSC 14:7a-b.

land and tenants that Ch'unghŏn had seized to their lawful owners.[21] U also attempted to restore the integrity of the tax structure and maintain the existing local administration.[22] These measures would bring order to the peasant society and would also assure a fairer distribution of responsibilities and economic burdens. This strategy was relatively successful at the outset, but when U moved the capital to Kanghwa Island in 1232 governmental neglect provoked a number of revolts. The first started in Kaegyŏng when a low ranking official who remained in the abandoned city took advantage of the circumstances, summoned local hoodlums and slaves, and rebelled. This nucleus was joined by monks from neighboring temples and they formed into three army units. On hearing of the disturbance, U dispatched troops bringing the uprising to a quick end.[23] Several months later, at the end of 1232, Sŏgyŏng also rebelled, but the Ch'oe house again responded by sending some 3000 of its own troops who, with the district military commissioner (pyŏngmasa), pacified the revolt. After this the histories report that Sŏgyŏng became a waste land.[24] In the following year when peasants rebelled in Kyŏngju, the Ch'oe house also responded with equally decisive attacks.[25] Although peasants might have thought that the Ch'oe house, by its withdrawal to Kanghwa, had lost its ability to maintain

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[21] KS 129:28b, KSC 15:23b.

[22] For more discussion see Chapter VII

[23] KSC 16:16b-17a.

[24] KS 130:4a, 23:27a-b, KSC 16:19a-b.

[25] KS 103:38b-39a, KSC 16:18b-19a. Naju in 1237 also revolted and this uprising was quelled with similar resoluteness. KS 103:27b-28b, 16:26a-b.

order, it demonstrated its vitality by rapidly pacifying revolts.

These latter revolts were random expressions of discontent and not necessarily representative of the period. The fact that there were so few revolts during this time of foreign invasions and that the peasants played a major role in the resistance to the Mongols should be emphasized. Peasants, formed into Pyŏlch'o units, were able to execute guerilla-type warfare against the Mongols and temporarily stymie enemy advances. When faced with the alternative of capitulating to foreign demands or fighting for their own land and kingdom, the peasants in most cases chose the latter. Localism might have been one reason, but the Ch'oe house's adroit use of tax incentives and exemptions to secure peasant support undoubtedly was effective.[26] The Ch'oe house demonstrated its ability to maintain control over the peninsula from its new insular capital. Peasant support was crucial to the Ch'oe regime and it must have made considerable gains in alleviating the burdens of the peasants. Ch'unghŏn faced bleak prospects at the start because of constant domestic disturbances, but the Ch'oe house effectively countered this, and was able to retain the allegiance of most peasants during the Mongol invasions.

The reasons for this impressive record must be traced in part to the Ch'oe house's ability to stabilize local government. It was the local township headmen (hojang) who were responsible for collecting taxes and ultimately administering dynastic policy to peasants. Although the Ch'oe house curtailed the hojang's power along with that of

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[26] This will be discussed in Chapter VII.

the local inspector general (sasimgwan),[27] as the central government assumed greater responsibility for local administration, the Ch'oe system seems to have worked equitably and enlisted the support of much of the populace.

Ch'ŏnmin

Accompanying many of the peasant uprisings during this period were slave revolts. Slaves, like peasants, were burdened with high demands on their labor and relatively few social or economic benefits. Although slave revolts occurred sporadically throughout traditional Korean history, during the military period they became more frequent. The reasons given for slave revolts are often similar to the causes of peasant unrest. But the social discrimination leveled at the slave and other ch'ŏnmin was much more severe. If the peasant's life was toilsome, the slave's existence was often more desperate. Ch'ŏnmin were at the bottom of the social scale, peasants in the middle and aristocrats at the top. Because of the lack of material on the various ch'ŏnmin, when discussing the changes and activities of this class, most of the discussion will concern slaves. Their activity was most striking during this period causing some to believe slaves had achieved a high degree of mobility.[28]

The term slave is not a very accurate translation of the word nobi. To the western mind a slave is considered property, with the slave's

[27] The sasimgwan position was eventually eliminated in 1318. See Hatada, "Jishinkan," p. 130. The hojang was held accountable to Ch'oe directives and checked closely by centrally dispatched officials. See pp. 27-29.

[28] See for example Pyŏn Taesŏp, "Nongmin," or "Manjŏk."

will subject to one man, his labor and service obtained by coercion, and individual rights such as a family denied him.[29] In Korea the slave or nobi, although often limited in terms of social advancement, had much greater control over his own existence. Slaves appeared in two forms: public and private.[30] Public slaves belonged to the state and served in menial tasks in government offices or worked in workshops that supplied the court and ruling elite with needed commodities. The government also supplied public slaves to officials as attendants. The number of these slaves was fixed according to the official's rank, and they often acted as couriers or escorts. Private slaves, owned by kings, officials and temples, included all other slaves and formed into two groups, ordinary and out-resident slaves. The latter were slaves in name but their social and economic position is believed to have been similar to commoner tenants.[31] Men became slaves in several different ways. Prisoners of war or criminals often became slaves. There are also examples of people selling themselves into this status for survival or religious purposes.[32] All members of a family often shared equally in the inheritance of slaves. In fact, the transfer of slaves was much more equal than the succession to land rights and it is believed that slave

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[29] David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 32.

[30] Hatada Takashi, History of Korea, translated by Warren W. Smith and Benjamin H. Hazard (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 1969) p. 39. Hatada actually sees three classifications public, official, and private, but official and public are nearly identical.

[31] Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Land Tenure," p. 62.

[32] Yi Chaech'ang, "Sawŏn nobi ko," Hwang Ŭidon sŏnsaeng kohŭi kinyŏm sahak nonch'ong (Seoul: Tongguk University Press, 1960), pp. 251-261.

ownership was a more common phenomenon than private land ownership at the start of the Koryŏ kingdom.[33] Manumission could be achieved through purchase, or a master, on his own volition could free his slaves.

In the twelfth century some slaves were achieving social recognition and escaping their humble status. Although the slaves were not immune to the problems confronting peasants and other elements of society, for they, too, had to work for their livelihood and perform services for their master, some slaves during the early twelfth century took advantage of their owners' power to enhance their own status. Slaves freely aided in augmenting their owner's power by acting as agents in land seizures and other means to expand aristocratic control.[34] During Ŭijong's reign, the court encouraged this by allowing slaves and eunuchs who had won royal favor to advance into low dynastic offices and carry out royal designs. The debauchery and government irregularities caused in part by eunuchs and other ch'ŏnmin in the administration seem to have incited the military into revolting. But the rise in the social, economic and political position of the slave did not end with the start of military rule. During Myŏngjong's reign, slaves, achieving new levels of prominence in the Koryŏ order, usually cooperated with the leaders of the new order.[35]

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[33] Hatada Takashi, "Kōrai jidai no okeru tochi no chakuchōshi sōzoku to dohi no shijo kinbun sōzoku," Tōyō bunka, 22 (Jan., 1957) and Chōsen, p. 355.

[34] Pyŏn T'aesŏp, "Manjŏk," p. 455.

[35] See Chapter II.

Slave Revolts and the Status of Slaves

Once Ch'unghŏn assumed power in 1196 there was a dramatic reversal in the attitude of the slaves which is best reflected in the increase of slave rebellions. In Myŏngjong's reign there had been only one slave revolt. Then, within seven years of Ch'unghŏn's seizure of power, slaves participated in five major disturbances in different parts of the kingdom. There were two more major slave uprisings three decades later in 1232.

Major Slave Disturbances during the Ch'oe House Rule

date	place
1196	Kaegyŏng
1198	Kaegyŏng
1200	Chinju
1200	Milyang
1203	Kaegyŏng
1232	Ch'ungju
1232	Kaegyŏng

This shift in the attitude of the slaves was in part a response to the growing hostility from the ruling elite, as well as an expression of resentment toward new policies Ch'unghŏn instituted.

The Manjŏk rebellion in 1198 sheds some light on the issues involved in the slaves' discontent. Manjŏk was a private slave who, with other men of a similar social status from the capital, joined to plot against the ruling elite. Manjŏk declared,

> In the nation since the 1170 coup, many good and bad men have risen from humble (ch'ŏn) status. How could generals and ministers of low origins advance? If the time comes, then we also can do this. Why should we toil and suffer under the whip?[36]

The slaves set a specified day to revolt and on a prearranged signal they agreed to kill Ch'unghŏn and their own lords, and finally, burning their slave registers, they would become lords and generals themselves. On the appointed day their numbers were insufficient. They postponed the revolt but by then the plot had been revealed. The authorities seized and drowned Manjŏk and some one hundred slaves. Was the major thrust behind the Manjŏk rebellion the quest for social liberation?[37] One cannot deny that by burning their slave registers and killing their masters, the slaves were seeking to improve their social status. They obviously felt that with Ch'unghŏn's administration just two years in power, they might be able to rally many to their cause and topple the Ch'oe authority. But if, as witnessed during Myŏngjong's reign, the slave conditions were improving, it would be better for them to remain silent and not try to defeat the new government. It was not to fulfill rising expectations and hopes by realizing still more social and political gains, but instead slaves reacted to changes in Ch'oe policy by revolting.

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, unlike the early military rulers, seemed anxious to restore the traditional social class order and showed little sympathy for slave aspirations. His effective exclusion of men with inferior

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[36] KS 129:12a-13a, KSC 14:2a-b.

[37] See Pyŏn Taesŏp, "Manjŏk," for affirmation of this interpretation.

class origins from the dynastic structure has already been demonstrated.[38] Soon after his assumption of power, Ch'unghŏn in his ten proposals criticized the activities of the slaves. Ch'unghŏn stated, "The slaves of the powerful houses fight for land rents and repeatedly collect them. The people all groan; anxiety and pain flourish."[39] Once Ch'oe power was secure, there was no reference to harassment by slaves or their arrogance in economic endeavors. The slaves seem to have ceased their economic roles and reduced their involvement in politics.[40] The slave revolts during this time in fact might have been a direct expression of their frustration under the Ch'oe house. The fact that they revolted gives testimony to their political awareness and understanding of the power structure. With their hopes of political and economic influence contained, and their social advance again blocked, revolt was one of the readiest ways to escape their desperate situation. Although direct evidence is lacking, circumstances lead one to conclude that rather than a breakdown in the social structure, it was the reordering of the entire social scale by Ch'unghŏn that caused the slaves to rise up at this time.[41]

Ch'unghŏn, in contrast to his pacification of peasant disturbances, counteracted the slave revolts with extreme severity. In Manjŏk's

[38] Pyŏn also feels that Ch'oe was trying to maintain the social order but does not suggest that this might be a cause for the slave revolts. See "Nongmin," p. 241.

[39] KS 129:5a, KSC 13:41a.

[40] Pyŏn offers a similar conclusion, see "Manjŏk," p. 471-2.

[41] Other grievances, such as those expressed by the peasants, were undoubtedly also present, but the changed social, political and economic conditions confronting the slaves at this time must have been most aggravating to them.

rebellion, he interrogated suspects and drowned the accused in a river. After the Chinju slave revolt several years, later he sent officials at once to pacify the area. With another slave disturbance in the capital in 1203, Ch'unghŏn captured, interrogated and drowned some fifty slaves.[42] To slaves who were willing to reveal these revolts, Ch'unghŏn offered rewards including manumission.[43] Through this type of policy, he effectively countered slave uprisings until well after the Mongol invasion had commenced.

Although there is no record of the slaves maintaining any of their former economic functions once Ch'unghŏn assumed power, they did do other types of work, and slaves were not totally eliminated from the power structure. The Koryŏ histories relate that when northern invaders defeated the dynastic troops in 1213, the kingdom selected public and private slaves to serve as soldiers.[44] Slaves not only went into the dynastic forces but private citizens had these people join their own guards. In 1218, Tae Chipsŏng and others, because they had no private troops of their own, coerced slaves, monks and others to join their forces.[45]

Ch'unghŏn treated his own personal slaves well, guaranteeing them support and watching after their needs. The example of his slave Tonghwa and Ch'oe Chunmun demonstrate this.

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[42] See KS 128:26a and KSC 14:6b-7a for the Chinju revolt and KS 129:15b and KSC 14:14a for the Kaegyŏng revolt.

[43] The slave who revealed the Manjŏk plot was freed and made a commoner; see KS 129:12b-13a, KSC 14:2a-b.

[44] KS 81:15a, 103:14a, KSC 15:8a.

[45] KS 129:25b-26a, KSC 15:13b-14a.

> Ch'unghŏn had a slave called Tonghwa. She was beautiful and had relations with many local men. Ch'unghŏn also once had relations with her. One day, playing, he said, "For whom could you be a suitable wife?" The slave responded, "The recommendee of Honghae, Ch'oe Chunmun." Ch'unghŏn at once summoned Chunmun and retained him at his house, using him as a slave. Later he appointed him to be a taejong and he advanced to be a taechanggun. Daily Chunmun saw special favor. Generally those who wanted appointments all attached themselves to him.[46]

Ch'unghŏn found a husband for his slave Tonghwa and then placed this person into the military and enabled him to advance to top positions. Ch'unghŏn was attempting to reinstitute traditional class rigidity, but his enforcement was partial and the benefits he bestowed on his own cadre and friends were many. As will be seen in his enforcement of the dynastic land system in a later chapter, and as witnessed by his recruitment of personnel, Ch'unghŏn's restoration like many of his other activities was tainted with favoritism. To men who worked for the Ch'oe house and were closely tied with its policy, Ch'unghŏn removed customary restraints and advanced them to suit his own will. He viewed all others as a threat and carefully watched them. Even though it carried contradictions, this strategy ultimately enabled Ch'unghŏn to consolidate his power expeditiously and bring stability to Koryŏ.

U essentially continued Ch'unghŏn's slave policies. U was an astute leader, he realized that much of what his father had inaugurated was politically expedient, but he was careful to remove any of Ch'unghŏn's loyal followers who were threats to his structure. One of U's first moves after establishing himself on his father's death was to banish people who had been close to Ch'unghŏn. Included in this group

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[46] KS 129:27b-28a, KSC 15:20b-21a.

were slaves such as Tonghwa.[47] These slaves surrounded Ch'unghŏn, and much like eunuchs attending a king, served and aided the Ch'oe leader in all his endeavors. They were quite familiar with Ch'oe politics and now their interference in U's affairs could be fatal to the Ch'oe house.

Loyalty and individual ties were important bonds in the Ch'oe period. Power came to individuals if they could recruit loyal followers and maintain allegiance. For this reason Ch'unghŏn went to extremes to provide for the needs of slaves like Tonghwa and his retainers in general. These people, in return, gave uncompromising fidelity to Ch'unghŏn, but as witnessed by their subsequent purge under U, their loyalty was not transferable. The last chapter mentions that one of the weaknesses of the Ch'oe power structure rests in this inability to transfer loyalty held for individual leaders into a sense of allegiance to the whole house. Furthermore, in an environment with each leader being surrounded by his own cadre of followers, the potential for power conflicts within the entire power structure among subordinate groups jockeying for influence is enhanced. U seems to have understood this quite well, for he quickly isolated military opponents to his rule and expelled his father's faithful servants replacing them with his own followers. As U speedily eliminated one group of slaves, he showered others with favors and positions demonstrating his attempt to consolidate his own following. An Sŏkchŏng was the son of a private slave, and Ch'oe U was generous with him and granted him a position in the

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[47] KS 129:28b, KSC 15:23b.

Taegak (a censorial body) over the objections of others.[48] This slave was useful to U and his structure, consequently U protected and advanced him.

Under the rule of U's successors, Ch'oe Hang and Ch'oe Ŭi, the rigid regulation of slaves again relaxed. Both Hang and Ŭi were the offspring of mothers who were concubines and alleged ch'ŏnmin.[49] The infiltration of men of humble origins into high dynastic offices during this time has been discussed. In 1258 the dynastic histories relate how Ŭi's house slave became a junior colonel (nangjang) and that the appointment of slaves to ch'amjik (posts of the sixth p'um grade and above) commenced from this time.[50] Although the Ch'oe leaders might have had some proclivity toward enlisting men of similar social backgrounds into their administration, one is led to speculate on the possible influence of the Mongol invasions on mobility. Slaves played a defensive role against invaders. At Chungju, for example, they formed into a Pyŏlcho and were quite effective in withstanding the Mongols. This slave unit, however, revolted soon after the Mongols retreated because they became embroiled in a dispute with the local elite. The slaves were willing to defend their area but when the area leaders tried to curb slave influence, they revolted. Twenty years later, however, slaves, given ranks in the dynasty as a reward for

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[48] KS 129:31b, KSC 15:26b.

[49] Even though Hang's mother was the daughter of the ranking official Sa Honggi, she still was a concubine to U and consequently of the ch'ŏnmin class. Perhaps her mother also was a concubine. See KS 129:51b, KSC 17:29a, for the reference to the ch'ŏnmin status of these two women.

[50] KS 75:24b, 129:53a, KSC 17:33b-34a.

their merit, achieved manumission in the name of national defense.[51] In 1253 one Kim Yunhu, who was leading a defense against the Mongols, promised that all men, regardless of their class status, would receive an office. To demonstrate his sincerity, he burnt the government slave registers.[52] How many similar incidents that may have occurred and the extent of social emancipation at this stage, can only be estimated, but undoubtedly many slaves through such action were able to escape their humble status.[53]

It is difficult to offer any conclusions on the economic functions of the slaves at the end of the Ch'oe rule. There are no records to indicate that they resumed their former activities in assisting their masters in land acquisitions. Neither is there evidence that they went on tribute exchanges. Emphasis must be placed rather on their social liberation, and advance in political life. Undoubtedly this new mobility at the end of the Ch'oe period may have facilitated slave efforts in achieving economic gains and may have been the basis for further advances when Koryŏ submitted to control by the Mongol Yuan dynasty.[54]

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[51] KSC 17:15b-16a.

[52] KS 103:39b-40a, KSC 17:14a.

[53] Kim Yongdŏk in "Hyang, so, pugok ko," contends that generally people of humble origins lived in areas such as hyang, so or pugok, but during the military period owing to domestic unrest, these designations began to lose their significance as social liberation was occurring. If one examines the material Kim presents and the evidence in the histories, is is apparent that this area terminology was maintained throughout the rules of Ch'unghŏn and U. Only after the Mongol invasions became quite severe, do changes in the hyang, so and pugok appear along with the potential of social mobility for the ch'ŏnmin.

[54] Imanishi Fumio, "Kōraichō ni okeru dohi ni tsuite." Kuwahara Hakushi kanreki kinen toyoshi ronsō (Kyoto, 1931), pp. 1160-61.

The Status of Other Ch'ŏnmin

Many of the same patterns that have been observed in the changing fortunes of slaves are evident with others from the ch'ŏnmin class. Eunuchs, traditionally of low social status, became quite important in political and social decisions during the early military period,[55] but when Ch'unghŏn consolidated his power he withdrew these people from important and sensitive areas. As in his slave policy, Ch'unghŏn was generous with people from the ch'ŏnmin class who would support his structure and had ties with his house while he suppressed all others. The net result was a basic tightening of the social order.

Throughout his rule Ch'unghŏn restrained eunuchs for they had always been a target of his suspicion.[56] Ch'unghŏn's antipathy toward this group grew after eunuchs played such a significant role in Kil In's counter revolt in 1196 and then in Hŭijong's attempt to assassinate him. Koryŏ tradition claims if the king should drink from the Tarae well, the eunuchs will have power. Accordingly in 1196, Ch'unghŏn ordered that the Tarae well be destroyed and the well at Kwangmyŏngsa be used for royal needs.[52] Through this move Ch'unghŏn was seeking to undermine further eunuch power. For the duration of his rule, eunuchs are all but absent from the historical records.

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[55] Eunuchs have been studied by Yi Uch'ŏl in "Hwan'gwan."

[56] Eunuch activities in both Ŭijong's and Myŏngjong's reigns have been discussed in previous chapters. Men occasionally were born with birth defects and thus became natural candidates to be eunuchs, but often men chose to be operated on, or eager parents had their sons caponized to become eligible to be a eunuch. See Yi Uch'ŏl, "Hwan'gwan."

[57] KS 129:9a, KSC 13:47a.

Not only did Ch'unghŏn deny eunuchs privileges, but he also forced artisans to curtail their activities. In 1199, the histories reported that he forbade artisans to wear head gear.[58] People with head gear usually worked for the royal household and because of this responsibility enjoyed prestige. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, by reviving discarded customs, was attempting to ensure greater social stability in the country and reassert the validity of Koryŏ's social codes. Four years later another example of this appears. Ch'a Yaksŏng had two sons by a kisaeng. One had entered the national university and the other had reached a position above the sixth p'um grade. Ch'unghŏn ordered that they be limited to the seventh p'um rank and be removed from the academic roster.[59]

Although there were many social restrictions, enforcement was incomplete. The advancement of some slaves has been mentioned and Ch'unghŏn also aided other ch'ŏnmin and people in the namban (technical services).[60] The Koryŏsa reports that when one U Kwangyu became Provisional Warder of the Office of Royal Archives (kwŏnji hammunjihu), ranking officials discussed saying,

> "Since Kwangyu is in the namban, it is not right for him to hold a high office." Accordingly they would not give him clearance. Ch'unghŏn then responded, "Kwangyu formerly

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[58] KSC 14:4a.

[59] KS 101:10b, KSC 14:14b.

[60] The namban was the third body in the dynastic administration, as opposed to the sŏban (military branch) and tongban (civilian branch). At the start of the Koryŏ kingdom it was filled with prestigious people, but later men with humble social origins entered the namban. People in the namban attended the king and served in regional offices. See Cho Chwaho, "Yŏdae namban ko," Tongguk sahak (1967) 1-17, and Yi Pyŏngdo, "Koryŏ namban ko," Seoul Taehakkyo nonmunjip, vol. 16 (1966).

> was quite able in handling investiture and foreign relations with Chin, so I especially gave him high offices. How can you firmly insist on regulations?"[61]

Ch'ungŏn who would not allow two sons of a kisaeng into high ranks, was permitting others of humble background to advance. Although trying to enforce social regulations, the Ch'oe house leader was also politically alert and willing to compromise his own social policy in order to reward the loyal and able. His system was undoubtedly strengthened by this flexible attitude that accepted social limitations as a convention but not as a binding rule for his followers.

U's policy continued this same pattern of flexible social restrictions that could be easily suspended when politically necessary. The Koryŏsa reports, "Yu Sŏk's great-grandmother was Yejong's concubine. Because of national codes he could not get into the Taegan (censorial bodies) or chŏngjo (high offices)".[62] U also enforced a regulation that limited one Son Pyŏn in his advancement because Son's wife was from a branch of the royal family.[63] This is additional evidence that the Ch'oe house was attempting to resurrect the old social order and restore the dynastic hierarchy for all but its supporters. For example U restored to some prominence eunuchs who won his confidence although even at this time he presumably carefully watched them. Yu Ch'ŏnu, in order to return to the Chŏngbang, had first to win the support of a eunuch through a financial gift.[64] Another eunuch in 1245 gained

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[61] KS 129:17b, KSC 14:21a.

[62] KS 121:3b-4a.

[63] KS 102:18b, KSC 17:3b.

[64] KS 105:33b.

recognition by passing with the top score in a national examination.[65] The Ch'oe heads enforced former dynastic regulations for the general administration of the kingdom, yet applied a different code for their own cadre of close followers. The Ch'oe house essentially sought a restoration that would suit its own needs.

By the time Ch'oe Hang assumed power the social order was relaxing. In addition to the advancement of slaves, other evidence like the rise in the status of house servants, is apparent. When Hang's servants started to wear caps, the sources report, "The former regulations, only allowed the servants of the royal family to wear caps. . . . The wearing of caps by servants of powerful officials starts here. After this, generally, servants of powerful houses all wore them."[66] Eunuchs also played a more important role. When ranking officials were discussing strategies to check the Mongols, a eunuch participated in the council.[67] Ch'unghŏn had tried to ostracize eunuchs but U and Hang, perhaps anxious to broaden their political contacts or in response to the exigencies of the age, which demanded men of talent above all, used these people. Many men of humble origins rose to prominence during this late Ch'oe period. The best example is Kim Injun who first served the Ch'oe house as a slave servant, but later led troops to defeat his masters and end sixty years of Ch'oe rule. The social emancipation that commenced at this time was not cut short with the Ch'oe collapse. When the king rewarded those who participated in the overthrow of the Ch'oe house,

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[65] KS 74:12b.

[66] KS 24:5a, KSC 17:6a.

[67] KS 24:9b-10a, KSC 17:11b-12a.

he permitted all who were of low status to advance regardless of social background.[68] Eunuchs also continued to enjoy mobility for in 1260, two years after the downfall of the Ch'oe house, a eunuch advanced to the sixth p'um grade.[69]

The changes that were experienced in the upper echelons of the Ch'oe power structure were reflected at the base. As Ch'unghŏn was consolidating his power over the kingdom, he sought to freeze the social structure. Rather than attempt daring new social changes, he met challenges to his regime with traditional methods of stabilization. To Ch'unghŏn one of the fastest and most expedient means of restoring order to the country was to regulate the social classes, limit social mobility and reform the dynastic administration. He also dispatched many officials to the various parts of rural Korea and reinvigorated regional administrations. When revolts continued, he used military strength to enforce his will. U accepted and followed this policy. It was a balanced and flexible strategy that allowed room for rewards and advancement for supporters, while maintaining the regulations of traditional Koryŏ society. Although there were contradictions and inconsistencies in this structure, it worked quite effectively and demonstrates the ability of the Ch'oe administration to secure order. Even when faced with considerable peasant and slave unrest, Ch'unghŏn was able to blend a rigid authoritarianism with opportunities for the social advancement of select followers. He tempered his policy with a strategy

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[68] KS 24:33a, KSC 17:36b-37a.

[69] KSC 18:8a.

that showed pragmatism and compromise. After Ch'oe Hang's succession to power, social restrictions started to relax as ch'ŏnmin played a more important role in the ruling structure. These changes were in part caused by the new tone set through Ch'oe Hang and Ch'oe Ŭi's leadership, but the Mongol invasions which required the mobilization of all sectors of the society were also a force in eroding social barriers.[70]

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[70] It is interesting to speculate on the impact of foreign interference on the Korean social order. Some scholars contend that the Japanese occupation of Korea in the twentieth century was instrumental in eroding old Yi class barriers; perhaps like the Mongols in Koryŏ?

CHAPTER VI

THE BUDDHIST ESTABLISHMENT AND THE CH'OE HOUSE RULE

The most important regligious institution in Koryŏ was the Buddhist establishment. Philosophically it presented a broad spiritual spectrum that provided religious and intellectual stimulation to medieval Koreans. Economically and socially Buddhist institutions enjoyed prestige and influence in the kingdom. Wang Kŏn, the Koryŏ dynastic founder, soon after uniting the country acknowledged the power of Buddhist temples when he asserted that Buddhism was an important force fostering the life of the dynasty.[1] The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the relations of the Buddhist religion and its hierarchy with the new military leadership. The Ch'oe house and the Buddhist establishment had to accommodate their mutual interests in order for each to prosper, and in this process the Ch'oe house turned to and then cultivated intimate bonds with the politically weak Sŏn (Zen) Buddhist sect.

Early Koryŏ Buddhism

Buddhism during the early Koryŏ period centered around three sects: Kyo, Sŏn and Ch'ŏnt'ae. The largest and most popular sect among the ruling aristocrats was Kyo. The Kyo sect adhered to a wide variety of beliefs but the most revered school was the Hwaŏm (Hwa-yen - Flower Garland School), which believed that the universe was one integrated whole with each part organically connected to all other

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[1] KS 2:15a, KSC 1:46b-47a.

parts.[2] The Kyo sect, as epitomized in Hwaŏm statements, could never have wide mass appeal, for the religious practices prescribed by it for the attainment of salvation could be performed only by monks who devoted their lives to religion.[3] Because of the Kyo emphasis on sutras and scriptures, the illiterate populace would rarely have had the intellectual capability to comprehend the thought or the leisure to practice it. Its appeal was generally to the Koryŏ court and the other aristocrats of the age.

Sŏn Buddhism was a second sect that people practiced during the early Koryŏ period, although it never enjoyed the lavish support given to Kyo. Basically like its Zen counterpart in Japan, Sŏn was ascetically oriented and comprehensible without intense study.

The last sect to rise to prominence at this time was Ch'ŏnt'ae (T'ient'ai) Buddhism. Ch'ŏnt'ae first evolved in China where it espoused the goal of unifying the Buddhist world and establishing the supremacy of the Lotus Sutra over all other sutras.[4] This syncretic

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[2]Stanley Weinstein, "Imperial Patronage in the Formation of T'ang Buddhism," (hereafter cited as "Imperial Patronage") in Perspectives on the T'ang, ed. by Arthur F. Wright and Dennis Twitchett (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 301. See also Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 313-320.

[3]William Theodore de Bary, ed. Sources of Chinese Tradition, vol. I (hereafter cited as Chinese Tradition) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 288. Although Kyo Buddhism in intellectual terms appealed to the educated elite, this does not mean that the general population could not participate in Kyo ceremonies and ritual. Throughout this whole era Buddhism was gradually merging with Korean shamanistic folk beliefs bringing significant changes to Buddhist thought and broadening its appeal.

[4]Weinstein, "Imperial Patronage," p. 287.

expression was especially appealing to the royal Koryŏ monk Ŭich'ŏn who brought Ch'ŏnt'ae to the Korean peninsula during the eleventh century in the hopes of harmonizing the competing Kyo and Sŏn beliefs.[5] As it emphasized scripture and practice, Ch'ŏnt'ae, like the earlier Kyo sect, appealed basically to the educated and upper levels of society.

The Kyo sect established very close ties with the ruling elite and the court. Intellectually Kyo was attractive to them because of its rather involved sets of beliefs and philosophically Kyo did not shun ceremony and court atmosphere in general. The court personally supported a number of Buddhist temples, of which perhaps Hŭngwangsa is the most celebrated example.[6] The nearly constant stream of royal offspring who became monks further cemented the court's ties with the Kyo sect. Some princes left the court because they could not fulfill their own political aspirations, but through a prominent position as a cleric they could maintain respect and influence. Others left for purely religious purposes. The sons of Hyŏnjong, Munjong and Sukchong chose the clergy and became prominent leaders of the Buddhist establishment. The example of Ŭijong's brother Ch'unghŭi who became a monk at Hŭngwangsa should not be forgotten and neither should one overlook the role of several of Myŏngjong's sons, who as royal monks constantly interfered with court matters. These types of monks, whether at temples

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[5] Kim Yŏngsu, "Chogye sŏnjong e ch'wihayo," Chindan hakpo 9(1938), p. 147, and Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wollamsa," p. 32.

[6] A number of princes from the royal court became monks in charge of Hŭngwangsa; see below. The court also oversaw the construction of this temple. See KS 7:37a, KSC 4:62a, KS 8:31a.

for political or religious reasons, bound together the interests of the court and the temples. The royal family led in forging these links, but the aristocrats in general also established many similar ties. In the capital area alone over seventy separate Buddhist temples flourished, and even though not all belonged to the Kyo sect, the inference is that the ruling elite supported many. Kim Tonjung, for example, the son of Kim Pusik, aided by his brother, built Kwanyŏnsa near Kaegyŏng.[7] Looking at tomb inscriptions of established leaders, they often tell of sons who entered Kyo temples as monks.[8] Through these family ties with the Koryŏ aristocrats and court, the Kyo sect was potentially a very influential political force in the kingdom.

The prominence of the Buddhist establishment grew because of its economic affluence. Under the Koryŏ tax system, the clergy not only was immune from corvee and other tax duties, but also received specific yield allotments from land according to the chŏnsikwa land system. The court, powerful families and devout followers gave land to the temples bringing still more economic advantage. Individuals gave land for many reasons. Some thought such actions would bring them Buddha's blessings or even salvation; some hoped to secure economic benefits; others donated land to build temples in the memory of deceased family

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[7] KS 98:20a, KSC 11:37b.

[8] Two renowned clans during the early Koryŏ were the Haeju Ch'oes and Kyŏngwŏn Yis. The son of one Haeju Ch'oe Yong for example became a monk at the Kyo temple Honghosa, see CK vol. 1, p. 363. The son of Kyŏngwŏn Yi munhasijung Yi Kongsu became a monk at Ch'on'gwansa, see HK, p. 103. This temple also was affiliated with the Kyo sect, see TMS 68, vol. 6 pp. 605-606. Yi Chagyŏm also had ties with the Kyo temples, see Han'guksa vol. 7, p. 40.

members or for the repose of a former king; and still others offered land when they joined the priesthood.[9] By such generous grants, as well as by the temples' own active appropriation of land, Buddhist land holdings became very large,[10] and the Kyo sect became one of the richest landowners in the kingdom. Temple slaves or regular tenants would cultivate the land, but as all land was tax free, temples were able to amass large fortunes.[11] Some profit went to spread the word of Buddha still farther, while temples used part of this income to reap still greater economic benefits. Temples managed a large number of handicraft industries such as weaving, porcelain manufacturing and fermenting wines. They also lent money and grain and accumulated capital through high interest rates in return.[12] Individuals and families who had endowed or established temples were able to accrue these profits for themselves. They also were able to benefit from certain tax breaks and immunities associated with temples.[13] Through

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[9]Yu Kyosŏng, "Koryŏ sawŏn kyŏngje ŭi sŏngkyŏk," Pulgyohak nonmunjip (1959), pp. 608-610.

[10]Hyŏnhwasa, for example, in addition to its holdings was granted 1240 kyŏl of land in 1020. See KS 4:34a, KSC 3:40b. Also see Hatada Takashi, "Kōraichō ni okeru jiin keizai," (hereafter cited as "Jiin keizai") Shigakku zasshi, vol. 43, no. 5, p. 567. For a more complete discussion on kyŏl sizes see Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Land Tenure," footnote 19.

[11]For a study on temple slaves see Yi Chaech'ang, "Sawŏn nobi ko," Hwang Ŭidon..., pp. 251-261.

[12]Yu Kyosŏng, "Han'guk sanggongŏpsa," in Han'guk munhwasa taegye (Seoul: Korea University Press, 1965) vol. 2B, pp. 1038-1044. Yu in this study indicated that over a period of three years, temples collected interest at a rate of 100%.

[13]Hatada, "Jiin keizai," p. 568. Kenneth Ch'en in Buddhism in China describes the mechanics of this in the Chinese context.

its social, political and economic links, then, the Buddhist establishment was intimately tied in with the dynasty, and these two institutions worked closely to enhance their respective positions.

Buddhist Revolts in the Military Period

The Buddhist hierarchy cooperated with the established order and until the rise of the military in 1170 no prominent revolt was staged by monks. Then commencing in 1174 monk disturbances erupted and continued until after Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn came to power. In addition to the monk revolt in 1174, during Ch'unghŏn's twenty-three year rule there were four separate Buddhist-inspired attempts to overthrow the Ch'oe house.

Monk Revolts in the Military Period

Date	Temples involved	miscellaneous
1174	Chunggwangsa, Honghosa Kwibŏpsa, Honghwasa in Kaegyŏng	
1197	Hŭngwangsa in Kaegyŏng	Tu Kyŏngsŭng implicated
1203	Pusŏksa, Puinsa in Hŭngju Ssangamsa in Songsaenghyŏn	
1211	unclear but in Kaegyŏng	joined with eunuchs and Hŭijong in a plot to kill Ch'unghŏn
1217	Hŭngwangsa, Hongwŏnsa Kyŏngboksa, Wangnonsa, Surisa in Kaegyŏng	took advantage of a Khitan attack and tried to kill Ch'unghŏn

At least twelve temples participated in the disturbances against the military authorities during Myŏngjong's reign and Ch'unghŏn's rule. Of these twelve, eight have been conclusively associated with the Kyo

sect. The affiliation of the remaining four temples is unclear, but there is no evidence to indicate that they were not Kyo temples. Nor was any Sŏn or Ch'ŏnt'ae temple ever mentioned as opposing the new order.[14] Thus, the revolts appear to have been led by the Kyo sect, which had been disenchanted earlier with the leadership of Yi Ŭibang and other generals and now with Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn. The forces behind the revolt in Myŏngjong's reign were attributed to the military's attack on the Kyo sect's economic, social and political structure.[15] Ch'unghŏn's rule presented new challenges to the Buddhist establishment. Among these was the continued decline in the economic and political position of the court and its associate, the Kyo sect. Basically the later revolts are expressions of a power struggle between the Ch'oe rule and the Kyo establishment. If Ch'unghŏn were to stabilize his rule and assume effective command of the kingdom, he would have to settle this disaffection. He ultimately chose accommodation with the Buddhist hierarchy.

Within one month of coming to power, Ch'unghŏn launched his first attacks on the Buddhist structure, and especially the Kyo sect, through two of his ten proposals.[16] Ch'unghŏn was trying to sever the court's ties with the Buddhist hierarchy and to remove monks from state politics. He supplemented this reform appeal by forcing royal monks to return to their home temples.[17] He had seen the influence that

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[14]Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," p. 31.

[15]See Chapter II.

[16]For the contents of the proposals see Chapter II, pp. 96-97.

[17]KS 129:7a, KSC 13:42b.

Buddhist institutions and monks had exerted over kings and policy during Ŭijong's and Myŏngjong's reigns. He had also seen both of these monarchs neglect the state to patronize temples and priests. He concluded that Buddhist influences must be curtailed if the country were to be administered effectively. To guarantee his success Ch'unghŏn also attempted to curb the economic power of the Buddhist structure. He attacked the proliferation of temples around the kingdom that individuals had established as tax shelters.[18] And by this he was presenting a challenge to the economic and political base that the Buddhist temples had achieved during the early part of the kingdom. If he did not start to restrain the Buddhist hierarchy, it is quite possible that on the basis of its former ties and existing resources, it could still obstruct policy and threaten authority. And in fact as expressed in these revolts it tried to do just this. As has been seen repeatedly, Ch'unghŏn was building an order that allowed no competition with his authority. Institutions separate from his structure would be tolerated, but only if they accepted a subservient position vis-a-vis the Ch'oe house. By curbing part of the old power structure, Ch'unghŏn would also be able to realize more potential autonomy for himself. It was only natural that the monks would attempt to reject this policy through recourse to rebellion.

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[18] In proposal nine Ch'unghŏn said, "Ministers, generals, ranking officials and unreliable monks, without examining whether or not the topographical conditions were favorable, established Buddhist buildings and named them prayer halls. Injuring the earth's vital system, they produced calamity several times." Ch'unghŏn went on to add that these temples must be removed. Although he never claims that these temples or prayer halls were established for taxation benefits, the inference is that Ch'unghŏn was trying to check this abuse. See Chapter II.

Ch'oe Ties with the Buddhist Sects

Ch'unghŏn tempered his direct assaults on the Kyo sect with a measure of compromise. In 1197 he made overtures to the Kyo temple Hŭngwangsa and proposed to visit it.[19] U likewise sought an accommodation with the Kyo sect and especially Hŭngwangsa. In 1223, for example, U had eighteen yellow gold pagodas and a flower vase made and sent to this temple.[20] Such a generous gift demonstrates that the Ch'oe house was quite aware of Kyo power, and hoped that through a more conciliatory stance it might be able to win Kyo support or at least moderate its resistance. U also lent philosophical support to the Kyo sect and financed the reproduction of its scriptures. When the kingdom was beset with the Mongol attacks, the Kyo sect was summoned to use its influence on behalf of the kingdom. Through the reproduction of the Buddhist tripitika in the early thirteenth century, it was hoped that Buddha's favor would be won and the Mongol siege lifted. Financial support for this project could not have been raised without the assistance of the Ch'oe house. During this same period, the Kyo monk Kakhun wrote his masterpiece the Haedong kosŭngchŏn.[21] Although it was written on command of the king, undoubtedly Ch'oe house influence was behind this compilation.

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[19] KS 129:7a-b, KSC 13:44b-45a. See also Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," p. 30, footnote 84.

[20] KS 129:31a, KSC 15:31b.

[21] This particular work has been translated into English by Peter H. Lee, Lives of Eminent Korean Monks--The Haedong Kosŭng Chŏn (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

The Ch'oe house also turned to Sŏn Buddhism in its attempt to contain Kyo. Perhaps by throwing his support behind the Sŏn sect, the Kyo sect's leading philosophical antagonist, Ch'unghŏn thought he could weaken or counterbalance the rebellious Buddhist establishment. But this supposition should not obscure the fact that the Sŏn sect for centuries had had links with anti-establishment groups, and philosophically it had special appeal to the soldier. During the late Silla kingdom, both these elements can be seen in the ties Sŏn had with the regional strongmen who were undermining the power of the Kyŏngju nobles.[22]

Before Ch'unghŏn rose to power, interest in Sŏn Buddhism was intensifying as both anti-establishment forces and some military personnel turned to Sŏn. For example during Ŭijong's reign several of the leading families that had not allied themselves with the king and his advisers such as the Namp'yŏng Mun clan and Chŏngan Im clan had ties with Sŏn. At one time Ŭijong sent his mother Lady Im to Pojesa, one of the two leading Sŏn temples in the capital area. Mun Kukkyŏm's uncle, rather than participating in politics, elected to join the Sŏn clergy.[23] The fourth son of P'ap'yŏng Yun clan member Ŏni also entered a Sŏn temple.[24] These ties continued once the military rose to authority in 1170. Chŏng Chungbu in 1175 restored Pojesa and even had the king visit this Sŏn temple.[25] He also sponsored a number of Buddhist assemblies and appears

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[22]Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," p. 32.

[23]HK p. 151.

[24]HK p. 123.

[25]KS 128:8b, KSC 12:23b-24a.

to have been attracted to Sŏn philosophy.

Sŏn was also much more easily comprehensible to the less-educated. Although it was quite probable that at this time Buddhism enjoyed the devotion of people of all ranks in society, the common peasant depended much more on shamanistic folk pantheons than the Buddhist religion. Sŏn more than any Buddhist sect carried the potential of fulfilling the needs of the populace. Although not the exclusive property of the warrior, because of the simplicity of Sŏn and the emphasis on meditation as the way to salvation, military personnel were particularly attracted to this unpretentious, austere philosophy. Sansom, describing a nearly identical phenomenon in Japan at about the same time, states,

> The leading warriors were attracted by the Zen doctrine. It had a strong appeal because it did not elaborate on argument but upon inner enlightenment and conviction. In its pristine form it was not institutional. It had no scriptures, no sacred buildings, no ritual but only a strict self-discipline and the practice of meditation. For a thoughtful warrior, whose life always bordered on death, there was an attraction, even a persuasion, in the belief that truth comes like a flash of a sword as it cuts through the problem of existence. Any line of religious thought that helped a man to understand the nature of being without arduous literary studies was likely to attract the kind of warrior who felt that the greatest moments in life were the moments when death was nearest.[26]

This simplicity was undoubtedly appealing to Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and his associates. Sŏn monks being essentially meditative would also be less likely to interfere in secular affairs and to challenge Ch'oe authority. Thus politically, philosophically and institutionally, Sŏn was an ideal

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[26]George Sansom, A History of Japan to 1334 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), p. 429.

choice for Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn.

Under Ch'unghŏn's support a great revival in Sŏn thought occurred. Chinul (1158-1210), a Sŏn monk, had passed an examination for Buddhist clergy in 1182 and then after a time at Pojesa went to Chŏlla and started to reinvigorate Sŏn and especially the Chogye sect of Sŏn under Ch'oe auspicies. Chogye Sŏn, as reformed by Chinul, called for the need to understand before complete mastery, and stated this through the terms chŏnghye ssangsu (simultaneous cultivation of knowledge and meditation) and ton'ojŏmsu (first awaken the self suddenly, then cultivate the self). There was very little doctrine in Chinul's tenets. They were simple and easy for the common man and warrior to comprehend. Using these concepts as the basis of his thought, Chinul compiled his beliefs into several works. To Chinul and his disciples, Buddha is the mind, this same Buddha can be found in all people. Chinul did not invent these Buddhist concepts, rather his renown rests in his organization and transmission of Sŏn tenets.[27] Through Ch'oe patronage Chinul's work was continued and transmitted throughout the kingdom by other Sŏn monks. Without Ch'oe favor, Chinul's message could have easily been discarded.

The Ch'oe house sponsored Sŏn Buddhism in many ways. Both Ch'unghŏn and U sent their sons to study under Sŏn masters.[28] Ch'oe Hang who had once been a monk himself (Manjŏn) and studied under one

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[27]An Kyehyŏn, "Chogyejong kwa o'gyo yangjong," (hereafter cited as "Chogyejong") in Hanguksa vol. 7, p. 312.

[28]Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn sent one of his sons to study under Chŏnggak kuksa; see CK, vol. 1, pp. 576-577, and Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," p. 33. U sent two of his sons, Hang (Manjŏn) and Manjong to learn from Chin'gak kuksa; see CK, vol. 1, pp. 463-464, and KS 129:41b.

Chin'gak was a strong supporter. When a contemporary belittled Buddhism, Hang responded by banishing him.[29] The Ch'oe leaders also had Sŏn temples constructed. In 1211 Ch'angboksa was rebuilt and at the same time Taeansa was restored.[30] In 1245 U had a Sŏn temple constructed on Kanghwa Island.[31] Under their auspicies the Chogye (modern Songgwang) mountain area in south Chŏlla prospered as a Sŏn retreat far from the politics of the capital.

Many of the leaders of the Sŏn Chogye sect starting with Chinul were tied to the Ch'oe house, and by supporting these monks the Ch'oe house was able to consolidate its alliance with the Sŏn sect. The Ch'oe house sought to elevate Sŏn masters and on one occasion through the recommendation of Ch'unghŏn, the monk Chonggak kuksa was appointed wangsa (royal tutor).[32] The Ch'oe leaders sent their mun'gaek to guard some of the more esteemed clerics,[33] and even asked these monks to present lectures on Chogye topics to instruct the mun'gaek.[34] U himself corresponded with Chinul's disciple Chin'gak, discussing Buddhist thought and laws.[35] He also requested Chin'gak to come to the capital to lecture, and later, when Chin'gak became ill, U sent doctors to offer

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[29]Kim Ku, Chip'ojip, in Koryŏ myŏnghyŏnjip, 1:1b.

[30]Ch'angboksa's restoration is mentioned in TYS 25:8b. Taeansa's restoration is noted by An Kyehyŏn in "Chogyejong," p. 312.

[31]TMS vol. 9, pp. 577-578, and Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," p. 36.

[32]An Kyehyŏn, "Chogyejong," p. 314.

[33]CK, vol. 1, pp. 576-577.

[34]CK, vol. 1, p. 593.

[35]Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," p. 34.

medical treatment to this revered monk.[36]

Through Ch'oe endorsement Sŏn was becoming the major Buddhist sect in the kingdom. The importance of this sect is reconfirmed in the contents of a tomb inscription recently discovered at Wŏllamsa temple in the Chogye area.[37] Written to commemorate the Sŏn monk Chin'gak, the tablet, now worn by age, seems to have been composed by Yi Kyubo but not finished until 1250 when Ch'oe Cha, a renowned poet and civil official, completed the project. On the tablet, after a brief explanation of how and why the inscription was made, there is a long list of the men and women associated with Chin'gak who sponsored the memorial. More than one hundred names are inscribed on the plaque, and of this number there were six nobles, twenty-three high ranking ministers, thirty-one third p'um rank officials, forty-one officials between the fourth and sixth p'um rank and eight people who were either princesses or wives of personages. Through Ch'oe support, as this tablet testifies, nearly all prominent officials of the dynasty and many writers and Confucian scholars such as Ch'oe Cha and Yi Kyubo who helped write this and similar inscriptions had an affiliation with Sŏn.[38] Kyo no longer had a monopoly over the patronage of the ruling elite. Sŏn, too, was widely followed among the civilian and military leadership of the kingdom.

Ch'oe authority eroded the political power especially of Kyo Buddhism and its ties with the court by careful regulation of all levels

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[36] CK, vol. I, p. 463-464.

[37] See Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa."

[38] Min Hyŏn'gu, "Wŏllamsa," especially p. 20.

of activity. The Chogye monks moreover pursued a much less active involvement in secular affairs than their earlier Kyo counterparts. This can be seen not only in their philosophical outlook but also in their actual physical establishment. Kyo temples were often around towns and especially centered in the Kaegyŏng area. Chogye Buddhism, however, was making its center far from the capital, aloof from court politics, in the mountains of South Chŏlla. Although there had been considerable Kyo Buddhist opposition for the first twenty years of Ch'oe rule, it was effectively stilled, and after this time there was little evidence to indicate further Buddhist-inspired resistance. Monks instead joined armies to defend against foreign invasions and were quite effective in fighting against the Khitans.[39]

Economic Aspects

Even though the Ch'oe house restrained the political influence of the temples, the economic power of Buddhism seems to have been sustained and even linked to the Ch'oe family. Ch'unghŏn in his proposals had already requested to limit the size and number of temples. Although there is no indication of what happened to the confiscated temple lands, or even the economic structure of many of these well endowed temples, it is probable that the Ch'oe house was careful to receive its share of profits. No figures are available on the commercial enterprises and land sizes of the temples at this period

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[39] KS 81:15a, KSC 14:44a-b, KS 22:9b, KSC 15:4a-b, KS 22:11a-b, KSC 15:7a.

either,[40] but both Ch'oe Hang (Manjŏn) and his brother Manjong made considerable economic gains as monks. Hang was originally in charge of a monastery in Chindo, an island off South Chŏlla province. The Koryŏ histories relate how both Manjong and Hang, by relying on their family power, assembled hoodlum monks to infiltrate the area temples. Because of the heavy extractions and levies that they forced on the people, their notoriety spread. Other monks, claiming falsely to be their disciples, extracted similar fees from the surrounding areas.[41] Hang is the same person who was noted earlier for studying under one of the Chogye masters. This economic activity causes one to question the sincerity of his Buddhist beliefs. The important point, however, is that Buddhist institutions were still serving an economic function, and it was through an affiliation with temples that the Ch'oe house and other groups were able to acquire tax benefits and funds.[42]

The Ch'oe house, through its endeavors to restrain and control the Kyo Buddhist establishment, helped foster and spread the Sŏn sect.

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[40] By the end of the Koryŏ dynasty it is clear that Buddhist temples were sizeable and this growth in part caused the new dynastic founder Yi Sŏnggye to curtail the influence of the Buddhist establishment. T'ongdosa in 1328 covered some 47,000 paces and included 12 subordinate villages. See Takeda Yukio, "T'ongdosa," Toyoshi kenkyū, vol. 25, no. 1, p. 71.

[41] KS 129:41b-42a, KSC 16:28b-29b.

[42] In the early years of the Koryŏ dynasty an examination for admission into the Buddhist clergy was instituted. The Ch'oe house's use of these examinations and its potential to manipulate the general Buddhist hierarchy have not been considered because of the lack of adequate research materials. Undoubtedly the Ch'oe leaders would seek to utilize these aspects if it were feasible. For a brief discussion of these examinations see Kim Yŏngsu, "O'gyo yangjong e taehayŏ," Chindan hakpo, 8(1937), p. 80.

Kyo and Ch'ŏnt'ae Buddhism did not disappear, but the emphasis and focus of Koryŏ Buddhism shifted to the Ch'oe-supported Sŏn sect. The Ch'oe house looked to Sŏn for it could be used politically as an ally and as a doctrine to compete with Kyo. By dividing the Buddhist heirarchy, Ch'unghŏn would be able to control it more effectively. Furthermore, the institutional nature of Sŏn which stressed aloof meditation rather than discourse and activity, would compel Sŏn monks to renounce court politics and not to meddle in secular affairs. Philosophically this simple yet deeply asthetic thought also appealed to Ch'unghŏn and his descendants for it offered an intelligible path to salvation. The Ch'oe leaders were careful not to overemphasize Sŏn, and once Kyo opposition had been tempered, they balanced their patronage for Sŏn by also lending support to Kyo. Thus, through stringent regulation, compromise and fiscal aid, the Ch'oe house successfully tamed one of the most autonomous forces challenging its order, and then amalgamated Buddhist influence into its power structure. The benefits the Ch'oe house and Koryŏ reaped were many. Ch'oe received respect and support in its association especially with the Sŏn sect. As the greatest benefactor of Sŏn, it could not help but win the prayers and blessings of a growing Buddhist organization. This type of support is always important in a traditional society where secular and sacred affairs are closely linked. Koryŏ received a new and invigorated Buddhist sect offering concepts that were both explicable and appealing to a much wider group of people than earlier Buddhist beliefs. Under Ch'oe leadership as Buddhism became a much more popular religion, its political involvement faded.

CHAPTER VII

CH'OE HOUSE FINANCES

Military might and Confucian legitimacy were the mainstays of Ch'oe rule, but sound economic policy was one key to its success. The Ch'oe house required ample funds to meet administrative expenses, provide payments and salaries to its personnel, and supply domestic needs. To control the dynasty and guarantee its own authority in the kingdom, the Ch'oe house needed to have command over the purse strings of the state. In this chapter, the means by which Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and his descendants acquired the necessary financial resources to maintain their rule will be examined. The Ch'oe house not only resorted to traditional sources of income but also innovated and searched for new ways to secure revenue. In the end the Ch'oe house brought significant changes to the entire dynastic fiscal structure by taking direct control over specific financial systems and not working through dynastic organs. To assess these changes, this chapter first will discuss the Koryŏ land system, the dynastic fiscal structure and traditional means available to individuals to profit. Then it will consider Ch'oe fiscal policy.

Koryŏ Land System

Land was the keystone to Koryŏ finances. Rents and taxes from the land provided stipends for dynastic leaders and covered costs of daily administration. Profits from the land also permitted the royal family the necessary funds to continue Koryŏ's aristocratic court life and was the basis of wealth for many powerful clans.

Koryŏ law recognized two basic types of land, kongjŏn and sajŏn, which have been rendered into modern English as "public land" and "private land" respectively. Kongjŏn included land owned or controlled by the court whereas sajŏn meant most other lands such as individually inherited land and land used to provide government stipends.[1] Taxes and rents varied according to the land classification with the tiller of kongjŏn generally able to retain more of his produce than the man who cultivated sajŏn. A peasant on kongjŏn would give one-fourth of the crop as cho (rents) to the state for distribution to the appropriate benefactors while the tiller of sajŏn would send one half the crop as cho. Of this the state would retain 5 to 7.5 sung from each kyŏl of land as se (tax), and give the remainder to the actual holder of the yield rights.[2] The state used the se and cho from the land to pay for its officials and expenses calling this process the chŏnsikwa. According to the chŏnsikwa system all officials of the state, civilian administrators, clerks, military officers, soldiers and even monks, received rights to rents (cho) from a specified amount of land during their tenure of office.[3] The government worker would never see the actual property; rather the state only guaranteed him a percentage of the yield for a specified size of land. The yield would vary yearly depending upon the productivity of the harvest. This system put a tremendous burden on the dynastic machinery but during the early Koryŏ

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[1] Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Land Tenure," p. 57.

[2] One sung equals 1¼ pounds.

[3] In addition to this form of payment, officials also received a fixed stipend under another system. See note 8.

it administered the system justly. Under the chŏnsikwa system, yields reserved for individuals came from sajŏn. For example kuninjŏn was land that provided soldiers with their allotments and chikchŏn was used for officials. Because they received cho from sajŏn, these officials were acquiring nearly half the produce of the land as their allotments. Land yields granted to the court for its expenses came from plots called naejang and land yields made to government offices to defray administrative costs came from land referred to as konghaejŏn. Because these were attached to the state rather than individuals, the histories called them kongjŏn. In theory all land that the chŏnsikwa regulated was under the ultimate jurisdiction of the state and the yield rights to this land could not be inherited. These divisions in the Koryŏ land system and the tax and rent scales are reflected in the chart below.

THE KORYŎ LAND SYSTEM

	inheritable land	sajŏn (inheritable)	chŏnsikwa: sajŏn (non transferable)	chŏnsikwa: kongjŏn	other kongjŏn	sigup
	estates; minjŏn (peoples' land); temples' land	kongumjŏn; haninjŏn; kubunjŏn	pyolsajŏn (monks' land); chŏnghojŏn; kuninjŏn; chikchŏn	naejang; konghaejŏn	chang; ch'o	
se (taxes):	¼ crop	5 to 7.5 of cho				unclear see text
cho (rents):	none	½ crop as cho				

There was much land in the dynasty that existed outside of the chŏnsikwa, which also was either kongjŏn or sajŏn. The largest landholder of the Koryŏ kingdom was the court. In addition to naejang and other grants given to it under the chŏnsikwa, the royal house also controlled scattered small parcels of land as well as large estates called chang and ch'ŏ. Both the chang and ch'ŏ were directly subordinant to the court giving their produce to the king.[4] These, too, were considered kongjŏn.

Sajŏn existing apart from the chŏnsikwa contained many varieties and its most prominent characteristic was that unlike sajŏn under the chŏnsikwa, yield rights to this sajŏn could be inherited. A few of the many types of yield rights that were reserved for officials included kongŭmjŏn (for high ranking officials), haninjŏn (for reserve officers) and kubunjŏn (for retired soldiers).[5] Under this category the state gave yield rights to families of aged or deceased officials to guarantee their subsistence.

Monastery land, which was held in perpetuity by temples, peasant or people's land (minjŏn) and estate land are all considered to be another type of land category. Minjŏn were small plots of land owned and cultivated by peasants which had been inherited or purchased. These lands could be exchanged among the peasants or sold to any interested

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[4]Hatada Takashi, "Kōrai jidai no ōshitsu no shōen," (hereafter cited as "Shoen") Rekishigaku kenkyū, 246(Oct., 1960) and Chōsen, p. 78. In this article Hatada does not present a satisfactory distinction between chang and ch'ŏ.

[5]See Yi Usŏng, "Hanin, paekchŏng ŭi sin haesŏk," Yŏksa hakpo, no. 19 (Dec., 1962) pp. 53-89, "Koryŏ ŭi yŏng'ŏpchŏn," Yŏksa hakpo, no. 28 (Sept., 1965) pp. 1-23.

buyer.[6] Since minjŏn was freely owned with no chŏnsikwa grantee collecting cho, a tax-rent of one fourth the produce had to be paid to the state.[7] The same seems to be the case with estate and temple land. An additional form of land is the sigŭp (fief), but this is of sufficient importance to warrant a separate and more lengthy discussion below.

Tax System

Taxes (se) from the land as well as the rents (cho) from fields were an important source of wealth for both individuals and the state.

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[6]Kang Chinch'ŏl "Land Tenure," p. 57-58.

[7]Hatada, offering a slightly different analysis of the land system, has divided Koryŏ public land into three categories: royal land, government office land, and minjŏn. The latter is land given to people in return for a wide variety of services rendered to the country. See "Kōrai no koden," (hereafter cited as "Koden") Shigaku zasshi, vol. 77, no. 4 (1969), and in Chōsen. The court as the largest landholder controlled huge tracts of public land from which it could collect rents to pay for royal expenses. Government office land included land granted to central and regional administrators to meet operating costs as well as land granted under the chŏnsikwa to the ranking civil and military officials. Temples and royal offices also received rents from specified lands in this second category. The minjŏn, which according to Hatada was the most common type of public land, was given to commoners who performed definite service for the kingdom. Included in this category is kuninjŏn, kiinjŏn, and regular minjŏn. This latter form of minjŏn was granted to farmers for the sole purpose of collecting tax rents to finance state administration. See "Kōrai no minden ni tsuite," (hereafter cited as "Minden") Chōsen gakuhō, vol. 48 (1968) and in Chōsen. Besides Hatada's research there have been other studies on different aspects of the land system. Yi Kibaek in "Military Tradition," p. 16 and in Pyŏngjesa yŏn'gu, pp. 144-152 provides an interesting example of how the land system worked in reference to kuninjŏn. Yi explains that in return for their military service, each military family was allotted military land. Since the soldiers were stationed in the capital, each soldier's land was cultivated by two yangho (supporting families) whose land tax was paid to the soldier. With this income the soldier supported his family and equipped himself with food, clothing, and the necessary weapons. See also Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Koryŏ ch'ogi ŭi kuninjŏn," Sungmyŏng yŏjadae nonmunjip, no. 3 (May, 1963), pp. 131-183.

The state would use its tax revenues to cover administrative costs and salaries for officials.[8] The average peasant, in addition to paying a tax on his land, was responsible for a corvee tax through his own labor and an annual tribute or local products tax. These taxes were levied according to one's status and often high government officials were exempt while the common peasant bore the major burden of the payment. The corvee was exacted in a number of ways, but the most common form was through the mobilization of the p'umgun (military corps). Technically a sub-unit of the provincial army, the p'umgun was a labor force that was under the direction of either the central government or local functionaries. Most peasants belonged to this organization.[9] The annual tribute tax was a tax placed on geographic areas to cover general expenses. This levy forced each specified district to send a prescribed amount of the products locally produced to the capital. Certain areas would ship silver or salt, others might be responsible for supplying textiles, silk or horses.[10] Through this the state could acquire more revenue as well as exercise some control over production through taxation. There were other miscellaneous levies that were administered on commodities that might otherwise have escaped state regulation. The

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[8] An elaborate stipend scale (nokpong) evolved early in the dynasty providing most central and regional officials with a specified salary based on the recipient's rank and usually paid in rice. See Yi Hŭidŏk, "Nokpong,". The stipend system will be discussed in greater detail at the end of this chapter.

[9] Yi Kibaek, "Military Tradition," pp. 19-20, and Koryŏ chuhyŏngun ko," in Pyŏngjesa yŏn'gu, p. 221.

[10] Imabori Seiji , "Kōrai hueki kōkaku," Shakai keizai shigaku, vol. 9, no. 3-5 (1938), pp. 474-478.

dynasty applied taxes to timber, fish, and commerce, and even assessed a type of tax on government offices.[11] In times of peace, the tax structure operated efficiently, providing the kingdom with an adequate income to develop one of the most advanced civilizations of its age.

The government was able to profit from levies on industries and people, and it also was able to accumulate considerable income from foreign trade. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Koryŏ had a flourishing trade with Sung China and later Chin China.[12] This trade was generally carried out under the guise of official tribute relations which called for the exchange of gifts between the countries involved. Accompanying these missions went many men who joined with the sole purpose of trading products on an unofficial level. Besides this type of official and unofficial trade, general traders handled considerable commerce. The histories reveal that merchants from all over the Asian world visited Koryŏ ports bringing their local products in exchange for Korean paper, silver, ginseng or textiles.[13] Merchants also traveled by foot and the northern border towns of Ŭiju and Chŏngju had bustling markets. The profits seem ultimately to have reached the court. The Koryŏsa states,

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[11] Ibid pp. 477-481. In 1250, for example, Ch'oe Hang reduced boat and fish taxes in Kumju and Hongju, see KS 129:44a, KSC 16:39b. In 1258 fees placed on government functionaries in Cheju were removed, see KSC 17:52a.

[12] See Kim Sanggi, "Yŏsong muyŏk sogo," (hereafter cited as "Muyŏk") Chindan hakpo, 7(1937), pp. 1-44, Yi Yongbom, "Yŏdan muyŏk ko," Tongguk sahak, 3(Dec., 1955), pp. 26-58, and Yu Kyosŏng, "Han'guk sanggongŏpsa," in Han'guk munhwasa taegye, vol. 2, p. 1057.

[13] Kim Sanggi, "Muyŏk," pp. 33-34.

> In Ŭijong's time, of all that Chin presented in thread, silk and other things, half went into the Naebu (Palace Treasury) for royal use and half went to the Taebu (State Treasury) to provide expenses. When the King (Myŏngjong) ascended the throne, all went to the Naebu.[14]

This is clear evidence that the court benefited from the tribute exchanges, and it also profited from a constant flow of gifts presented by unofficial traders.

Other Sources of State and Individual Income

Officials, while occasionally taking advantage of their government office to reap profits from tribute exchanges and gifts received while in office, generally obtained an adequate income from their assigned cho under the chŏnsikwa as well as a set income in rice from stipends. In addition to these sources was the sigŭp. The granting of a sigŭp meant that the state gave the recipient "the control of a fixed territory--often an administrative district--or a fixed number of households within that territory. In concrete terms this meant the levy of a land tax and a tribute of local products as well as the imposition of labor service requirements."[15] Sigŭp holders, receiving not only land rents but also the produce of the population, exercised much greater control over these specified lands and thus had a greater chance for enrichment. Because of its unique character, sigŭp cannot be classified either as kongjŏn or sajŏn, but rather, as reflected in the land chart, warrants its own separate category.

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[14] KS 20:18b, KSC 13:5b-6a.

[15] Kang Chinch'ŏl "Land Tenure," p. 47.

Sigŭp went to a variety of people for many different reasons. The early Silla rulers incorporated many tribal leaders into their kingdom through sigŭp grants. For example, Kim Kuhae, the king of Kumgwŏn Kaya, received his former territory Kimhae as his sigŭp when he supported the Silla kingdom, and the Koryŏ dynasty continued the tradition of giving sigŭp to important men. Wang Kŏn rewarded the last Silla king Kim Pu with Kyŏngju as his own personal sigŭp, and other early Koryŏ kings also granted sigŭp to personages in an effort to gain their support to the court. Furthermore the Koryŏ kings all received their kingdom as a sigŭp from the Chinese emperors. Sigŭp also went to members of the royal family and Koryŏ nobles, and enfeoffment to ranks such as hu (duke) or kong (marquis) often accompanied the sigŭp grant. The size of the sigŭp then depended on the rank of the grantee with the hu receiving a sigŭp of 3000 households and the kong receiving a 1000 household sigŭp.[16] Accompanying the sigŭp and enfeoffment was the establishment of a pu (administration). The pu, although often honorary, usually employed some thirty individuals to oversee administrative details and manage the sigŭp as well as the noble's affairs.[17]

One of the problems in understanding the sigŭp is that while some were real grants others were fictive. The latter were often presented merely as an honor to demonstrate a man's importance in the dynastic structure or as a reward for service, and in this case the accompanying pu had little real importance. For example, Yi Chagyŏm received a sigŭp

[16] KS 77:44a-b, and Kang "T'ojijedosa," pp. 1274-1275.

[17] KS 77:22b-23a

of 8000 households with a real value of 2000.[18] The state gave the larger figure of 8000 to reflect the eminence of the grantee, but the real figure of 2000 indicated the size and value of his holding. Kim Pusik received a similar grant of 1000 households with a real size of 400 households.[19] Members of the royal family received similar sigŭp. P'yŏngyanggong, the brother of Munjong, had a sigŭp of 2000 households with a real value of 300, and Sukchong's brother, Chosŏn'gong, acquired a sigŭp of 5000 households and a real value of 500.[20] The recipient of the real sigŭp controlled a truly generous grant.[21] But generally with the development and efficient operation of the chŏnsikwa, individuals didn't need or recive sigŭp and thus this system, with the exception of grants to the royal family, was rarely used during most of the tenth and eleventh century.

Two additional sources of financial benefits for Koryŏ personages were slaves and endowed temples. The function and value of slaves has been discussed. As personal servants they were invaluable in extending their master's interests and protecting his landholdings. They were also an inexpensive form of labor. Individuals, as discussed in the previous chapter, also could use temples to increase their financial

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[18] KS 127:12a-13a.

[19] KS 98:19a.

[20] KS 90:6b, 18a.

[21] There are no exact figures to indicate how the profits from the sigŭp were divided. In China, however, one third of the produce was sent to the state while the holder of the sigŭp received the remaining two thirds. See Ha Hyŏn'gang, "Koryŏ sigŭp ko," (hereafter cited as "Sigŭp ko") Yŏksa hakpo, 26 (Jan., 1965), p. 125, and Niida Noboru "Tōdai no hōshaku oyobi shokuhōsei," (The enfeoffment and sigŭp of T'ang) Tōhō gakuhō, vol. 10, no. 1 (1939), pp. 1-64.

strength. When officials established temples, religious affirmations were often a screen for economic goals. If a man granted his land to a temple, these lands could enjoy a tax free status. To maintain control over these lands, the granting family would appoint an administrator of the temple property making the temple administration subservient to the donor. The temple, with large tracts of land and a modicum of capital, could reinvest its wealth, realizing huge profits from money lending and other endeavors. In Japan, temples and their subordinate shoen often grew in this way,[22] and the potential was present in Korea.

By the early twelfth century the operation of the dynastic fiscal structure was in trouble and problems were especially acute in the land system. Nearly every attempt to enforce a broad land system failed in the end. A program, such as the chŏnsikwa, was so expansive that its complete enforcement was nearly impossible. Bureaucratic inertia and inefficiency was another debilitating influence which eventually contributed to the downfall of most land systems. Perhaps the biggest defect in any dynastic land system rests in the fact that the very men who were to enforce it found the land system in direct conflict with their own goals and needs. Most officials wanted to provide enough funds to support their families once they died. One of the easiest ways to secure this was through inheritance of the land. The very fact of inheriting land was in conflict with most land systems. Once land was inherited and private land, free from state control, abounded, the

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[22] See for example Elizabeth Sato, "The Early Development of the Shoen," in Medieval Japan, ed. by John W. Hall and Jeffrey P. Mass (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 91-108.

government had less land to support its officials and administration and maintain its land system. The Koryŏ kingdom, like many states around the world before and after, was not immune to these problems. Large private estates already appeared by the early 1100's and rich aristocrats at this time embarked on a policy of accumulating rents. The severity of their rent demands forced many farmers to abandon their relatively free status and become tenants on estates.[23] Local functionaries joined with the civilian officials in their land seizures incurring peasant problems and discontent.[24] Large tracts of royal land such as naejang and government office land (konghaejŏn) disappeared or were absorbed into common people's land (minjŏn).[25] After years of disuse the state again granted sigŭp to individuals during Injong's reign. The once elaborate chŏnsikwa was becoming increasingly ineffective as a means of standardizing salaries and dividing land rents. It was, in part, out of these inequities that the military and Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn came to establish their own systems.

Ch'oe Financial Needs

When Ch'unghŏn came to power in 1196 he had inherited an economic structure that was quite unstable. The court was almost without funds. Eleven years earlier in 1185, the Koryŏsa relates that the royal granary was nearly empty even though it was receiving all the

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[23]Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Land Tenure," pp. 61-62.

[24]Kang Chinch'ŏl, "T'ojijedosa," p. 1339.

[25]Hatada Takashi, "Koden," p. 239.

tribute presented from foreign exchanges.[26] In the next year, with the dynastic granary again drained, the kingdom was forced to borrow gold and cloth to provide salaries.[27] As state finances deteriorated, individuals continued to expand their private land holdings rapidly. In doing this some used slaves, others relied on dynastic grants or merely appropriated property.[28] Ch'unghŏn had to bring stability to the kingdom, otherwise he, too, conceivably would meet the same fate as his predecessors. And one of the most urgent challenges was to restore fiscal solvency. By resolving the current financial crisis, Ch'unghŏn would be able to alleviate some of the burdens confronting the peasants and win their support. Decisive and successful fiscal policy would also assure Ch'unghŏn of adequate funds to support the dynasty and his own private structure.

Specifically Ch'unghŏn needed funds to pay the officials in the government. He could rely on the chŏnsikwa, inheritable sajŏn and the stipend system to cover these salary demands. He also needed ample finances to cover public administrative costs, and could look again to the chŏnsikwa, other public land allotments (kongjŏn), and revenue from taxation. In addition Ch'unghŏn had to raise funds to cover his own personal expenses. He required money to pay his loyal followers, his mun'gaek, and other personal attendants. He also had his own administrative costs and financial wants to bolster his autonomy and

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[26] KS 20:18b, KSC 13:5b-6a.

[27] KSC 13:15a.

[28] See for example Chapter II p. 97. Another example of people grabbing land is when Yi Chunch'ang was slandered for stealing land from a youth in 1183. KS 100:25b-26a, KSC 12:56a-b.

authority. Here Ch'unghŏn turned to the chŏnsikwa using both kongjŏn and sajŏn for his own personal advantage. By holding dynastic offices he was eligible to receive a fixed stipend under the nokpong system and chikchŏn under the chŏnsikwa. As these sources were regulated according to one's government rank, and insufficient to cover the myriad costs of the Ch'oe house, Ch'unghŏn also had to turn to other sources to supplement his income. By gaining control over large tracts of inheritable land and organizing estates, Ch'unghŏn had a dependable source of income, and the sigŭp was another possible source. Investing in temple projects, the ownership of slaves and trade have been additional means to augment one's finances which were available to Ch'unghŏn. In order to utilize these various sources of income, Ch'unghŏn needed first to bring stability to the country and to revitalize both the land system and tax structure. Ch'unghŏn's endeavors to pacify slave and peasant discontent and thus ensure tranquility in the kingdom have been examined; the role of finances in guaranteeing the success of his rule will be discussed here.

Ch'oe Fiscai Policy: Land

The key to Koryŏ finances rested in the land. In theory, by restoring the land system, peasants would be settled with their own land to till. This accomplished, taxes could be then paid to the government to cover salaries and expenses, and rents could be paid to officials holding collection rights under the chŏnsikwa. Ch'unghŏn started to adopt this order, but the flaw in this scheme rested in the fact that the Ch'oe house had very specific needs distinct from those of the

dynasty. Ch'unghŏn needed to revitalize the chŏnsikwa to pay officials, but he also needed to expand his own private holdings to cover his burgeoning expenses. The net result was that the Ch'oe house pursued a diverse, somewhat conflicting policy that can best be understood only from the vantage of the Ch'oe leadership.

One of the first moves that Ch'unghŏn initiated after he assassinated Yi Ŭimin was to call for the resuscitation of the dynastic land system. In article three of his ten point proposal for reform, Ch'unghŏn stated,

> Under the former king's system ... those in power were very greedy and grabbed public and private land to increase their holdings. The property of very rich families crisscrossed the chu and kun, and caused the nation's taxes to be reduced... Only your majesty can decree that officials should investigate documents and that all land found to be illegally taken should be returned to its original(form).[29]

Ch'unghŏn realized that the dynastic land system was the foundation of the kingdom's finances. By enforcing the chŏnsikwa, Ch'unghŏn could have funds to support the dynastic bureaucracy, and with the officialdom well paid, he could hope for their good will. Furthermore, by restoring the former land system he could curtail large estates and return land to the peasants, thus moderating their resistance. And finally by breaking up large estates he would be eliminating the economic power of potential opponents to his regime. Through a sound

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[29] KS 129:5a, KSC 13:41a.

land policy, Ch'unghŏn could guarantee his authority.[30]

Ch'unghŏn supplemented his call for a reinvigorated land system with the confiscations of the estates of his opponents. On coming to power Ch'unghŏn purged a number of people from the government and curtailed the power of many unreliable officials. With Yi Ŭimin's execution, for example, Ch'unghŏn dismantled Yi's land and power structure in Kyŏngju and this undoubtedly meant much of his land reverted to the state. The total amount of land confiscated from all purged officials and the dispersal of this land is not recorded, but part of it conceivably went to the state to strengthen the chŏnsikwa.

There were limits to Ch'unghŏn's questionable altruism, however, for in conjunction with the revitalization of the dynastic land system, Ch'unghŏn also sought to assure his own fiscal security. Although he controlled collection rights under the chŏnsikwa from the offices he held, he could personally profit much more if he were able to acquire inheritable sajŏn and minjŏn. Through the control of especially minjŏn a strong official, from the accumulation of rents, could secure himself as a power financially independent of the court and the dynastic land system. Ch'unghŏn, by careful plans and by using rents from land as one of the financial foundations of his superstructure, was able to erect such an autonomous economic system. He also tried to expand his control over other types of fields and the court unknowingly aided Ch'unghŏn in this effort when it granted, for example, one hundred kyŏl

[30] Kang Chinch'ŏl in "T'ojijedosa," p. 1342 claims Ch'unghŏn's reforms were merely a disguise to enable himself to gain more power. While this is partly true, it should not obscure the fact that by restoring the dynastic institutions and strengthening the bureaucracy, Ch'unghŏn could also build his position.

of royal estate land to Ch'unghŏn in 1215.[31] Royal estate land was public land and thus Ch'unghŏn was also able to acquire larger profits from this type of transaction.[32] While one hundred kyŏl is a rather small allotment, in the future, if Ch'unghŏn were to receive similar grants, as he probably did, the opportunity for gain would be great. Ch'unghŏn, in addition to grants such as this, was able to enlarge his holdings through other means as well. He took advantage of his kongŭmjŏn privilege, and like many other powerful individuals of the twelfth century, seized land at will. After his death the histories mention, "Ch'oe U, because his father Ch'unghŏn seized public and private land and tenants, in each case he returned the land and tenants."[33]

Ch'unghŏn's descendants inherited this order but made modifications. Although Ch'oe supporters received public offices and the accompanying rights under the chŏnsikwa and nokpong systems, the Ch'oe house had a continuing need for funds to reward loyal followers and individuals who had not received a government post. For example, in 1228 U distributed some two hundred kyŏl of his private fields to various military officers in order to win their support.[34] Two hundred kyŏl is not a large tract of land, but this entry is a good example of how U used land distributions to win support and repay his followers. From these records it

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[31] KSC 14:19a.

[32] Konghaejŏn and kongjŏn in general were more profitable to control. Unlike sajŏn under the chŏnsikwa, there was no limitation on the amount of kongjŏn one could control.

[33] KS 129:28b, KSC 15:23b.

[34] KS 129:34b, KSC 13:42b-43a.

appears that U was quite confident of his power and willing to release land when it was politically expedient. He clearly had sufficient land to support his own needs and was secure enough to give private land away. Unfortunately no exact accounting of his holdings is recorded, but judging from the offices held and the expenses he incurred to maintain large private forces and retainers and perform as de facto ruler, U must have controlled extensive property. His descendants Ch'oe Hang and Ŭi also continued to amass large holdings and when the Ch'oe house was confronted with the constant Mongol invasions, it even sought to place land on Kanghwa Island under its direct control. In 1257, for example, three thousand kyŏl of Kanghwa land was granted to Ŭi.[35]

The Ch'oe family was not alone in enlarging its estates and land parcels through chŏnsikwa allotments, grants from the court and forceful seizures. The dynastic sources report that one hyŏllyong (magistrate) Chŏn Sungu resented Supreme General Kim Hyŏnbo for Kim had enlarged his fields through extortion. Chŏn confiscated Kim's land rents and entered them in the government treasury.[36] This passage is significant for it reveals that men--like Kim Hyŏnbo--were using diverse methods to increase their land holdings. And in reaction to these types of acts, other officials might have been trying to maintain the integrity of the land system. Although Ch'oe U later overruled the case, Chŏn had perhaps intended to restrain the activities of men like Kim. The magistrate (hyŏllyong) seems to have been commissioned with

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[35] KSC 17:32a.

[36] KS 129:35a-b, KSC 15:46a-b.

overseeing the entire land rent system, for it was his office that collected rents and sent them to the Ministry of Revenue. The state then delivered them to their proper recipients.

It is difficult to analyze the role of the court in these proceedings. The royal family was traditionally the largest landholder in the country and although there are records that indicate that the court gave land to the Ch'oe house and probably other powerful figures,[37] they also retained holdings for their own use. To supplement their finances at this time the naejang (royal estate residence) was one source of funds,[38] and the previously mentioned ch'ŏ (royal estate) appears for the first time in 1226.[39] Although these sources of wealth might have bolstered royal finances, the court does not seem to have had the commanding hand in finances vis a vis the Ch'oe house. In 1257 for example, when Ch'oe Ŭi received three thousand kyŏl of Kanghwa land, the state granary received the smaller allotment of two thousand kyŏl. The royal clansmen and leading ministers took the remaining land along the rivers and sea.[40] The court seems to have played a very minor role in this land division and what is more obvious is that the court, with its functions curtailed, needed fewer funds and resources, while the Ch'oe house, as the de facto government, required much land to

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[37]The court for example presented Ch'unghŏn with 100 kyŏl of land, KSC 14:19a.

[38]Kang Chinch'ŏl, "T'ojijedosa," p. 1350.

[39]Hatada Takashi, "Shoen," p. 77. As will be discussed below, the court did not have sigŭp rights at this time. The ch'ŏ might have evolved as a possible supplement to its reduced income.

[40]KSC 17:32a.

govern the kingdom.

How significant were the changes in the land system at this time? The chŏnsikwa did not disappear and the public granary was still important enough to be granted two thousand kyŏl at the end of Kojong's reign. One of the reasons Ch'unghŏn sought to reform the land system at the start of his rule was to provide his officials, who were later to serve concurrent positions in both the dynastic system and his own private house organization, with a fixed emolument from a dynastic institution. If Ch'unghŏn could maintain the semblance of a dynastic land system, this could cover the expenses of his own administration as well. Still, private land apart from the chŏnsikwa also expanded, allowing men to establish an economic base separate from the court and independent of the throne. This allowed them to recruit their own followers such as mun'gaek, and support them not only through government offices but also by profits from private holdings. This is the position that the Ch'oe house achieved. The trends toward the expansion of private land coupled with the appearance of mun'gaek, which emerged before the Ch'oe house assumed power, continued under its rule.[41] But to reiterate, private land holdings did not expand unchecked for chŏnsikwa allotments were an important supplement to the Ch'oe power structure.

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[41] Kim Chongguk, "Kōrai bushin," claims this period was characterized by the growth of manors in which the owner controlled all rent, alienation of land and produce rights. With the advance of the owner's position and power, the tiller was no longer a tenant but became a slave. Little evidence has been uncovered to support Kim's entire thesis.

Ch'oe Fiscal Policy: Sigŭp

Ch'unghon also used the sigŭp to strengthen his fiscal resources. During Injong's reign the sigŭp reappeared as a source of support for powerful figures, but then it was not used again until the rise of the Ch'oe house, which resurrected the sigŭp to extend its economic base and thereby further secure its independence from dynastic finances. When the state granted the sigŭp merely as an honor, the accompanying enfeoffment seemed not to have been automatically heritable. If land was also included, however, it seems to have been transferred to the recipients' heirs. The king granted three of the four Ch'oe leaders, Ch'unghŏn, U and Hang, the same sigŭp.[42] The exact date that the latter two men received their sigŭp is unclear, although Ch'unghŏn received his fief in 1205 or some nine years after he came to power. That these Ch'oe sigŭp were technically not automatically inheritable was demonstrated by the king's command that Hang receive his father's sigŭp as well as by the lack of direct evidence that Ŭi then inherited Hang's sigŭp.[43] Even though there was no fixed succession right to the sigŭp, still in reality it does appear that U succeeded to his father's sigŭp, and this in turn passed on to Hang.

Shortly after these men received their sigŭp, they were also granted a title and a pu (administration) was established. The king decreed, for example, that Ch'unghŏn be given the title of Chin'ganghu

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[42]For Ch'unghŏn's sigŭp see KS 129:10b, KSC 14:19b, for U's see KS 129:39b, KSC 16:30b-31a, and for Hang's see KS 129:49b, KSC 17:23b. Also see Ha, "Sigŭp ko," p. 137.

[43]KS 129:49b, KSC 17:23b.

(Duke of Chin'gang) with a pu in the first month of 1206, which was the month after he received his sigŭp at the end of 1205. The following month the Koryŏsa reports that Ch'unghŏn was enfeoffed Chin'ganggong (Marquis of Chin'gang) and a pu called Hŭngnyŏngbu was established.[44] Although the date U received his sigŭp is unclear, he was invested Chinyanghu (Duke of Chinyang) in 1234 shortly after the capital was moved to Kanghwa.[45] Once Hang was in power and his sigŭp established, the king invested Hang with the title of hu and formed a pu. Hang demurred for two years and then in 1253 the king issued another decree to the same effect causing Hang's enfeoffment.[46] The title and the pu in each case seem to have been little more than honorary grants given after the sigŭp had already been extended.

The king theoretically granted the sigŭp to the Ch'oe leaders because of the merit each performed in supporting the throne. Although no one can dispute that sigŭp has been given traditionally to meritorious subjects, the heads of the Ch'oe house, like other leaders earlier in the dynasty, sought the sigŭp not only to demonstrate that they had been protectors of the throne but also for the economic benefits accruing there from.

Ch'unghŏn received the area around Chinju (in modern Kyŏngsangnamdo) as his sigŭp. It is noteworthy to speculate on the role Chinju

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[44] KS 129:17a-b, KSC 14:20b. In this case Ch'unghŏn politely refused the title hu and took the less prestigious title kong. Six years later he changed the name of his pu to Chin'gang.

[45] KS 129:39a, KSC 16:21b-22a.

[46] KS 129:47b-48a, KSC 17:4b, 7a-b.

had in the Ch'oe power structure. Ch'unghŏn once served in the area as a government official,[47] but the records do not explain in detail his relation with this area. Undoubtedly the entire region, including parts of Chŏlla and Kyŏngsang, was a base of his power for he developed close marriage ties with the Chŏngs of neighboring Hadong and the Ims of Chŏngan in Chŏlla. The size of Ch'unghŏn's original sigŭp was some three thousand households with a real grant of three hundred households.[48] Whether this grant changed in subsequent years is difficult to ascertain, but in 1242, a request was made to increase U's sigŭp and the same was done for Hang's fief.[49]

Under the dynastic system, sigŭp payments went directly to the state granaries, but both Ch'oe U and Hang evidently followed different patterns for when an official in error sent the Chinyang (U's sigŭp) produce to the public granary, the king protested saying payments should be sent directly to U. The king often acted as a spokeman for Ch'oe wishes, and here, by objecting to the delivery of the Chinju produce to the public granary, the king and his court reconfirmed the legitimacy of Ch'oe-instituted changes. U diplomatically responded that in this one instance the customary system should be used.[50] Seven years later the court again decreed that all the Chinyang produce should be directly

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[47] CK, vol. 1, p. 442. Ha Hyŏn'gang and Kim Chongguk disagree over the length of Ch'unghŏn's stay in the Kyŏngsang area. Ha believes that Ch'unghŏn did not necessarily have a close tie to Chinju before he received his sigŭp there, while Kim claims Ch'unghŏn spent nearly ten years in the area. See Ha, "Sigŭp ko," pp. 132-133.

[48] KS 129:16b, KSC 14:19b.

[49] KSC 16:30b-31a, KS 129:49b-50b, KSC 17:23b.

[50] KS 129:40a, KSC 16:31b-32a, and Ha, "Sigŭp ko," p. 129.

sent to Hang's house. Hang politely declined this honor.[51] The word chik (directly) in the original text seems to indicate that even under the former system the sigŭp holder would ultimately receive sigŭp produce, but it usually first went to the dynastic granary for subsequent redistribution. This same scheme was used in the payment of chŏnsikwa rents. But the Ch'oe house did not follow this tradition as evidenced by the king's protest when the produce was not directly sent to U. Rather under Ch'oe rule the sigŭp revenues bypassed dynastic agencies and went straight to the Ch'oe house. This was a significant development. It undoubtedly streamlined the administration of sigŭp payments and more importantly put the whole operation of the sigŭp under the Ch'oe house free from court interference. The dynasty was being bypassed and losing its jurisdiction over sigŭp finances. This was the start of a precedent that would ultimately leave the dynasty devoid of any control over chŏnsikwa lands as well. But for now these changes in the sigŭp brought greater revenue to the Ch'oe house and judging by the increases made in the Ch'oe sigŭp, it was indeed a successful and lucrative means of income.

The Chinju sigŭp produced for the Ch'oe family textile, corvee and local tribute taxes.[52] Chinju is a rich agricultural area even today and must have been a choice site in the thirteenth century. During the early Yi dynasty Chinju had a population of 5906 people in 1628 households and a local gazetteer described it as having rich lands with warm weather and light breezes. In Chinju there were 12,730 kyŏl

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[51] KS 129:44a-b, KSC 16:39b.

[52] See note 21.

of arable land, which grew grains, fruit, cotton and hemp. Honey mushrooms, fish, tea, lacquer, bamboo, medicine and skins were all produced locally, and salt was also available as well as low-grade, locally-manufactured porcelain.[53] With Chinju as its sigŭp, the Ch'oe house would be able to claim most of these products. Certainly in Chinju the Ch'oe house had a solid economic base, and it became increasingly important in Ch'oe finances as a source of income to meet the ever expanding Ch'oe needs for revenue.

The sigŭp is a microcosm of the entire Ch'oe structure and an excellent example of how the Ch'oe house would use legal dynastic institutions to establish its own system. The Ch'oe structure initially depended on grants from the king and in this respect one might claim that the Ch'oe house was part of the dynastic structure. But once these institutions were established, the Ch'oe house used them to secure its independence from the court. A royal command established the Kyojŏng-dogam, but soon it became the center for all Ch'oe administration, above reproach from the court. The king likewise granted the sigŭp, and again the Ch'oe house used this grant to increase its resources and provide funds so it could operate free from dynastic restraints. In theory the king was at the apex of the entire Ch'oe system, but in reality he merely came to acknowledge Ch'oe will and provide the necessary setting to cloak Ch'oe action with legitimacy.

The sigŭp came to have an entirely different significance from its original intention. Initially the court families were the chief benefactors of the sigŭp in the Koryŏ dynasty, but the Ch'oe house

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[53] Yun Hoe et al., Sejong sillok chiriji (Seoul: Sejong saŏphoe, 1973), 150:27b-28a.

severed this relation as the royal family no longer received sigŭp.[54] Moreover, the court cut off from sigŭp profits had to search for new means to build its economic base and started to rely on the ch'ŏ and naejang for funds.[55] After the fall of the Ch'oe house, those who supplanted Ch'oe Ŭi, such as Kim Injun continued this innovation and used the sigŭp to support their authority.[56]

Ch'oe Fiscal Policy: Temples, Slaves and Trade

Temples and slaves provided additional sources of income for the Ch'oe house. Ch'unghŏn and his descendants probably used its relationship with temples to accrue funds. When Ch'oe Hang was a monk on Chindo, for example, he recruited unscrupulous clerics to assist him in extracting levies from the neighboring peasants. Ch'oe U's son Manjong remained in the clergy and when the Ch'oe house was overthrown, it is reported that Manjong had large estates. Although specific evidence is lacking, the Ch'oe house undoubtedly attempted to use its capital to offer loans, perhaps through temples, and to acquire profits in interest. They might have also taken advantage of the income temples reaped through handicraft industry, tea and spirit production or the storage of goods and grains. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, temples maintained a significant economic input, which was available to the Ch'oe house to tap and control through its years in power. The Ch'oe house likewise had slaves to work its fields and

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[54] Ha, "Sigŭp ko," p. 134.

[55] Kang Chinch'ŏl, "T'ojijedosa," p. 1356.

[56] KS 130:15a, KSC 18:19a, and Ha "Sigŭp ko," p. 138.

manage minor affairs. Although Ch'unghŏn and U generally curbed slave activities in the upper echelons, they did not oppose employing slaves at a lower level. Slaves as a cheap and ready labor force helped bolster Ch'oe resources.

Profits from trade were another source of Ch'oe income. Trade along the northern border does not seem to have been stopped by the internal upheaval that arose following the 1170 military takeover. The northern border towns continued to be bustling centers of commerce and men who accompanied missions to Chin usually were able to accumulate substantial profits. Once Ch'unghŏn was in power this trade continued unabated. There seems to have been an even more intense search for trade after the onset of the Khitan problem in 1216. The Koryŏ histories report "Merchants compete to amass profits. Although they (government officials) are strict, regulating and confiscating the goods, still men are greedy without limits and secretly conduct a ceaseless trade."[57] Thus the official stance at this time seems to have been to curtail such commerce, but in reality exchanges continued. Merchants came from Sung and Chin China, for example in 1201, 1205 and 1211. In 1205 one of the Chinese merchants was unjustly imprisoned and flogged. Ch'unghŏn on hearing of this quickly dismissed the responsible official.[58] On another occasion in 1231 a Sung merchant presented U with a water buffalo. U in return granted the merchant ginseng and silk, and gave the water buffalo to the king.[59] Contacts with Japan were less

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[57] KS 22:6a, KSC 14:38a.

[58] KS 21:20a, KSC 14:19b.

[59] KS 129:36b, KSC 16:34a.

frequent yet opportunities for profit were present. U in an attempt to stabilize relations sent a man to Japan with a letter calling for peace, and when the envoy returned U rewarded him with lavish gifts.[60] Exchanges continued; in 1244 a Japanese vessel loaded with silk and silver washed ashore at Cheju island, but then the increasing ferocity of Mongol attacks by land and Wakŏ pirate raids by sea made their ventures dangerous and less profitable.[61]

To what extent the Ch'oe house was able to profit from this form of commercial activity is quite difficult to estimate. Even though there are no records to demonstrate that Ch'unghŏn was able to use either the official or unofficial exchanges to bolster his income, it is quite probable he would tap these sources whenever it was feasible. Ch'unghŏn, furthermore, as in all other sectors of his society, sought to check any possible independent movement. People who could establish their independence through trade, could also be a threat to his superstructure, thus it was necessary to curb any competing institution. Perhaps this explains why in 1216 trade was strictly regulated. This also might indicate that Ch'unghŏn would actively seek to acquire the profits in any of the official and unofficial exchanges.

Once the Mongol invasions became severe, there are few records of official tribute missions or accounts of covert international trade. Merchants from China or Japan were rare. Rather than benefitting from exchanges, the Mongols burdened the Ch'oe house and Koryŏ at this time

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[60] KS 129:34b-35a, KSC 15:43b.

[61] KS 23:37a-b, KSC 16:32b-33a. For accounts of the Japanese pirate raids at this time see Benjamin Harrison Hazard, Jr., "Japanese Marauders and Medieval Korea," (Masters thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 1958).

with exorbitant demands for all sorts of local tribute products. If there were any profits the Ch'oe house was to accrue from international exchanges, once the Mongol invasions started, the sum must have been negligible.

Ch'oe Fiscal Policy: Tax Structure

The tax structure was closely tied to the land system. By controlling the tax structure and using it as he did the land system, Ch'unghŏn and his descendants could acquire not only economic assets but political leverage. Part of Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's initial ten point proposal for reform was to restore the integrity of the tax system. In proposals four and five he admonished that people in poverty could not pay taxes. Furthermore, unjust clerks only transgress and injure the weak, making the situation still more intolerable. The solution according to Ch'unghŏn was to dispatch honest officials to inspect the provinces and forbid the presentation of gifts.[62] From Ch'unghŏn's call for reform, it is apparent that in the years following the military assumption of power in 1170, the tax structure had deteriorated considerably, and with the collapse the kingdom could not operate efficiently. This is also apparent in the fiscal bankruptcy of Myŏngjong's court. Ch'unghŏn had sought to correct this situation and had succeeded. Inspite of the chaos caused by the Mongol invasions and the court's flight to Kanghwa Island, the reinvigorated tax structure was still operating toward the end of Kojong's reign. At that time the Koryŏ histories report that one Yi Hyŏn betrayed the kingdom by

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[62] KS 129:5a-b, KSC 13:41a-b.

suggesting to the Mongols, "My country's capital lies on a sea island. Tribute taxes all come out from the chu and kun. If your army secretly enters the border before autumn, the people of the capital will be faced with an emergency."[63] Yi Hyŏn acknowledged the operation of Koryŏ's tax system some twenty years after the capital had moved to Kanghwa, he also indicated the rulers' dependence on the tax income.

Both the Ch'oe house and the court administered the tax structure. The court in theory had ultimate control over the operation of the tax system and on at least one occasion it requested a reduction in corvee levies to alleviate the burdens on the agricultural sector of the economy.[64] Ch'oe Hang in 1250 made a similar demand to reduce taxes all over the country. Hang had just come to power after his father's death, it made good political sense to reduce taxes at this time and gain the support of the people. Ch'unghŏn undoubtedly was connected with levies as well. For example, in 1202 a soldier, falsely claiming that Ch'unghŏn had dispatched him, led troops to Pongju and collected silver and silk.[65] The inference of this case is that although Ch'unghŏn had not approved of this particular incident, similar activities had occurred before in which Ch'unghŏn had directed men to collect levies.

In spite of the king's reduction in authority, during the Ch'oe period the tax system operated in the traditional manner with only a few changes. Local officials or men dispatched by the central

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[63] KS 130:8b-9a, KSC 17:15a-b.

[64] KS 22:27a, KSC 14:34a.

[65] KSC 14:10b.

government still handled the collection of taxes.[66] Once levies were made, they went to the Ministry of Revenue in the capital and usually the operation took place in the autumn after the harvests. Tax revenue would be used for administration, and since the Ch'oe house in effect controlled the dynasty, it, as well as the bureaucracy, would reap benefits. Enforcement of the tax system was well planned and timely. The Ch'oe house realized the tax structure could be used for sensible political, economic and defensive purposes. Thus with Kwangju's stalwart self-defense against foreign invaders, the Ch'oe house rewarded the area with an exemption from the usual corvee and local products taxes.[67] Using Kwangju as an example, the leadership hoped to encourage other areas to offer equally valiant resistance against the Mongols. This type of policy has often been employed by dynastic leaders throughout history to strengthen and support ravaged peasants. The Ch'oe heads also offered similar exemptions to people who left their home lands and went to mountain fortresses or coastal areas,[68] and in times of peace peasants who returned to their land received tax incentives.[69] Tax exemptions also went to areas that suffered from foreign invasions and faced subsequent starvation.[70] Through such actions the Ch'oe house could win the endorsement of hard pressed peasants and be more certain of their backing in resisting the Mongols. The Ch'oe house gained not

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[66] KS 129:5a-b, KSC 13:41a-b, KS 22:14a, KSC 15:12a.

[67] KS 80:27a, KSC 16:22b.

[68] KSC 17:33b.

[69] KS 24:21b, KSC 17:21b.

[70] KS 23:29b-30a, KSC 16:23a, KSC 16:35a, 17:24a-b.

only monetary benefits but political support as well as from these tax policies.

If the Ch'oe house enforcement of the tax structure was enlightened and flexible, it was also expansive, looking continually for new ways to enlarge the system to include previously exempt people. Until Ch'unghŏn's rule the high-ranking officials (commonly referred to as yangban) had usually been spared from most forms of taxation. In 1208 when the promenades in the capital were repaired, the state assessed the yangban of the five capital districts to pay the costs. The histories relate that yangban corvee labor began here.[71] The yangsuch'ŏk (weavers), a special class with low social status, was also exempt from the corvee and other duties throughout the early part of the dynasty. Ch'unghŏn, inheriting a structure that seems to have commenced under his immediate predecessor Yi Ŭimin, also included these people in his levies. It is reported that Yi Ŭimin's son collected heavy tribute from the yangsuch'ŏk, and Ch'unghŏn, calculating the number of the yangsuch'ŏk, collected from them even more heavily.[72] How many other people were brought into the tax structure because of Ch'unghŏn's initiative can only be guessed, but it is certain that Ch'unghŏn and his descendants used taxes as an economic and political support to their power. By enforcing and expanding the tax system, the Ch'oe house gained more funds for its own operations as well as financial backing for policies it enforced in the name of the dynasty.

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[71] KS 21:22a-b, KSC 14:22a.

[72] KS 103:8b, 129:22a-b, KSC 14:40b-41a.

The stipend system which was supported through tax revenues was also maintained throughout the Ch'oe rule. As long as revenues were available, dynastic officials received their salaries without incident and these payments served as an adequate supplement to land yield allotments. Once the Mongol invasions limited the dynasty's control of the peninsula, however, the tax revenues and the cho from the chŏnsikwa were cut, forcing the Ch'oe house to seek new sources to pay the stipends. In 1257 officials, after discussing the possibility of dividing fields and using land to replace stipends, established a Kŭpchŏn—dogam (Directorate-General for Land Grants) to implement this design.[73] Three months later the Ch'oe house divided Kanghwa Island with most of the land going to Ch'oe Ŭi and the dynasty, while royal clansmen and officials received the remaining lands according to rank.[74] Since the power of the Ch'oe house rested in part on the support of the officialdom, it was quite natural for the Ch'oe house to go to such extremes to guarantee fiscal renumeration for them.

The Ch'oe family was not only politically the strongest house in the kingdom but also economically the richest. Through deliberate, cautious policy, Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and his descendants were able to amass huge landholdings. Grants through the chŏnsikwa and court, sigŭp and more covert means such as forceful land seizures and expansions all contributed. The Ch'oe house was also able to control the tax structure and benefit from profits realized through local tribute and corvee

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[73] KSC 17:30b.

[74] KSC 17:32a.

taxes. International trade was another possible source for income, but it was an uncertain supply dependent on foreign relations and international stability. Slaves and temple holdings were yet another economic resource. The Ch'oe house, although relying on well-used and tested means, was dynamic and flexible in its pursuit of income. It enlarged its assets slowly and was willing to make long-range gains rather than immediate economic profits. Where opportunities permitted, it also innovated in finding new sources to be tapped. It had huge expenses in supporting its vast administration and accompanying personnel. It relied on its own private sources to fund part of this system, but it attempted to maintain the chŏnsikwa and tax structure to provide many with stipends. No precise records show the extent of Ch'oe wealth but taking into account its estates in Kyŏngsangdo and Chŏllado, its sigŭp and its scattered holdings granted under the chŏnsikwa and under other state initiated allotments, its property must have been vast.[75] Besides land the Ch'oe house also had additional stores of wealth. When the Ch'oe house was overthrown near the end of Kojong's reign, it is reported that one of Ch'oe Ŭi's minor granaries held over 15,000 sŏk (one sŏk equals about five bushels) of rice.[76] He also had special areas to breed and raise horses.[77] Once the Ch'oe house was destroyed, the Koryŏsa reports that the state sent officials

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[75] In addition to Chinju, the Koryŏsa specifically mentions that the Ch'oe house also had estates in Imp'i (near modern Iri) in Chŏlla. See KS 104:39b-40a.

[76] KSC 17:45a.

[77] KSC 17:43a.

to both Chŏlla and Kyŏngsangdo to list and confiscate Ch'oe Ŭi's and his uncle Manjong's estates, slaves, cloth and grain.[78] How many other granaries, and what type of financial operations the Ch'oe house maintained in addition to these, can only be surmised. There were other men in the kingdom who also had money and wealth, but like the court, they depended on the support of the Ch'oe house.

The changes in the Ch'oe economic structure are illustrated in the charts below. The proportions presented are by no means exact, rather they should be interpreted as indicators of trends occurring in the Ch'oe financial structure. The sources of Ch'oe income include: revenue from trade, kongjŏn (public land) and sajŏn (private land) rents, sigŭp holdings, inheritable land yields, tax revenues, stipends, temples and miscellaneous (including gifts and slaves). They are presented in Chart IA and Chart IB with IA representing Ch'oe revenue in the early Ch'oe period and IB depicting the income during the latter years of the regime. The differences in size between the two circles reflects the burgeoning of Ch'oe income over the period, but to reiterate, these proportions should not be seen as exact absolutes but more as reflections on the trends.

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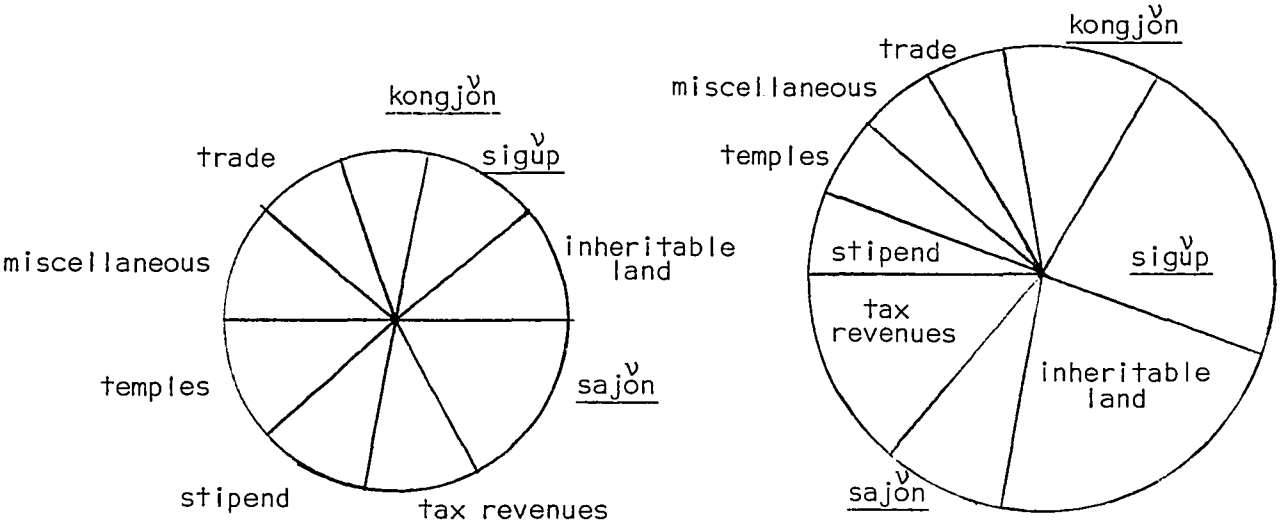
[78] KS 129:55b.

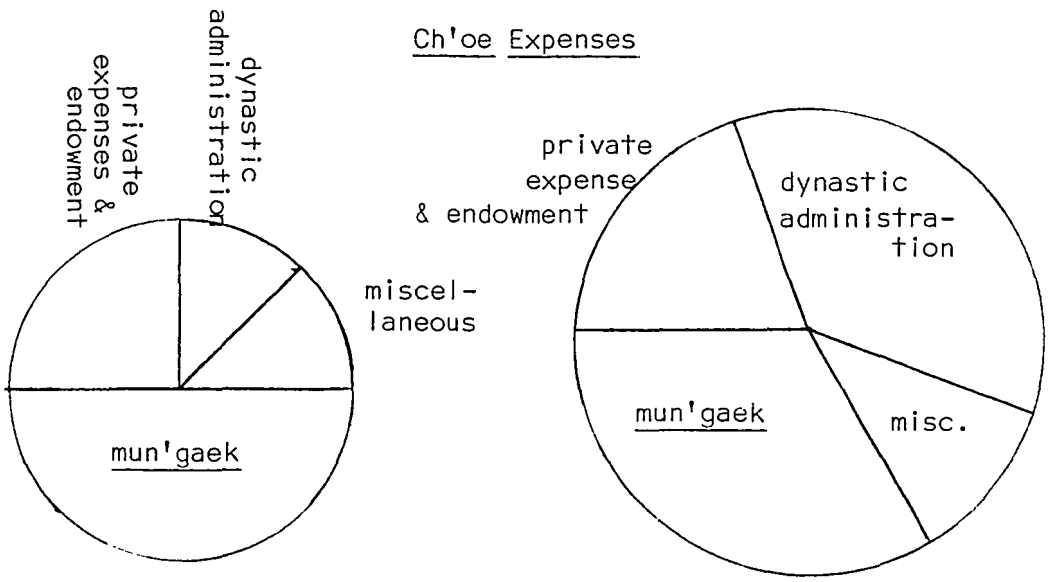
Sources of Ch'oe Income



The proportions of several Ch'oe sources of income such as revenue from miscellaneous, trade, temples, stipends, and personal sajŏn allotments under the chŏnsikwa decreased while Ch'oe profits accrued from inheritable land holdings, kongjŏn (such as konghaejŏn), sigŭp produce, and tax revenues expanded dramatically. The expansion of private sources of income, especially the rapid growth of inheritable land and sigŭp grants, would indicate, as stated above, that the Ch'oe house was placing less emphasis and dependence on the dynasty and the sajŏn of the chŏnsikwa as the period progressed. The chŏnsikwa holdings, while providing revenue to officials, interfered with personal Ch'oe needs for more income from other holdings. With the gradual enervation of the dynastic land structure, the Ch'oe house assumed more responsibility for the payment of official salaries and general administrative expenses. This is reflected on Chart 2A and 2B below. The Ch'oe house also chose to retain the tax structure, for rather than obstructing Ch'oe land

acquisitions, it was a ready source of revenue which brought income to the government from most land regardless of the owner.

Ch'oe expenses are divided into four categories: private expenses and endowment, dynastic administration, mun'gaek and miscellaneous (such as gifts). These are presented in Chart 2A and Chart 2B, and as in Chart 1A and Chart 1B, the difference in size between the two circles reflects expansion of costs from the early Ch'oe period to the latter part of the period. The Ch'oe house used much of its resources at the start of its rule to meet its own personal needs such as payments to the Ch'oe mun'gaek and other followers and its administrative expenses.



Although these costs did expand, the overall percentages within the Ch'oe system actually decreased as the Ch'oe house started to funnel an increasingly larger proportion of its income into the dynastic administration to cover salaries and general expenses incurred in managing state affairs. The Ch'oe house, since it took a great deal

of land out of statecontrol, placing the land under its own supervision, had to assume more responsibility for dynastic finances. It also assumed many of the functions kings had previously performed such as honoring scholars and rewarding the just. The remaining two components represented on Charts 2A and 2B, private endowment and miscellaneous, remained proportionately small and relatively unchanged throughout the Ch'oe rule.

The Ch'oe family was presiding over a period of transition. The land system and tax system had started to deteriorate many years before Ch'unghŏn came to power. He strengthened the dynastic structure to meet his needs. While on the one hand he restored the decaying dynastic structure, he continued the trends that would ultimately leave the dynastic land system and the court itself much weaker by supporting, to the detriment of the dynasty, the expansion of Ch'oe private lands and income. He also initiated action as seen in the sigŭp, that would ultimately divest the dynasty of any authority in redistributing land rents allowing instead individuals to assume this responsibility. To what extent this process was exacerbated by the Mongol invasions is unclear, but after Koryŏ capitulated to Mongol demands, the chŏnsikwa and the dynastic tax structure were practically useless. In its place, large estates, controlled by powerful politicians, rich families and temples, evolved as Korea entered a new phase in its economic maturation.[79]

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[79] Kang Chinch'ŏl, "Land Tenure," p. 62.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CH'OE DILEMMA

The Ch'oe house was founded on two inherently competing systems. Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, pressed with crises from the start of his rule in 1196, had to react quickly and decisively to the challenges posed by domestic unrest, poverty, Buddhist opposition, and a powerful military class. The most expedient solution was to restore the dynastic structure, which already comprised offices and agencies to meet the country's problems and govern it effectively. Through the dynastic organization individuals could be mobilized and decisions made to effect the changes and reforms Ch'unghŏn needed to secure his authority. Once assured of his command, however, Ch'unghŏn began to construct his own system of offices and agencies, superimposing them upon the existing dynastic structure. The tangled vines that would lead to the eventual undoing of the Ch'oe house grew from this scheme of dual offices, dynastic and private, set up to administer state affairs. Private offices were the locus of Ch'oe administration and power, but by retaining and even relying on dynastic offices, Ch'unghŏn was acknowledging the importance of a dynastic order which could be used later as the basis for a challenge to the Ch'oe hegemony and the restoration of authority to the king.

This was just one dilemma confronting the Ch'oe house but out of this sprang many more. The purpose of this chapter is to assess both the role of the king, of Confucian ideology and of civilian precepts in the Ch'oe system and also the problems derived from relying on these institutions. This chapter will also discuss other issues facing the

Ch'oe house such as the contradictions caused by the mun'gaek system and the social and economic changes of the age. The Ch'oe house collapsed as much from its inability to resolve these dilemmas as from its inability to halt the Mongol invasions.

The Monarch

The king was at the apex of the entire dynastic structure and thus the relations between the Ch'oe house and the royal family were unique. During Ch'unghŏn's twenty-year command, five separate kings held the throne (see p. 320). Ch'unghŏn forced the removal of two (Myŏngjong and Hŭijong), two died in office (Sinjong and Kangjong), and one (Kojong) survived Ch'unghŏn. Myŏngjong was removed from office partly as a result of widespread criticism for ineffectiveness, testified by that of Pak Chinjae, Ch'unghŏn's nephew, in 1197:

> The king has ruled for twenty-eight years. He is old and weary; he has lost his diligence. The various princes use favors and royal authority to disturb the country's affairs. The king also gives favors to the petty, and many receive gold and silk. The treasury is empty. How can we not have him abdicate?[1]

To Ch'unghŏn and his followers, Myŏngjong's removal was imperative if stability and good administration were to be achieved. Myŏngjong's brother was enthroned as Sinjong and ruled with little incident for seven years until he died of illness. Hŭijong succeeded his father Sinjong. After seven years of rule, however, Hŭijong became impatient with his subservience to the Ch'oe house and, abetted by various anti-Ch'oe forces, tried to assassinate Ch'unghŏn in 1211. Because of his

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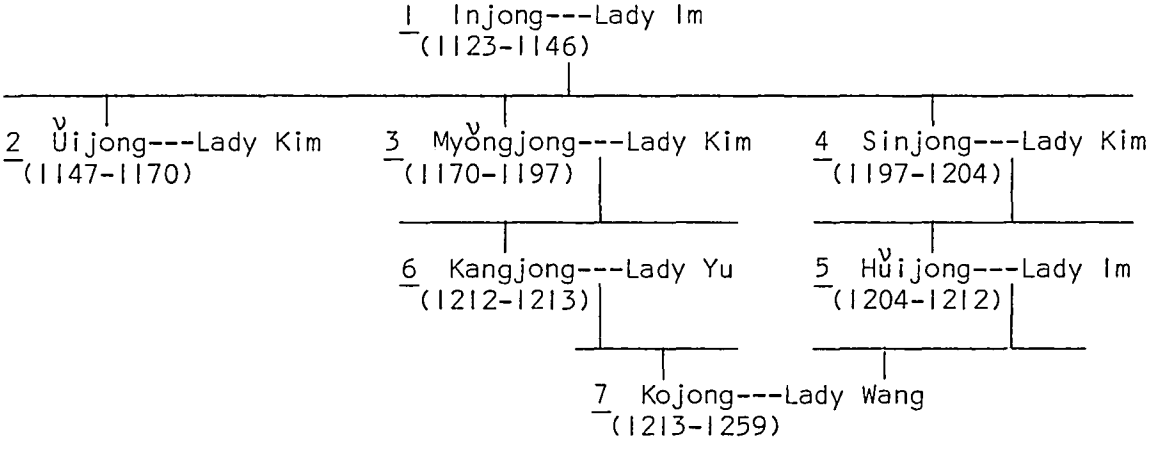
[1] KS 129:7b, KSC 13:45a.

participation in this plot, Ch'unghŏn exiled Hŭijong and enthroned Myŏngjong's son as Kangjong. Kangjong died suddenly in office two years later at the age of 62. His son became the new monarch Kojong. Kojong, holding the distinction of the longest reign in the history of the dynasty, was monarch for forty-six years. He died one year after the Ch'oe house was overthrown.

Ch'unghŏn, by restoring the dynastic structure, reasserted, in theory but not in fact, the royal prerogative. In maintaining this scheme he went to the court immediately after the assassination of

<u>Koryŏ kings 1123-1259</u>



Yi Ŭimin to obtain royal sanction. Thus, the king was important to Ch'unghŏn, since he hoped to link his own designs to royal needs in order to facilitate the consolidation of his own power. By obtaining royal approval for his action he would be able to inaugurate his policies as an officer of the king acting on behalf of royal will. Ch'unghŏn, by acknowledging the royal position and uniting his cause with the king, was elevating his position to that of a protector of the court.

Ch'unghŏn, once he had won the support of the monarch, gradually manipulated the court into a defensive posture. This was a subtle policy, well calculated and effective, commencing a month after the assassination of Yi Ŭimin when Ch'unghŏn announced the ten proposals for reform. In his last article, Ch'unghŏn turned to the court and remonstrated with it for harboring sychophants and extortionists, and for disregarding ministerial advice.[2] When royal behavior did not improve significantly Ch'unghŏn forced Myŏngjong to abdicate. The prestige of the royal family continued to decline during Sinjong's reign. At Myŏngjong's death in 1202, rather than inter him with the rites fitting for a king, Ch'unghŏn ordered that the ceremony used to bury a queen be followed. The court and royal family wore black mourning hats for only three days.[3] Two years later when Sinjong died, Ch'unghŏn reduced official mourning from the customary twenty-six days to fourteen days.[4] Through this policy the dignity accorded to the royal household was gradually diminished. With the plummeting of prestige came a corresponding loss of power. During much of Kojong's reign, the king had little real authority, as the Ch'oe leaders made most of the decisions. Kojong sadly acknowledged his plight in 1255 when he repeatedly summoned an official who, as repeatedly, failed to appear. The angry Kojong wanted to seize the administration and fire the disobedient official, but then, sighing, lamented: "Even though I should take over the government today, tomorrow I would definitely

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[2]See Chapter II, p. 95.

[3]KS 64:6b, KSC 14:13a.

[4]KS 64:7a, 21:17a-18a, KSC 14:15b-16b.

return it. What type of punishment could I give?"[5] Many years earlier Chŏng Sukch'ŏm had declared that the monarch was indeed powerless and that the effects of this would be disastrous for the country.[6] It had taken Ch'unghŏn nearly twenty years and five monarchs before he found a pliable king. Part of his dilemma stemmed from his attempt to establish a facade of royal power to mask his own independence. It is evident that this system was not easy to administer. To succeed in circumventing the authority of the king, the Ch'oe house had to depend not on their military might alone but on many other institutional mechanisms.

Ch'unghŏn looked to marriage ties as one means to influence the court. Marital unions had been a common way to control earlier monarchs, and during the early Koryŏ period, kings often had several wives. At that time many of the royal consort families such as the Kyŏngwŏn Yi clan or Ansan Kim family were able to exert considerable influence over the royal prerogative through intermarriage with the court. The Chŏngan Im clan, as the maternal family to Myŏngjong and Sinjong, and the Kangnŭng Kim clan, as the maternal relations of Hŭijong and Kangjong, had this potential during the military period. These marriage ties had been formed before the Ch'oe house came to power. The prominence of the Im clan has already been discussed in some detail. Presumably through their close ties with the Ch'oe house as well, the Ch'oe leaders would be able to have some say in the affairs of the court. The Kangnŭng Kim clan's role during this period

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[5] KS 24:23b, KSC 17:23a.

[6] KS 100:28a-b, KSC 15:2a-b.

is less conspicuous. This family had a long history and was an esteemed Koryŏ household during the early years of the dynasty but in the military period their influence was less obvious. In addition to these ties Hŭijong married a member of the Chŏngan Im clan and Kangjong married the daughter of the Yu family member Sinhanhu Song.[7] Ch'unghŏn had Kojong, the final king, marry Hŭijong's daughter (the king's own second cousin). Marriage among sibling and cousins was openly practiced during the Koryŏ period. In the tenth century, for example, Kwangjong married his half-sister, hoping through such a union to curtail the influence of consort families on his rule. The Ch'oe house pursued this same policy, perhaps for the same reasons. Ch'unghŏn in 1197 went to battle to prevent his brother from marrying with the royal family. He felt such a grave act at that time would destroy the structure he was carefully erecting. But if Ch'unghŏn was to deny his own family access to the king through marriage ties, he was also anxious to deny others the same opportunity. By having Kojong marry his own second cousin, Ch'unghŏn would be achieving this policy. Furthermore, by restricting the king to only one wife Ch'unghŏn, like the earlier military leaders, was curtailing the political influence of aristocratic families in court and state affairs.

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn was not in a secure enough position to establish direct marriage ties with the court heirs, but his son U was able to achieve this goal and see that his descendants would rule the kingdom as monarchs. Ch'oe marriage ties with the royal household began during

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[7] KS 88:34b, little else is known about this person; his clan origin is unclear.

Ch'unghŏn's rule when he selected royal princesses as spouses for his sons and grandsons (see Chapter II, pp.). U perpetuated this policy. Then at a strategic time, U had his own granddaughter, the daughter of Kyŏngju Kim clansmen Kim Yakson, marry Kojong's son, the crown prince. The son of this union eventually ascended the throne as Ch'ungnyŏlwang in 1274. U was able to make this move, which his father had not dared to consider, because, with the Ch'oe house firmly established, he was politically and socially in a much more secure position. The prestige of the Ch'oe house was already obvious owing to strategic marriages with many of the prominent military and civilian households of the kingdom. Furthermore U's granddaughter, a member of the Kyŏngju Kim clan, was part of one of the most prestigious Koryŏ families, a clan that already had long ties with the court. By having this girl marry the crown prince, little affront to royal prestige would be seen. It was a wise move, for it cemented the relationship of the Ch'oe house to the ranking clans of the day and the royal family.

The Ch'oe house was able to dominate the court also through economic means. By its land policy, the Ch'oe house provided the court with needed property and guaranteed the integrity of royal estates. Ch'unghŏn presented it with gifts to aid the royal house in meeting expenses.[8] Ch'oe U gave other lavish gifts such as a double coffin decorated in silver and gold in 1232 when the queen dowager died.[9] Ŭi, coming to power in the closing days of the Ch'oe house, also demonstrated his generosity by presenting the court with land, 2570 sŏk of

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[8] KS 129:19b, KSC 14:27b-28a.

[9] KS 129:38a, KSC 16:15a.

rice, cloth, silk, oil and honey.[10] These deeds were in part impelled by the plight of the court and in part caused by the Ch'oe house's eagerness to exercise control over the court by obligating the court through gifts.

The Ch'oe house's adroit use of institutions further solidified its dominant position over the court. By gaining control of the military forces, the Ch'oe house was able to circumvent any ploy the monarch might have devised to strengthen his own position through military means. The Ch'oe house also gradually controlled the administration of the dynasty leaving the king virtually powerless. Kojong's lament that he was unable to summon successfully even a petty official dramatically reveals the dependent position into which the court had fallen.

Under the rule of Ch'oe U, the Ch'oe house achieved immense security and power. U in fact was so well ensconced that he even considered the possibility of becoming king. A diviner named Yŏnji secretly discussed this with U saying, "Now the king has lost the appearance of a ruler, while you have the presence of a monarch. Destiny rests with you, how can you avoid it?" U spoke about this with a confidant, but when the confidant questioned Yŏnji, the diviner became alarmed and the discussion ended.[11] U considered the possibility of becoming king but decided against this; Ch'unghŏn may have considered the same alternatives and reached a similar decision. Why did these leaders, with nearly total authority in their grasp, refrain from the last step of ascending the throne themselves, to proclaim a new dynasty?

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[10] KS 129:52a, KSC 17:29b.

[11] KS 129:32b-33b, KSC 15:38a-39b.

The court filled many roles during the Ch'oe period. Its most important function was to provide a legal setting to Ch'oe house designs. When Ch'unghŏn decided to restore the dynastic structure, he also guaranteed the position of the royal family. With the dynasty came the king, and the monarch was indispensable to the Ch'oe house operation. The king had a propaganda value. He could mouth the words of the Ch'oe leaders and bolster the Ch'oe house. The king sanctioned the rule of each of the Ch'oe leaders providing legitimacy to Ch'oe activities. Ch'oe Hang's rule was especially honored with a number of decrees by the king. Through the monarch the Ch'oe house achieved a legal setting for its position.

The monarchs played an important role in administering dynastic ceremonies and fulfilling the functions of a Confucian king. One of the first steps Sinjong took after becoming king in 1197 was to issue pardons and grant awards to officials throughout the kingdom.[12] In 1208 the king personally presented wine and food to the aged, the filial, chaste widows and other exemplary individuals. At the same time he also aided the sick and orphaned.[13] The king prayed for the reduction of banditry on a number of occasions and once when bandits raided and insects plagued the northern area of the kingdom, Kojong dispatched palace attendants (naesi) to pray at shrines in the capital and provinces to end these scourges.[14] Besides these ceremonial functions, the king also took charge of the royal tombs and maintained

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[12] KSC 13:51b.

[13] KS 21:22b-23a, 68:10b-11a, KSC 14:23b.

[14] KS 22:23b, KSC 15:42a-b.

the rites and proprieties demanded for these sepulchers. When ghouls disturbed one tomb, Hŭijong demanded that the Ministry of Rites establish a patrol to protect it.[15] These duties were not novel. Kings throughout the earlier years of the dynasty, charged with these functions, protected the people and royal ancestors as well as sustained the customs of the kingdom. But in fulfilling their duties, the kings of the Ch'oe period were characterized as "figureheads without power,"[16] "so weak while officials were so strong."[17] Though the kings performed ceremonial functions, they had little power. They were important basically as a source of Ch'oe legitimacy.

The preservation of the monarch also fostered Confucian ideology.[18] Ch'unghŏn and his son U by guaranteeing the primacy of the state examinations and by other means, such as recuiting scholars into the government went to great lengths to promote the Confucian system. Through this the Ch'oe house preserved an order that civilian officials believed was above reproach. This system, the body of ideas expressed in Confucian thought, provided the perfect rationale for the maintenance of the

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[15] KS 21:22b, KSC 14:23a-b.

[16] KS 20:38b-39b, KSC 13:46a-47a.

[17] KSC 14:8b.

[18] Confucian ideology accepted an absolute monarch who in practice was often the arbitrator of disputing groups. There was a stress on personal relationships that envisioned the king as the father of the household. The government had responsibilities for the welfare of its people and example rather than law was considered the most effective means of persuasion. It was a Confucian dictum that government offices should go to men of merit and ability. This Confucian scheme was based on the authority of the classics. For further discussion, see Edward A. Kracke, Civil Service in Early Sung China (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953) pp. 21-24.

monarchy and the entire dynastic system. When Ch'unghŏn chose to revive the dynastic structure, he unavoidably had to foster its ideology, Confucianism. Furthermore, there was no other readily accessible political ideology to take the place of Confucian theory.

There were serious implications for Ch'unghŏn, however, in taking this step. Although Confucian thought justified the dynastic order, it provided no raison d'etre for the other half of the Ch'oe structure, the private Ch'oe organization. In supporting Confucianism, as in supporting the dynastic structural framework including the king and civil officials, Ch'unghŏn in the long run undermined the foundations of his regime. The lack of any type of ideological support for his innovations was a crucial weakness in his system. Often at the start of a new regime a new philosophy, serving as the rationale for the emerging structure, is formed. When Wang Kŏn rose to the throne, as the basic ideology for his kingdom, he sought to combine support from geomantic precepts, Buddhist power and Confucian theory. This scheme was embellished during Sŏngjong's reign when Ch'oe Sŭngno did much to expand Koryŏ Confucian thought.[19] The foundation of Yi Chosŏn was also based in part on the growth of a new ideology, Neo-Confucianism. Ch'unghŏn was unable to devise any rationale that could justify the operation of two competing organizations. Rather, by maintaining the Confucian system, he held his structure accountable to Confucian norms. The men that worked for him would be loyal to him as a leader, but their ultimate allegiance, if they believed at all in Confucian theory, would be to the ruler, the

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[19]See Kang, "Ruling Class...," especially Chapter V on the current of thought.

king. By this compromise, again out of necessity, the Ch'oe house was able to bring temporary stability to the age, but its own vulnerability lay at the same time in just this act. In less auspicious times, or under a less adept Ch'oe ruler, Confucian theory was to be used to justify the expulsion of the Ch'oe house and the restoration of full authority to the king.

There were other very real reasons why the royal family had to be retained. This is reflected in a discussion Ch'unghŏn had with his confidants when they were confronted with the necessity of removing Myŏngjong. One man proposed that Marquis Chin, an obscure member of the extended royal family be a possible heir. This suggestion was countered by the following response.

> Ch'unghŏn said, "P'yŏngnyanggong Min, is the king's brother by the same mother. He is expansive and has a sovereign magnanimity. Moreover his son Yŏn is wise and likes learning. He would be a fitting heir apparent." ... Pak Chinjae replied, "Marquis Chin and Min each could become kings. However, the Chin emperor does not know Marquis Chin. If we enthrone him, the emperor will consider this a usurpation. It is not as sound as enthroning Min. As in Ŭijong's abdication, because they are brothers, we can announce this without anxiety.[20]

This episode demonstrates Ch'unghŏn's caution when contemplating changes in the royal position. He worried about the legitimacy of the royal house and about securing a wise monarch, but he was even more anxious about the response of the Chinese emperors, who at this time were represented by the Chin dynasty. Any unusual succession had to be

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[20] KS 129:7b-9a, KSC 13:45a-46a. The identity of Marquis Chin remains unclear.

carefully explained to the Chinese court.[21] Without Chinese approval the legitimacy of the Koryŏ dynasty and the Ch'oe house would be threatened. If the Ch'oe house were concerned about establishing a convincing argument to the Chinese for succession within the royal Wang family, the idea of presenting a totally new monarch as a result of the overthrow of the royal family and the founding of a new dynasty led by the Ch'oe family must have seemed inconceivable at that time.

It is a Korean anomaly that only three major dynastic eras are recorded and that the latter two, Koryŏ and Yi Chosŏn, were both extremely long periods. Undoubtedly inertia promoted longevity, but the

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[21] See Michael C. Rogers, "Sukchong of Koryŏ: His Accession and His Relations with Liao," T'oung Pao, vol. 47, no. 1-2 (1959), 30-42; and "Koryŏ's Military Dictatorship and Its Relations with Chin," (hereafter cited as "Military Dictatorship") T'oung Pao, vol. 47, no. 1-2 (1959), 43-62. Ch'unghŏn at this time followed the same procedures Chŏng Chungbu used to explain Ŭijong's abdication. To further substantiate his claims of Myŏngjong's infirmed conditions, Ch'unghŏn falsely announced to Chin that Myŏngjong had died in 1198. Actually he died in 1202. See Roger's article, "Military Dictatorship," p. 55. Rogers says Ch'unghŏn "had evidently decided to hasten the process of obtaining Chin's recognition of his puppet T'ak (Sinjong) by eliminating Ho (Myŏngjong) altogether from the scene." Myŏngjong's alleged earlier death might help explain why Ch'unghŏn sought to bury this king with the rites of a queen (see p. 321). By spending less time on the funeral, he would attract less attention and Chin would remain unaware of the fabrication. With Hŭijong's abrupt removal the same procedures were again followed to achieve Kangjong's succession, according to the Koryŏsa. Rogers on the other hand states, "The Chin History contains no reference to Wang O's (Kangjong) succession, much less to his investiture. Nor is its evidence merely negative; it notes that Wang Yŏng (Hŭijong) died in the eighth month of 1213 to be succeeded by his son. It thereby administers the coup de grace to the Koryŏsa account; for it actually was Wang O who died on the ninth day of that month (Aug. 26), and was succeeded by his son Ch'ŏl (Kojong). Wang Yŏng lived in exile until 1237. The conclusion is inescapable that the Koreans had no alternative but to retain the name of Wang Yŏng in their report of the king's death; so far as Chin was concerned, he was still the reigning king." (p. 60).

need to gain Chinese recognition for dynastic change, and the fact that the existing royal houses held all the regalia of legitimacy from the Chinese, preserved the Korean kingdoms. Dynastic changes in Korea occurred only when the Chinese court was divided and challenged by various elements within China. The Koryŏ dynasty formed during the disruptive Five Dynasties period of Chinese history. Although Wang Kŏn went to the major dynasties for their tacit approval of his new Korean dynasty, the early Koryŏ kings did not need to be wary of a Chinese ally rushing to the aid of the deposed Silla monarch. The Silla king relinquished his throne for basically domestic reasons. But the fact that he could not rely on the backing of a Chinese emperor to support his prerogatives made it that much easier for Wang Kŏn to establish his Koryŏ line. The same situation occurred when Yi Sŏnggye founded his dynasty. In China the Mongol Yuan and the Chinese Ming dynasties were vying for control. Yi Sŏnggye was able to take advantage of this dispute to overthrow the last vestiges of Koryŏ rule and establish Yi Chosŏn.

Ch'unghŏn was not in such a position, for when he came to power the Chin dynasty was still at its peak. Chin acknowledged the authority of the royal Wang clan and when Ŭijong abdicated, Chin was reluctant to approve Myŏngjong's succession.[22] If Ch'unghŏn had assumed power when the Chinese dynasty was on a downswing, perhaps the Ch'oe house could have ushered in a new era and a new dynasty.

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[22] See KS 99:32a-33b, 19:14a-b, KSC 12:2a-3b, 22b-23a. Rogers also presents this tale in "Military Dictatorship," pp. 46-52.

Still another consideration for Ch'unghŏn was the loyalty of the Koryŏ bureaucracy to the Wang line. If Ch'unghŏn had tried to depose the royal family, there would have been moral indignation around the country. Rather than bringing the stability he sought, he would have further inflamed the passions of many and incurred the opposition of the civil bureaucrats. It might have also prompted intervention by the Chin dynasty, for Koryŏ officials, crying foul play, could have pleaded for Chin aid and Chin would have had a legitimate excuse to initiate an expedition against Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn. This, in fact, almost happened in 1175 when Cho Wich'ong revolted against the early military leaders and sought Chin aid to restore power to the rightful rulers.[23]

Ch'unghŏn opted for the more secure alternative of maintaining the royal family. Through this scheme he would be able to carry on with his work and gain the support of the Chin dynasty as well as the civilian structure of the Koryŏ kingdom. He could retain the monarchy but still select kings who were amenable to his direction. Of the earlier Koryŏ kings, some were quite aggressive in fulfilling their responsibilities, while others relegated their power to officials and merely assumed ceremonial functions.[24] Ch'unghŏn cultivated the latter type of monarch, thus assuring the Ch'oe house nearly all responsibility for the affairs of the kingdom and leaving the king a passive participant in the government.

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[23] See Chapter II, and KS 110:9a-b, KSC 12:21b-22a, 23a-b; also Rogers' article, "Military Dictatorship," pp. 50-52.

[24] Kwangjong offers a good example of a king who ruled and reigned. See for example, Hugh H.W. Kang, "Institutional Borrowing: The Case of the Chinese Civil Service Examination System in Early Koryŏ," Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 34, no. 1(Nov., 1974), pp. 109-125.

This was an expedient move forced by necessity, but in the end it paved the way for the collapse of the Ch'oe house. Ch'unghŏn and his descendants had to acknowledge a power higher than theirs. Behind every act was the sanction of the throne. Ch'unghŏn and U could work in this system, and they were strong enough to control this relationship with the king to their own advantage. Still planted in this fictive maintenance of royal power were the seeds for later opposition. Some day the royal position would serve as a rallying point to throw off the Ch'oe rule. This, in part, was the path that Japan followed to bring the end to the Tokugawa bakufu in 1868. To the Ch'oe house which would always be vulnerable to the potential revival of full royal power, it was a very real threat, too. The concept of legitimacy, tied with the authority of the monarch, was extremely important to Koryŏ society and to the Ch'oe house.

Civilians

To operate the dynastic structure which he had chosen to revive Ch'unghŏn had to depend on civilian cooperation. The role of civilian power in the military period follows a noteworthy pattern. Of all office holders identifiable for Ŭijong's reign, civilians held approximately 90% of the offices in the civil dynastic structure. This participation was reduced to 79% at the start of Myŏngjong's reign and then further lowered to 59% by the end of Myŏngjong's rule. Civilians were gradually being removed from power during this period, yet they were still a block with which to contend. When Ch'unghŏn restored the dynastic system, he tried to win the support of the civilian leaders and the percentage of civilian participants again began to increase.

These same trends are also reflected in the number of successful examination candidates who served in the dynastic structure (see following page).

Civilians were important to the Ch'oe house. Ch'unghŏn needed armed might to guard his rule, but he would not be effective if he commanded by the sword alone. By winning the civilians' approval the Ch'oe house secured their support and aid in carrying out policy. Civilians, bringing respect and esteem to the Ch'oe house, aided in pacifying resistance and establishing tranquility. They also were invaluable in handling administrative matters and managing the kingdom. Through the appointment of able officials, Ch'unghŏn could rule the country more effectively and justly. The fact that the Ch'oe house so readily turned to civilian solutions to their problems suggests that Korean society had reached a certain level of administrative sophistication in which it could best be governed not by military alliances but by a restoration of civil institutions. Furthermore, civilians would be an important counterweight to military power. It was the discontent of the civilians during the end of Myŏngjong's rule that helped Ch'unghŏn eliminate Yi Ŭimin, and by supporting Ch'unghŏn, they continued to be an invaluable bloc that inhibited the success of any potential Ch'oe opponent.

As the Ch'oe period progressed the distinctions between military and civilian leaders gradually became blurred. The Ch'oe rule, as it matured, became less military in its outlook and civilians once again assumed greater responsibility. Although there were fewer active military officers in the dynastic structure, there seems to have been

Composition of the civil dynastic structure (1146-1258)

key	Ŭijong	early Myŏngjong	late Myŏngjong	Ch'unghŏn	U	Hang
total found	96	43	77	77	90	35
civilians	90 (93%)	34 (79%)	45 (59%)	48 (62%)	63 (70%)	26 (74%)
military	6 (6%)	8 (18%)	31 (40%)	24 (31%)	24 (26%)	7 (20%)
unknown		1	1	5	3	2
passed exam	41 (42%)	21 (48%)	31 (40%)	31 (40%)	41 (46%)	23 (66%)
father 5th p'um	39 (40%	19 (44%)	29 (37%)	40 (52%)	46 (51%)	17 (49%)
grandfather 5th p'um	21 (22%)	12 (28%)	18 (23%)	17 (22%)	25 (27%)	11 (31%)
local	5 (5%)					1
inferior			4	1	1	

(figures adapted from Charts A-F in Chapters I, II and IV)

a general mixing of the branches, as military leaders assumed all types of dynastic positions. Military officers also passed the state examination, indicating a new era where officers received training in Confucian learning and were well read in the classics. Civilians became less rigid, too, and no longer were reluctant to assume military posts. The Sŏbang which was charged with planning military tactics and strategy comprised civilian officials. This same blurring of distinctions can be seen in the makeup of clans. During the early years of the Koryŏ dynasty, certain clans had separate military lines, now differences were even visible within generations. Kyŏngju Kim member T'aesŏ was a civilian who had a number of sons. One became a civilian official and two became military officers. Chŏng Sukchŏm of the Hadong Chŏng clan was a noted general; one of his sons passed the state examination and became a civilian official. The conflicts and antagonisms that erupted between military and civilian elements in Ŭijong's and Myŏngjong's reigns were changing into a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation. One's service background was no longer a barrier to the office one held. But along with less emphasis on military traditions and more stress on civilian norms, would eventually come attempts to reassert the full powers of the dynasty and its structure.

Mun'gaek

Sources of dysfunction in the Ch'oe scheme are visible in the mun'gaek system which Ch'unghŏn and his descendants constructed. Mun'gaek were retainers who in theory reserved their ultimate loyalty for their masters. The Ch'oe house operated its organization through

mun'gaek who usually held a position in a Ch'oe office and simultaneously a post in the dynastic order. By giving them dual appointments, Ch'unghŏn never doubted that his mun'gaek would remain loyal supporters and followers of his leadership, but their situation posed a real problem to the thoughtful mun'gaek. A mun'gaek received a position from Ch'unghŏn and he owed loyalty to him as his master, but because of his dynastic office he should retain some allegiance to the king. This was not too great a dilemma for most men during the early Ch'oe period because Ch'unghŏn and U were too powerful to challenge. Still the potential was present; ideology and office could be used to topple the Ch'oe house.

Weaknesses in the Ch'oe mun'gaek system were apparent whenever any one of the Ch'oe leaders died. Extensive purges which eliminated men who were not trusted or were considered to be a threat to the individual Ch'oe leaders accompanied the succession of the new Ch'oe rulers. U, forcing the dishonest and the sycophants to leave, executed many of his father's confidants and replaced them with people he could trust. The point to notice here is that the loyalty of Ch'unghŏn's mun'gaek did not transfer automatically to his son. The mun'gaek of the Ch'oe house seem to have been loyal to the individual leaders, but not to the house itself. When Hang succeeded again this same situation evolved as he exiled many of U's faithful supporters. There was no ideological basis for these men to summon to justify their loyalty to the Ch'oe house. They could support individuals for reasons of fidelity or expediency, but there was no established theory to rationalize support for the organization. Furthermore, in the system that the Ch'oe house fostered,

ultimate loyalty would always be directed to the dynasty. By fostering the dynastic order besides its own structure, the Ch'oe house was permitting a competing institution, a competing source of power. The dynastic hierarchy was always there, a dormant order that could be used as a base to challenge Ch'oe authority.

Social and Economic Contradictions

During the politically confusing years before Ch'unghŏn rose to power, there were definite changes emerging in the social structure. Men of humble ch'ŏn status were beginning to receive appointments to dynastic offices, and a number of them even reached the coveted chaesang status. Slaves with talent started to play a more prominent role in society by aiding their masters in land acquisitions or economic endeavors. Social legislation at this time was relaxed, but this very relaxation was accompanied by many peasant revolts and domestic unrest. Ch'unghŏn, a member of a military officer's family, witnessed these events and was impelled to establish his own rule in part to settle these disorders. His solution was simple. He immediately sought to reconstruct the old hierarchy by curtailing the role of slaves and eunuchs and assuring positions for the socially prominent. Ch'unghŏn had accepted the Confucian scheme, which acknowledged an established social order and a dependence on men of learning. By curbing the activities of people like slaves and utilizing talented officials, domestic unrest could be pacified and the system stabilized. The lineage of the men who served in the Ch'oe structure reflects this (see page 335). During the late Myŏngjong period, of the individuals found in the officialdom, four men of humble origins reached ranking

positions while in Ch'unghŏn's rule only one such man was found in the structure. On the other hand, twenty-nine of the men (37%) discovered holding offices in Myŏngjong's civil structure had fathers in the fifth p'um rank or above compared to forty men (52%) discovered in Ch'unghŏn's rule. U and Hang continued the patterns started at this time. Men of humble ch'ŏn status were effectively excluded from prestigious ranks or influence until Hang's period, and even in Hang's period these types of people did not take high government offices but rather assumed informal appointments in the Ch'oe structure acting as aides and confidants for the Ch'oe leader.

One must not get the impression that the Ch'oe house was rigidly restricting the lower classes on all levels, for much of its policy sought to alleviate the discontent of the peasants, and each leader paid considerable attention to their own favorites and personal slaves. Although Ch'unghŏn and U attempted to impose some restrictions on social mobility and restored influence to prominent military and civilian families, developments under Hang and Ŭi seem to have ultimately opened the door for further social emancipation. Starting from the days of Silla rule, there had been a gradual expansion of rights and the granting of political privileges to an increasingly larger proportion of people. The Silla kingdom restricted political authority to the ranking Silla nobles. With the start of the Koryŏ period access to power extended to a still larger group such as former Silla non-elite groups. Under the military rule, military leaders also assumed a prominent role in decision-making and for part of the time even slaves were reaching ranking offices. Although Ch'unghŏn subsequently

restricted slaves, the door, in figurative terms, had been left ajar and during the years immediately after the Ch'oe rule, a small number of slaves again fulfilled more roles and advanced. Starting from the end of the Ch'oe period, social limitations relaxed and perhaps it was during this period that the foundations were set for the relatively open society that evolved in the early Yi dynasty.

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn, turning his attention to economics, also tried to rehabilitate the dynastic fiscal structure. The government needed funds as much as Ch'unghŏn did. The dynastic system was already there, and merely needed to be implemented. Ch'unghŏn made this his task. By revitalizing the chŏnsikwa and forcing people to return land they had seized, Ch'unghŏn curtailed the power of the large landholders, strengthened the dynasty and obtained new tax funds. By clarifying and regulating the land and tax system, this plan also resolved many peasant grievances and restored order for the dynasty. In restoring the dynastic land system, however, Ch'unghŏn sought to guarantee his own preeminence. His restoration of the land system was incomplete, for while he curtailed the large holdings of other men, he permitted himself the luxury of expanding his own property thus perpetuating the very type of order he was trying to abolish. Seeds of disorder sprouted in this dual dynastic-private system that Ch'unghŏn constructed, for he could not expand one order without undermining the other.

The Ch'oe Position

Under the guise of restoration, the Ch'oe house was trying to establish itself as the highest agency in the kingdom. It sought to

achieve this goal by dissolving or weakening any possible competing institutions. Between itself at the top and society below, it accepted no intervening power. Since its strongest competitor for prominence was the royal family, the Ch'oe house, through marriage ties, economic tactics and other institutional mechanisms such as the control of the military establishment, was able to subdue the court to its own advantage. The Ch'oe house tried to merge itself with the court and assume the respect and authority traditionally delegated to the royal house. The Ch'oe house might have succeeded in this endeavor except that by depending on Confucian theory, which maintained the prestige of the court, no matter how great the Ch'oe power came to be, the royal house would always be theoretically supreme.

The Buddhist establishment was a second major force that posed a threat to the Ch'oe hierarchy. Ch'unghŏn, through memorials, through force, and through sponsorship of another sect tried to break the strength of the great Kyo Buddhist sect. He achieved this, and in its place he fostered a sect that was philosophically more akin to his own purposes, and politically less likely to challenge his authority. The Chogye Sŏn sect, through the patronage of the Ch'oe house, became one of the most prominent religious forces in the kingdom. And for the duration of the Ch'oe rule, Buddhist institutions and clerics did not interfere in the political life of the state. The Ch'oe house had successfully restrained one of the potential major independent forces in the kingdom.

Challenges to the Ch'oe house were also latent in slave and peasant unrest and individual attempts to establish economic

independence. Ch'unghŏn pursued a deliberate attack, and through numerous ploys he was able to quell local revolts. To subdue the powerful, Ch'unghŏn enforced the dynastic land system, thereby curtailing extensive land holdings.

Trade was another ready source of wealth which could easily be used by an innovative individual to bolster his power and independence from the ruling power structure. Chang Pogo and others had been able to accumulate through maritime trade hugh resources and enough power to challenge the Silla kingdom. This potential was undoubtedly still present in the Ch'oe period. Ch'unghŏn, however, checked this possibility, too, and took an active, personal interest in trade and in obtaining profits from commerce. Through strict regulation he tried to prevent individuals from gaining too much wealth and establishing an order that could compete with his own power structure.

The military establishment was a final source of competition to the Ch'oe house and perhaps its most formidable domestic opponent. Each of the Ch'oe leaders tried to curtail military opposition but the problem was most acute for Ch'unghŏn. Ch'unghŏn purged a large number of men who were potential threats and he thereby neutralized much of the military opposition. Many of the policies he pursued, as discussed above, were aiso tailored to curb the prospect of any renascent military revolt. By building his own military structure Ch'unghŏn tried to construct a system that would be powerful enough to guarantee his military preeminence and by sheer force assure the subservience of others. Furthermore, in supporting civilian and Confucian ideology, he sought to emulate civil models of rule and give his system a much

more civilian, non-military orientation. He was attempting to defuse the military time-bomb. As long as a recourse to arms was the basis for power, and as long as there was no philosophical or institutional means to secure support for a ruler, politics would be decided by military might, and this was a very unstable way to administer a kingdom. Ch'unghŏn was presiding over a transitional period in which the excesses of the earlier military period were being countered, and civilian authority was being reasserted. Ch'oe U and Hang inherited this and continued these basic patterns. Many competing institutions were successfully neutralized as the Ch'oe house's position of leadership was successfully maintained for some sixty years.

Ultimately the basis for Ch'oe power rested in its military might. Because the Ch'oe house was able to summon force to institute its programs, it was able to maintain its position in the kingdom. Yet, evidently force alone was not enough, for the Ch'oe family had to bolster its position by the employment of civilian scholars, the restoration of the revered dynastic structure and the appeal to Confucian legitimacy. The Ch'oe house by this then had the necessary machinery and means to assure the enactment of its policies. Without the dual support of military and civilian forces, it would have been extremely difficult to administer the kingdom and restore stability to the age.

The Collapse of the Ch'oe House

One of the most obvious reasons for the collapse of the Ch'oe house is disruptions caused by the Mongol invasions. From its establishment the Koryŏ dynasty had often been confronted with serious

threats from the north. Then in 1225, several years after Ch'unghŏn had died, the first difficulties with Mongols developed. By this time the Mongols had rapidly expanded their power in northern China and were already threatening the Chin dynasty. Over the next forty years the Mongols repeatedly invaded the Korean peninsula. They destroyed everything that blocked their path, but the court and Ch'oe house remained unscathed on Kanghwa Island. The difficulties imposed on Korea by the Mongols were indeed traumatic, upheaval must have caused many to yearn for peace, but the Ch'oe house remained in firm control of the kingdom and the fact that the Ch'oe house was able to withstand these invasions for so long testifies to its basic strength. In time these repeated invasions took their toll, however, and the government drifted toward bankruptcy as peasants abandoned their farms to escape the invaders.

Flaws in the Ch'oe system itself must also be examined, however, as additional causes for its collapse. The power of the Ch'oe house rested with its leaders. In the mun'gaek system which the Ch'oe house nurtured, the leader, the Ch'oe head himself, was the fulcrum of all loyalties. If he were removed there was no institutional guarantee that the structure would stand. Ch'unghŏn and U, under whom the Ch'oe house rapidly expanded and matured, were capable men who understood the politics of the age and were able to balance the competing forces to assure their own survival. The last two Ch'oe leaders, Hang and Ŭi, products of a different environment, were not able to match their ancestors' acumen. The Ch'oe house had matured and brought stability to the kingdom; civilian institutions were openly praised; and with this a search for literary accomplishment and Confucian ideals replaced

the military atmosphere of the early Ch'oe years. Ch'oe Hang, sent to Cholla province and trained in Sŏn thought, was removed from martial pursuits and was unfamiliar with court life. It is no wonder that because of his training, he had so little skill in handling political problems, comprehending civilian sensibilities, and commanding the Ch'oe house. Hang's son Ŭi was equally ill-prepared for the responsibilities of his position, and relegated most of his powers to his confidants. Weaknesses in the Ch'oe system had always been present; whereas Ch'unghŏn and U were able to master them, Hang and Ŭi gradually were overwhelmed by them.

The last years of the Ch'oe house, holding out on Kanghwa Island, are pictured in rather desperate terms, and with the collapse of the economic foundations of the kingdom and the constant Mongol attacks, the imminent demise of the entire Ch'oe system must have become obvious to the men around the Ch'oe leaders. It was the Ch'oe confidants and ranking officials who brought an end to Ch'oe rule. Through their offices they must have realized that the Ch'oe house, cut off from its supplies and limited in its options, had become vulnerable and no longer competent to rule.

The potential for the collapse of the Ch'oe house of course was always present. Seeds for decay are inherent in many systems and the contradictions plaguing the Ch'oe economic and social structure have already been indicated. The Ch'oe house was especially vulnerable since it was fostering two competing sets of institutions. The Ch'oe leaders maintained the dynastic structure with the king and civilian personnel, and within this order they formed the Ch'oe house machinery.

The fatal flaw in the Ch'oe structure, however, rested in its cultivation of civilian officials and Confucian ideals, and its failure to devise a new ideological basis for its system. The civilian leadership gradually reasserted control over the structure and neglected military ideals. Their Confucian beliefs, which included the concept that legitimacy resides in the monarch, fed into what became an irreversible torrent of antipathy toward continued Ch'oe rule.

Conclusions

The period of Ch'oe hegemony was a major watershed in Korean history. Along with the rise of the Ch'oe house, there occurred a restoration of the dynastic system and institutions. The Ch'oe house formed novel political and military systems and appended them to the existing dynastic agencies. They were novel in that they bypassed the established dynastic order and put ultimate power into the hands of the Ch'oe leaders and a few individuals close to them. The king was actually peripheral to this system; the military had a significant role.

Even in these new structures, however, legacies of the past were retained. The paramount Ch'oe organization, the Kyojŏng-dogam, operated on a consensus basis--much as the earlier oligarchy of the chaesang had. Furthermore, people within this structure came from many formerly powerful families, and it incorporated much of the previous social order. That the Ch'oe order did not completely break with the past was both its greatest strength and its most ominous flaw. By compromising its new order with the old established system, the Ch'oe house gained the time needed to devise its structure, but by accepting the norms of a previous era it would never be able to free itself

completely from those restrictions. The Ch'oe house was not able philosophically to advance beyond the days of pre-military coup Korea. It did turn to Sŏn Buddhism as a possible rationale for its new order, but Sŏn tenets made poor political theory. In the end, the Ch'oe house could only depend on Confucian concepts of legitimacy to rationalize its order. In its call for Confucian ideals, however, it embarrassingly had to acknowledge the supremacy of the dynastic ruling house.

Military officers assumed the positions of supreme power in Korea in the twelfth century. Although power slipped from their grasp within a century, the impact of military rule in general, and the Ch'oe house in particular, was profound and set much of the political and social tone for the remainder of the Koryŏ dynasty. Most prominent of the many institutional innovations introduced during the six decades that the Ch'oe house controlled the kingdom was the evolution of private armies and private systems of authority. Under Ch'oe initiative, the security of the kingdom became the responsibility of the Ch'oe house, and the Ch'oe-directed Tobang and Yabyŏlch'o became its military arms. To staff these organizations, the Ch'oe leaders used mun'gaek who gained their positions because of allegiance to the individual Ch'oes, not through regular dynastic channels.

Changes also occurred in the Koryŏ social structure. The Ch'oe house effectively countered many of the peasant revolts that characterized the years following the military coup of 1170. It also restructured the social order, denying privileges to many ch'ŏnmin. Its policy, however, was contradictory for it permitted supporters of

the Ch'oe house, regardless of status, to advance to positions of prominence. In doing this it was cautiously permitting the continuance of the erosion, already set in motion after 1170, of rigid social distinctions that marked much of the earlier Koryŏ period. The Ch'oe house was unknowingly paving the way for the increased social fluidity that marked the ensuing centuries.

There were equally significant developments brought about by Ch'oe economic policy. The Ch'oe house sought to bypass the dynastic administration wherever feasible. In the administration of the sigŭp, for example, the Ch'oe house assumed ultimate jurisdiction over the collection and deposit of sigŭp yields. In eliminating the dynastic government's traditional power in matters such as this, the Ch'oe house was placing the individual in direct control of his lands and free from the dynastic middleman. Although this trend did not culminate in the Ch'oe period, the dynasty did eventually lose all command over state finances and land was increasingly seen as the private property of individuals, not as a possession of the dynasty. The Ch'oe house not only sought to expand its control over revenues, but also looked for new sources of wealth. During the Ch'oe rule both yangban and yangsuch'ŏk, for example, assumed certain tax-paying responsibilities. The Ch'oe house also employed the central administration to ensure that revenue from the countryside would be more expeditiously collected and transported to state granaries for state needs. Under Ch'oe authority the central government reasserted its influence over provincial Korea as well as the capital city.

In addition to these social and economic changes, new patterns emerged in the Buddhist hierarchy at this time. The Kyo sect with its elaborate doctrine gradually lost primacy to Sŏn beliefs which emphasized meditation and rejected a slavish dependence on scripture. The stage was set for a type of Buddhist thought that would have much more meaning and significance for the average person. Buddhism had the potential to become a popular religion with deep appeal to the masses as well as to the capital elite.

Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn and his descendants also reinvigorated the dynastic civil structure which had suffered setbacks in the years immediately following the 1170 coup, but the Kyojŏng-dogam and Chŏngbang, agencies of the Ch'oe house, actually managed all governmental operations. Under the auspices of these organs, but through such traditional means as the civil service examination, the Ch'oe house recruited many civilian scholars into its structure as mun'gaek. Indeed, the Ch'oe leaders expanded the scope of the state examinations both by holding them more frequently and by passing a greater number of candidates. Under this atmosphere Confucian learning recovered its former esteem and partly because of Ch'oe patronage, a vigorous intellectual life, coupled with major literary developments, ensued.

The Ch'oe age was crucial for the development of civilian ideals. Early Koryŏ society was continually disrupted by attempts to bring some sort of solution to the problem of rivalry between military and civilian forces. It was indeed the tensions between these groups that in part fomented the military coup that ushered in military rule. Tensions between military and civilian elements were not resolved until

the rise of the Ch'oe house and even then the resolution was unexpected. With the establishment of the Ch'oe house a new period of accommodation evolved and it is an ironic twist of history that it was during this phase of military rule that the Koryŏ kingdom was able to bring some resolution to centuries of military-civilian rivalries. Men were henceforth judged by their merit and by their contributions, and not ostracized from power because of their service background. It took a military general in the position of greatest power in the country to realize that his authority could not be secure without cooperation between and participation in government by both military and civilian elements. And because the Ch'oe house gradually became so dependent upon civilian cooperation, it was ironically in this military period that the foundation was firmly set for Korea's lasting civilian legacy.

APPENDIX A.

Naesi (Palace Attendants) in Ŭijong's reign

Name	Origins	Information
Chin Hyŏn'gwang		B
Chin Tŭngmun		L
Ch'oe Hyŏn	Haeju	A B
Ch'oe Kwanggyun	Hannam	A
Ch'oe Yunsŏ		A B
Chŏng Ham		H
Chŏng Sŏ	Tongnae	A G
Ham Yuil	Hanyang	G
Hwang Munjang		
Kim Ch'ŏn	Kyŏngju	A G
Kim Kŏgong	Pugwŏn	L
Kim Kŏsil		B
Kim Kwang		B
Kim Tonjung	Kyŏngju	A B
Kim Yu		
No Yŏngsun	Kigye	G
Paek Imji	Namp'o	L G
Pae Yŏn	Kigye	A B
Pae Yunjae		G
Pak Yun'gong		B
Yi Pokki		B
Yi Tangju		A B
Yŏng Ŭi		H B
Yun Chiwŏn		
Yun Ŏnmun	P'ap'yŏng	A
Yu Pangŭi		B
Yu Ŭnggyu		A G

Key

A - father or close relative in fifth p'um rank or above
L - histories claim from functionary backgrounds
H - histories claim from ch'ŏn (humble) backgrounds
B - removed from office in 1170 coup
G - advanced after 1170 coup

Total	27
A	10
L	3
H	2
B	12
G	7

APPTENDIX B.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's rule (1196-1219)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to power ?	When removed	miscellaneous
An Wan	?			kamkŏmŏsa		1205	
Chi Kwisu	C			kŭpsa tongjong		1204	
Chi Kwiyŏng	?			?		1204,	brother: Kwisu
Ch'oe Ch'ungsu	M	Ubong	A	tae-changgun		1197,	brother: Ch'unghŏn
Ch'oe Hyŏgyun	?			ŏsajungsung		1196	
Ch'oe Hyŏng	?			kigŏrang		1196	
Ch'oe Kwangwŏn	?			p'anwiwisa		1196	
Ch'oe Kwangyu	?					1196	
Ch'oe Kyeryang	C			p'ansa		1217	
Ch'oe Pi	M			nangjang		1196	
Ch'oe Yŏn	M			changgun		1197	
Chondo	monk					1196	royal favorite
Chŏng Chin	C?	Hadong		kongbu sangsŏ		1215	greedy
Chŏng Yunsi	?			sanyak		1211	
Chu Kwangmi	M			sang-changgun		1196	
Chun Chonsim	M					1197	Ch'oe Ch'ungsu's friend
Chu Wŏnjŏk	M			changgun		1197	
Han Ki	?			ubogya		1209	
Hong Ki	monk					1196	Myŏngjong's son others removed
Kang Che	M			sang-changgun		1196	
Ki Inbo	M			nangjang		1219	conspirator
Kil In	M			sang-changgun		1196	
Kim Chun'gŏ	?			moksa		1199	
Kim Chungwang	?			moksa		1199	brother: Chun'gŏ
Kim Nambo	M			changgun		1209	conspirator
Kim Yusin	M			tae-changgun		1196	

APPENDIX B.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's rule (1196-1219) (Continued)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to power ?	When removed	miscellaneous
Ko Anu	M			sang-changgun		1197	
Kwŏn Chŏlp'yŏng	M			p'yŏngjangsa		1196	son: Chun
Kwŏn Chun	M			changgun		1196	
Kwŏn Sik	M			changgun		1196	
Kwŏn Sin	M			changgun (sogyŏng)		1196	
Kwŏn Yŏn	M?					1196	conspirator
Kwŏn Yun	M			changgun		1196	
Mun Chŏk	C			sŭngsŏn		1196	
Mun Hongbi	C?			nangjung		1196	
Mun Tŭngnyŏ	M			tae-changgun		1196	
O Sukpi	M			changgun		1197	Ch'oe Ch'ungsu's friend
Paek Pugong	M			tae-changgun		1197	
Pae Wŏnu	?			nangjang		1202	
Pak Chinjae	M						Ch'oe relative
Pak Chŏngbu	M?					1197	Ch'oe Ch'ungsu's friend
Pak Kongsŭp	M			Kyŏllyŏng		1196	
Pak Tŭngmun	C			Siŏsa		1205	
Pan Ch'wijŏng	C?			taebokgyŏng		1196	conspirator
Sa Hongjŏk	C?			ch'umir		1211	conspirator
Sin Kwanghan	?			ŏsa		1197	
Sŏk Sŏngjun	M			changgun		1197	
Song Wi	C?			nangjung		1197	
Son Hongyun	M		A	changgun		1196	father: Sŏk
Son Sŏk	M			ch'amjijŏngsa		1196	
Son Yŏng	M			kyowi		1219	
Tam	monk					1197	other, too
Tu Kyŏngsŭng	M	Mangyŏng		chungsŏryŏng		1197	

APPENDIX B.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's rule (1196-1219) (Continued)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to power ?	When removed	miscellaneous
Tu Ŭngnyong	?					1196	
Unmi	monk					1196	royal favorite
U Sŭnggyŏng	M			changgun (ch'amjijŏngsa)		1211	
Wang Chunmyŏng	C?			naesinangjung		1211	
Wang Ik	M			changgun		1211	
Wang Kyŏngŭi	C?			chŏngŏn		1211	brother: Chunmyŏng
Wŏn Ch'un	?			chihu		1196	flatterer
Yi Chigwang	M		A	changgun		1196	father: Ŭimin
Yi Chisun	M		A	tae-changgun		1196	father: Ŭimin
Yi Chiyŏng	M		A	changgun		1196	father: Ŭimin
Yi Chŏkchung	?			singi chiyu		1199	conspirator
Yi Hyŏnp'il	?					1196	Ŭimin's relative
Yi Insŏng	C?			ch'amjijŏngsa		1196	
Yi Kwangsil	M			changgun		1211	
Yi Kyŏngyu	M			taechanggun		1196	
Yi Pu	M			taechanggun		1217	
Yi Pun	?			naesi		1196	flatterer
Yi Sangdon	?			naesi		1196	flatterer
Yi Sunjung	C			pisogam		1213	
Yi Sunu	exam			taesasŏng		1196	royal favorite
Yi Uimin	M		H	changgun and up		1196	
Yŏm Kŭkkwŏn	?					1197	
Yŏn	monk					1197	other removed, too
Yu Ikkyŏm	?					1210	conspirator
Yu Kwang	M			sang-changgun		1196	suicide

APPENDIX B.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn's rule (1196-1219) (Continued)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to power ?	When removed	miscellaneous
Yun Seyu	C	P'ap'yŏng	A	yebuwŏnoerang		1215	
Yu Sambaek	M			changgun		1196	Tu Kyŏngsŭng's relative
Yu Tŭgŭi	C			yibusangsŏ		1197	

Key

Totals:	ousted under Ch'unghŏn	81	during first two years	55
	military background	39		33
	civilian background	14		5
	monks	5	plus more	5 plus more
			changgun (generals)	10
			taechanggun (grand generals)	6
			sangchanggun (supreme generals)	6

M - military
C - civilian
exam - passed state examination (kwagŏ)
H - described by histories as from ch'ŏn (humble) status
L - described by histories as from functionary background
A - father or close relative held fifth p'um rank or above
flatterer refers to specific statements that man flattered to advance
conspirator refers to specific incidents in which individual conspired to overthrow Ch'oe house
slandered refers to individuals who were slandered and thus removed

All other symbols explained in previous appendix.

APPENDIX C.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe U's rule (1219-1249)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to power ?	miscellaneous
An Yŏngnin	?	?	?	?		flatterer
A Yunwi	?			chungnangjang		involved with Kim Hŭiryŏ
Ch'a Chŏk	?			chwasŭngsŏn	ch'umirbusa	
Chi Yunsim	M			sang-changgun		conspirator
Ch'oe Chunmun	M	Honghae		tae-changgun		conspirator
Ch'oe Hyang	M	Ubong	A	changgun		U's brother
Ch'oe Hyojŏn	?			?		flatterer
Ch'oe Mil	?			?		flatterer
Ch'oe Sagyŏm	?					Ch'unghŏn's retainer
Ch'oe Sanbo	?	Samgyehyŏn				involved with Kim Hŭiryŏ
Ch'oe Suung	?			?		flatterer
Ch'oe Yugong	M			sang-changgun		conspirator
Chŏng Sunu	M			sang-changgun		fled battle
Chŏn Ui	?			anch'alsa		deceitful
Cho Sukch'ang	M	Hwoengch'ŏn	A	tae-changgun		slandered
Cho Yŏngyu	?	Sŏngyŏng		?		rebel
Chun P'il	?			?		flatterer
Ham Yŏnsu	M			sang-changgun		conspirator
Han Sun	?			?		rebel
Hong Munsŏ	?			?		flatterer
Hong Yŏl				kupche		friend of Kim Chŏng
Ki Hongsŏk	?			chiyu		friend of Kim Chŏng
Kim Chŏngnip				kukchabusa		slanderer
Kim Chŏnghŭi	M			changgun		friend of Kim Chŏng
Kim Honggi	M	Kunsando	A	kyŏllyŏng		son of Hŭiryŏ
Kim Hŭiryŏ	M	Kunsando		changgun		slandered

APPENDIX C.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe U's rule (1219-1249) (Continued)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to power ?	miscellaneous
Kim Kunyu	exam	Kyongju	A	yebusirang		slandered
Kim Kwangyŏng	?	?	?			rebel
Kim Kyebong	M			changgun		conspirator
Kim Taeji	?	?	?	?		rebel
Kyŏng Yu	?			chikhak	kyosorang	slandered
Ko Serim	?		?	?		flatterer
Ko Sugyŏm	M					conspirator
Kŭm Hwi	M	Kimp'o	A	tae-changgun		conspirator
Min Kyŏngham	?		?			friend of Kim Chŏng
No Chijŏng	M		?	sang-changgun		conspirator
No Hyojŏng	?			Cheju pusa		unethical
O Sugi	M		?	sang-changgun		conspirator
Paek Yangp'il	?		?			slanderer
Pak Hŭido	M		?	sanwŏn		conspirator
Pak Munbi	M		?	tae-changgun		conspirator
Pak Pongsi	?		?	kammu		disobedient
Saja	?		?			Ch'unghŏn's servant
Sin Chakchŏng	M		?	pyolchang		involved with Kim Hŭiryŏ
Sin Chŏ	?		?			slandered
Sin Sŏnju	M		?	changgun		ties with Ch'unghŏn (?)
Sok Chun	?		?	?		rebel
Son Chungsu	?		?	pusa		friend of Kim Chŏng
Song Chagong	?		?	?		flatterer
Song Ch'un	?		?	?		Ch'unghŏn's attendant
Song Paekkong	?		?	?		slandered
Taji	?		?			rebel

APPENDIX C.

Men revoded from power during Ch'oe U's rule (1219-1249) (Continued)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	Return to Power ?	miscellaneous
Tonghwa	?		H			Ch'unghŏn's slave
Yi Chŏngsu	?		?			flatterer
Yi Kongyun	?		?			conspirator
Yi Kugin	M	Yongju	?			conspirator
Yi Mugong	M		?	tae-changgun		conspirator
Yi Sebun	C		?	namgjung		flatterer
Yi Sŏn	C		?	usŭngsŏn		disobedient
Yi Su (Yu)	exam		?	yebusirang		impropriety
Yi Wŏnmi	?		?			flatterer
Yi Yun'gong	?		?			flatterer
Yŏm Sujang	?		?	haknok		slandered
Yu Pi	?		?			flatterer
Yu Songjŏl	M		?	changgun		conspirator

Kim Chŏng was U's grandson who was once considered as a possible heir

All symbols explained in previous appendices

Total: 65 individuals

APPENDIX D.

Men sent to check Khitan in 1216-1218

Name	C/M	Origins	H/A/L	Sent as	in	miscellaneous
Ch'a Ch'ŏk	M			pms	1216	
Chin Seŭi	?			pms	1217	
Chin Suk	M			pms and pupms	1216, 1217	
Cho Ch'ung	exam	Hoengch'ŏn	A	puwonsu	1216	
Ch'oe Chŏnghwa	C			chipms	1216	
Ch'oe Chongjun	exam	Tongju	A	chipms	1216, 1217	
Ch'oe Uj	?			chipms	1217	
Ch'oe Wŏnse	M			pms	1217	
Ch'oe Yugong	M			chipms	1216	
Chŏng Sukch'ŏm	M	Hadong	A	wonsu	1216	
Chŏng T'ongbo	M			pms	1218	
Chŏng Yunin	M			pms	1217	
Kim Ch'wiryŏ	M	Onyang	A	pms	1216	
Kim Hyŏgyŏ	C			pupms	1217	
Kim Kunyu	exam		A	pupms, chipms	1216, 1217	
Kim Onju	C			pupms	1216	
Kim Yŏllyang	?			pms	1217	
Kong Ch'ŏnwŏn	M			pms	1216	demoted, then advanced
Kwak Kongŭi	C			chipms	1217	Ch'unghŏn's friend
Kwŏn Chun	C			pupms, chipms	1216, 1217	
Mun Han'gyŏng	M	Myŏngju	A	pms	1217	
No Wŏnsun	M			pms	1216	
O Inyŏng	M			pms	1217	
O Sugi	M			pms	1218	
O Ŭngbu	M			pms	1216, 1217	demoted, then advanced
Paek Sujŏng	?			chipms	1216	
Sin Sŏnju	M			pms	1218	

APPENDIX D.

Men sent to check Khitan in 1216-1218 (Continued)

Name	C/M	Origins	H/A/L	Sent as	in	miscellaneous
Song An'guk	?			chipms	1217	
Song Sin'gyŏng	M			pms	1216	
Yi Chŏk	?	Chip'yŏng		pupms	1217	
Yi Chogyu	M			chipms	1218	
Yi Im	?			pms	1218	
Yi Mugong	M			chipms, pms	1216, 1217	
Yi Pu	M			chipms	1216	
Yi Sirch'un	C			pupms, pms	1216, 1217	
Yi Tukkyo	?			pupms	1217	
Yi Yŏnsu	C			chipms	1216	
Yu Segyŏm	C	Musong	A	pupms	1216	
Yu Tonsik	M			pms	1217	

Key

Totals: 39 men
20 military background (M)
11 civilian background (C)

pms - pyŏngmasa

Other symbols are explained in previous appendices.

APPENDIX E.

Men removed from power during Ch'oe Hang's rule (1249-1257)

Name	M/C	Origins	H/L/A	Position on removal	When removed	miscellaneous
Ch'oe Chongp'il	?			changgun	1250	
Ch'oe Hwan	?			chwasŭngsŏn	?	
Ch'oe Yundan	C			p'andaesa	1250	in Sach'ŏndae
Chŏng An	exam	Hadong	A	ch'amjijŏngsa	1251	criticized Hang
Chŏng Hongyu	?			chiyu	1249	
Chŏng Ko	?			hyŏllyong	1257	slandered
Cho Yŏmu	?			pujubusa	1250	grudge
Chu Suk	M			Ch'umirwŏnbusa in Tobang & Yabyŏlch'o	1250	slow in supporting Hang linked to Tae family
Hwangbo Ch'angjun	?			in Yabyŏlch'o	1251	failed in orders
Kim An	M			changgun	1249	
Kim Hyŏjŏng	M			changgun	1250	supported king
Kim Kyŏngson	M	Kyŏngju	A	tae-changgun	1249	supported Kim Chŏng
Min Hui	C			ch'umirwŏnsa	1249	jealousy
No Sŏng	?			kammu	1257	slandered
O An'gu	C			taesasŏng	1250	in Sach'ŏndae
O Sŭngjŏk	?			changgun	1250	linked to Tae family
Pak Changwŏn	?			kammu	1249	grudge
Pak Hwŏn	exam	Kongju		hyŏngbusangsŏ	1250	
Sŏl In'gŏm	?			Hapju pusa	1257	slandered
Yi Ch'ang	?				1257	slandered
Yi Hyŏn	?			ch'umirwŏnbusa	1254	traitor
Yi Kyu	?				1257	slandered
Yi Kyun	?			Naju pusa	1250	
Yu Sŏk	exam	Musong	A	anch'alsa	1250	criticized for lack of justice

Total: 24 individuals

All symbols explained in previous appendices.

Glossary

akkong (musician) 樂工
anch'alsa (Royal Inspector) 按察使
An Ch'imin 安置民
An Hongmin 安洪敏
Ansan 安山
An Sŏkchŏng 安碩貞
An Wan 安琓
An Yŏngnin 安永麟
An Yubu 安有孚
A Yunwi 牙允偉
Ch'achanggun 借將軍
Ch'a Ch'ŏk 車倜
Ch'a Chunggyu 車仲規
Ch'ae Chŏng 蔡靖
Ch'ae Chŏng 蔡楨
chaein (actor) 才人
Ch'ae In 蔡仁
chaesang 宰相
Ch'ae Songnyŏn 蔡松年
Ch'ae Sunhŭi 蔡順禧
Ch'ae Wŏn 蔡元
ch'albangsa (Royal Commissioner for Inspection) 察訪使
ch'amjijŏngsa (Assistant Executive in Political Affairs) 參知政事
ch'amjik 參職
chang 莊
Ch'angboksa 昌福寺
Chang Ch'ungŭi 張忠義
changgun (general) 將軍
Chang Il 張鎰
Chang Ingmyŏng 張翼明
Chang Pagin 張博仁
Chang Pogo 張保皐
Chang Wi 張暐
Chang Yunmun 張允文
Ch'a Songgu 車松祐
Ch'a Yakch'un 車若椿
Ch'a Yaksong 車若松
Ch'ebang 遞房
ch'ehyŏp kongsin (meritorious subject) 禘祫功臣
Chi Chasim 池資深
Chi Ch'ing 智偁
chigonggŏ (examiner) 知貢擧
chijusa (Administrator of Memorials) 知奏事
chik 職
chikchŏn (office land) 職田
Chi Kwangsu 池光守
Chi Kwisu 池龜壽
Chi Kwiyŏng 池龜永
chimunhasŏngsa (Administrator) 知門下省事
chinch'ŏk (ferrymen) 津尺
Chin Chun 陳俊
Chindo 珍島
Chin'gak 眞覺
Chin'ganggong 晉康公
Chin'ganghu 晉康侯
Chin Hwa 陳澕
Chin Hyŏn'gwang 陳玄光
Chinju 晉州
Chin Kwangin 晉光仁

Chin Saryong 陳士龍
Chin Seŭi 秦世儀
Chin Sik 陳湜
Chin Suk 陳淑
Chin Tungmun 秦得文
Chinul 知訥
Chinwihyŏn 振威縣
Chin Yunsŭng 陳允升
chi ŏsadaebu (Acting Chief Censor) 知御史大夫
Chi Sim 池深
Chi Ŭisim 池義深
chiwŏnsa (Acting Administrator) 知院事
chiyu (Instruction Officer) 指諭
Chi Yunsim 池允深
cho (rent) 租
ch'ŏ (royal estate) 處
Cho Chinyak 曹晉若
Cho Chun 趙準
Cho Ch'ung 趙冲
Ch'oe Cha 崔滋
Ch'oe Chae 崔梓
Ch'oe Chap'a 崔子葩
Ch'oe Chayŏng 崔子英
Ch'oe Ch'i 崔值
Ch'oe Ch'ŏkkyŏng 崔陟卿
Ch'oe Chŏng 崔証
Ch'oe Chongbŏn 崔正伤
Ch'oe Chŏngbun 崔宗蕃
Ch'oe Chŏnghwa 崔正華
Ch'oe Chonghyŏn 崔正賢
Ch'oe Chongjae 崔宗梓
Ch'oe Chongjun 崔宗峻
Ch'oe Chongp'il 崔宗弼
Ch'oe Ch'un 崔偸
Ch'oe Ch'unghŏn 崔忠獻
Ch'oe Ch'ungnyŏl 崔忠烈
Ch'oe Ch'ungp'il 崔忠弼
Ch'oe Ch'ungsu 崔忠粹
Ch'oe Chunmun 崔俊文
Ch'oe Ch'unmyŏng 崔椿命
Ch'oe Ham 崔諴
Ch'oe Hang 崔沆
Ch'oe Hongyun 崔洪胤
Ch'oe Hwan 崔峘
Ch'oe Hyang 崔珦
Ch'oe Hyogi 崔孝基
Ch'oe Hyojŏ 崔孝著
Ch'oe Hyojŏn 崔孝全
Ch'oe Hyogyun 崔林尹
Ch'oe Hyŏn 崔瑄
Ch'oe Hyŏng 崔衡
Ch'oe I 崔怡
Ch'oe Imsu 崔林壽
Ch'oe In 崔璘
Ch'oe In 崔仁
Ch'oe Kwanggyun 崔光鈞
Ch'oe Kwangŭi 崔匡義
Ch'oe Kwangwŏn 崔光遠
Ch'oe Kwangyu 崔光裕
Ch'oe Kyeryang 崔季良
Ch'oe Kyun 崔均
Ch'oe Mil 崔謐
Ch'oe Munbun 崔文本
Ch'oe Munch'ŏng 崔文清
Ch'oe Nubaek 崔婁伯

Ch'oe Omwi 崔嚴威
Ch'oe On 崔溫
Ch'oe Pak 崔博
Ch'oe Pi 崔斐
Ch'oe Pohu 崔甫侯
Ch'oe Posun 崔甫淳
Ch'oe Poyŏn 崔甫延
Ch'oe P'yŏng 崔坪
Ch'oe Sagyŏm 崔思謙
Ch'oe Sanbo 崔山甫
Ch'oe Sebo 崔世輔
Ch'oe Sŏn 崔詵
Ch'oe Sŏng 崔珹
Ch'oe Sukch'ŏng 崔淑清
Ch'oe Suung 崔守雄
Ch'oe Tang 崔讜
Ch'oe Tongsik 崔東軾
Ch'oe U 崔瑀
Ch'oe Ubo 崔祐甫
Ch'oe Uch'ŏng 崔遇清
Ch'oe Ŭi 崔瑄
Ch'oe Ŭi 崔義
Ch'oe Ŭngch'ŏng 崔應清
Ch'oe Wŏnho 崔元浩
Ch'oe Wŏnse 崔元世
Ch'oe Yangbaek 崔良伯
Ch'oe Yŏhae 崔汝諧
Ch'oe Yŏn 崔璉
Ch'oe Yong 崔瑛
Ch'oe Yŏngŭi 崔令儀
Ch'oe Yu 崔濡
Ch'oe Yuch'ing 崔褒偁
Ch'oe Yuch'ŏng 崔惟清
Ch'oe Yuga 崔瑜賈
Ch'oe Yugong 崔愈恭
Ch'oe Yun'gwang 崔允匡
Ch'oe Yunin 崔允仁
Ch'oe Yundan 崔允旦
Ch'oe Yunsŏ 崔允偰
Ch'oe Yunŭi 崔允儀
Chogye 曹溪
Cho Ilsŏng 趙日成
Cho Kyesun 趙季珣
Chŏlla 全羅
Cho Munbal 趙文拔
Cho Munjin 趙文振
Cho Mungwi 趙文貴
ch'ŏn 千
Ch'ŏnanbu 天安府
Chŏn Ch'iyu 田致儒
Chondo 存道
Chŏngan 定安
Chŏng An 鄭晏
Chŏngbang (Privy Council) 政房
Chŏng Chin 鄭稹
Chŏng Chiwŏn 鄭知源
Chŏng Chŏngsuk 鄭旌叔
Chŏng Chun 鄭準
Chŏng Chungbu 鄭仲夫
Chŏng Chunyu 鄭俊儒
Chŏngdangmunnak (Assistant Executive in Letters) 政堂文學
Chŏnggak 靜覺
Chŏng Ham 鄭諴
Chŏng Han'gyu 鄭漢珪
chŏnghojŏn 鄭戶田
Chŏng Hongyu 鄭洪裕
chŏnghye ssangsu 定慧雙修
Ch'ŏngju 清州

Chŏngju 定州
Chŏng Ko 鄭皐
Chŏng Kongsu 丁公壽
Chŏng Kukkŏm 鄭國儉
Chŏng Kŭgon 鄭克溫
Chŏng Kyun 鄭筠
chŏngŏn (Policy Monitor) 正言
Chŏng Ŏnjin 丁彥眞
Chŏng Pangbo 鄭邦輔
Chŏng Pokkyŏng 鄭復卿
Chŏng Sesin 鄭世臣
Chŏng Seyu 鄭世猷
Chŏng Sin 鄭臣
Chŏng Sŏ 鄭敍
chŏngan 政案
Chŏng Sonip 鄭遜位
Chŏng Sukch'ŏm 鄭叔瞻
Chŏng Sunu 丁純祐
Chŏng Sŭmmyŏng 鄭襲明
Chŏng T'ongbo 鄭通輔
Ch'ŏn'gwansa 天冠寺
Chŏng Wŏnnyŏng 鄭元寧
Chŏng Yunin 鄭有麟
Chŏng Yunsi 鄭允時
Chŏngyong (cavalry) 精勇
Chŏnju 全州
ch'ŏnmin 賤民
chŏnsikwa 田柴科
Chŏn Sungu 田承雨
Ch'ŏnt'ae (Heavenly Terrace) 天台
Chŏn Ŭi 全懿
Ch'ŏnu-wi (Royal Guard Army) 千牛衛
Chŏn Wŏngyun 田元均
Cho Paekki 趙伯琪
Cho Posu 趙甫壽
Cho Sijŏ 曹時著
Cho Sŏng 趙晟
Choson'gong 朝鮮公
Cho Su 趙脩
Cho Sukch'ang 趙叔昌
Cho T'ong 趙通
Cho Tonghŭi 趙冬曦
Cho Wich'ong 趙位寵
Cho Wŏnjŏng 曹元正
Cho Yŏmgyŏng 趙廉卿
Cho Yŏmu 趙廉右
Cho Yŏngin 趙永仁
Cho Yŏngyu 趙永綏
chu 州
Chu Kwangmi 朱光美
Ch'umirwŏn (Security Council) 樞密院
Chun Chonsim 俊存深
Chungbang 重房
Ch'unghŭi 冲曦
Ch'ungju 忠州
chungnangjang (senior colonel) 中郎將
Chungsŏmunhasŏng (Department of Royal Secretariat-Chancellery) 中書門下省
Chunggwangsa 重光寺
Ch'ungnyŏlwang 忠烈王
Chun P'il 俊弼
Chu Suk 周肅
Chu Wŏnjŏk 周元迪
chwabogya (Senior Executive) 左僕射

Chwau-wi (Left-Right Army) 左右衛
Ha Ch'ŏndan 河千旦
Hadong 河東
Haeju 海州
Haengju 幸州
Ha Kongsŏ 河公敍
haksa (Academician) 學士
Hallimwŏn (Royal Academy of Letters) 翰林院
Ham Chajin 咸子眞
Ham Sun 咸淳
Ham Yŏnsu 咸延壽
Ham Yuil 咸有一
Han Chŏng 韓靖
Han Ch'wi 韓就
Han Hyu 韓休
haninjŏn (Reserve Officers Land) 閑人田
Han Ki 韓琦
Han Kwangyŏn 韓光衍
Han Munjun 韓文俊
Han Munyu 韓文裕
Han Noe 韓賴
Han On'guk 韓彦國
Han Sun 韓恂
Han Yuhan 韓惟漢
Ho 晧
Hobu (Ministry of Revenue) 户部
Hŏ Chadan 許子端
Hŏ Hongjae 許洪材
hojang (Township Headman) 户長
Hong Chin 洪縉
Hong Chungbang 洪仲方
Hongwonsa 弘圓寺
Honghae 興海
Honghosa 弘護寺
Honghwasa 弘化寺
Hong Ki 洪機
Hong Kyun 洪鈞
Hong Munsŏ 洪文敍
Hong Yŏl 洪烈
Hŏ Sesu 許勢修
Hŏ Sŭng 許升
hu (Marquis) 侯
Hŭijong 熙定
Hŭngju 興州
Hŭngnyŏngbu 興寧府
Hŭngwangsa 興王寺
Hungwi-wi (Third Combat Army) 興威衛
Hwang Munjang 黃文莊
Hwangbo Ch'angjun 皇甫昌俊
Hwangbo Hang 皇甫抗
Hwangbo Ki 皇甫琦
Hwangbo Kwan 皇甫瓘
Hwangbo T'ak 皇甫倬
Hwaŏm 華嚴
Hoengch'ŏn 橫川
hyang 鄕
hyŏllyŏng 縣令
hyŏn 縣
Hyŏngbu (Ministry of Punishments) 刑部
Hyŏnhwasa 玄化寺
Hyŏn Tŏksu 玄德秀
I 里
Ibu (Ministry of Civil Personnel) 吏部
Ich'ŏn 利川

Im Changgyŏng 林長卿
Im Chongsik 林宗植
Im Ch'un 林椿
Im Hang 任沆
Im Hyomyŏng 任孝明
Im Ik 任翊
Im Kŭkchŏng 任克正
Im Kŭkch'ung 任克忠
Im Kwang 林光
Im Kyŏnggyŏm 任景謙
Im Kyŏngsik 林景軾
Im Kyŏngsuk 任景肅
Im Kyŏngsun 任景純
Im Kyu 任奎
Im Minbi 林民庇
Imp'i 臨陂
Im Pu 任溥
Im Wŏnae 任元敳
Im Yŏn 林衍
Im Yŏngnyŏng 任永齡
Im Yu 任濡
Injijae 仁智齊
Injong 仁宗
Illyang 仁梁
Kaegyŏng 開京
Kakhun 覺訓
kamch'alŏsa (Investigating Censor) 監察御史
Kammugwan (District Office) 監務官
kammun-wi (Capital Gate Army) 監門衛
Kang Che 康濟
Kang Ch'ŏgyun 康處均
Kang Ch'ŏyak 康處約
Kanghwa 江華
Kangjong 康宗
Kang Munjun 姜文俊
Kangnŭng 江陵
Kang Sunŭi 康純義
Kaya 伽耶
Ki Chŏ 奇洧
Kigye 杞溪
Ki Hongsŏk 奇洪碩
Ki Hongsu 奇洪壽
kiin 其人
Ki Inbo 奇仁甫
Kil In 吉仁
Kim An 金安
Kim Chagi 金子期
Kim Chagyŏk 金子格
Kim Chang 金莊
Kim Ch'ang 金敞
Kim Chidae 金之岱
Kim Chiu 金之祐
Kim Ch'ŏkhu 金陟侯
Kim Ch'ŏn 金闡
Kim Chŏng 金晸
Kim Chŏngnip 金挺立
Kim Chŏnghŭi 金正曦
Kim Chonjung 金存中
Kim Chujŏng 金周鼎
Kim Chun 金晙
Kim Chung 金冲
Kim Chunggu 金仲龜
Kim Chun'gŏ 金俊据
Kim Chungon 金仲溫
Kim Chungwang 金俊光

Kim Chunggwi 金仲龜
Kim Ch'wiryŏ 金就礪
Kimhae 金海
Kim Honggi 金弘己
Kim Hŭiryŏ 金希礪
Kim Hwayun 金華尹
Kim Hyogyŏ 金奕輿
Kim Hyojŏng 金孝精
Kim Hyoin 金孝印
Kim Hyŏnbo 金鉉甫
Kim Injun 金仁俊
Kim In'gyŏng 金仁鏡
Kim Isaeng 金利生
Kim Iyŏng 金貽永
Kim Kahoe 金嘉會
Kim Kam 金昰
Kim Kisin 金起莘
Kim Kison 金起孫
Kim Kŏgong 金巨公
Kim Kongsu 金公粹
Kim Kŏsil 金居實
Kim Ku 金坵
Kim Kuhae 金仇亥
Kim Kŭkki 金克己
Kim Kunyu 金君綏
Kim Kwang 金光
Kim Kwangjung 金光中
Kim Kwangyŏng 金光永
Kim Kyebong 金季鳳
Kim Kyŏm 金謙
Kim Kyŏngbu 金慶夫
Kim Kyŏngson 金慶孫
Kim Nambo 金南寶
Kim Onju 金蘊珠
Kim Onjung 金温中
Kim Panggyŏng 金方慶
Kim Podang 金甫當
Kim Pojŏng 金寶鼎
Kim Pongmo 金鳳毛
Kim Pu 金富
Kim Pusik 金富軾
Kim Pyŏn 金弁
Kim P'yŏng 金平
Kim Sami 金沙彌
Kim Sik 金軾
Kim Sillyŏn 金臣璉
Kim Sinyun 金莘尹
Kim Sŏngmi 金成美
Kim Sugang 金守剛
Kim Suja 金守雌
Kim Sujang 金守藏
Kim Sujŏng 金守精
Kim Sungnyong 金叔龍
Kim Sun 金純
Kim Suyŏn 金壽延
Kim Taeji 金大志
Kim T'aesŏ 金台瑞
Kim Tŏngmyŏng 金德明
Kim Tongsŏng 金諫成
Kim Tonjung 金敦中
Kim Tonsi 金敦時
Kim Ubŏn 金于蕃
Kim Ŭiwŏn 金義元
Kim Ŭiyŏl 金毅烈
Kim Wŏnŭi 金元義
Kim Yakchin 金躍珍
Kim Yaksŏn 金若先
Kim Yang 金諹

Kim Yanggyŏng 金良鏡
Kim Yŏlbo 金閱甫
Kim Yŏllyang 金沿亮
Kim Yŏnggwan 金永寶
Kim Yŏngbu 金永夫
Kim Yŏngnyŏng 金永寧
Kim Yŏngsŏk 金永錫
Kim Yŏngyun 金永胤
Kim Yŏnsŏng 金鍊成
Kim Yu 金鏐
Kim Yunhu 金允侯
Kim Yusin 金庾信
kisaeng 妓生
Ki T'aksŏng 奇卓成
Ki Yunsuk 奇允肅
Ki Yunwi 奇允偉
Ko Anu 高安祐
Ko Chasa 高子思
Ko Chogi 高兆基
Kojong 高宗
Ko Kyerŭng 高季稜
kong 公
Kongbu (Ministry of Public Works) 工部
Kong Ch'ŏnwŏn 貢天源
konghaejŏn 公廨田
kongjŏn (public 公田 lands)
kongŭmjŏn (land for high ranking officials) 功蔭田
Ko Paekchŏng 高伯梃
Koryŏ 高麗
Koryŏsa 高麗史
Koryŏsa chŏryo 高麗史節要
Ko Serim 高世霖
Kŏsŏng Wŏnbal 巨成元拔
Ko Sugyŏm 高守謙
Ko Wŏnin 高元仁
Ko Yŏl 高悅
Ko Yongbu 高榮夫
Ko Yŏngmun 高令文
kubunjŏn (Retired Soldiers land) 口分田
Kukchagam (National University) 國子監
Kuksa 國師
Kŭmgwan 金官
Kŭm Hwi 琴輝
Kŭm Kŭgŭi 琴克儀
Kumo-wi (Capital Garrison) 金吾衛
kun (guard) 軍
kunban ssijok 軍班氏族
kuninjŏn (Soldiers land) 軍人田
Kŭpchŏn-dogam (Directorate-General of Land Grants) 給田都監
kwagŏ (state examination) 科舉
Kwak Kongŭi 郭公義
Kwak Yangsŏn 郭陽宣
Kwang Tae 光大
Kwangjong 光宗
Kwangmyŏngsa 廣明寺
Kwangyang 光陽
Kwanyŏnsa 觀瀾寺
Kwibŏpsa 歸法寺
Kwŏn Chŏlp'yŏng 權節平
Kwŏn Chŏnggyun 權正鈞

Kwŏn Chun 權濬
Kwŏn Chun 權準
kwŏnji hammunjihu (provisional warder) 權知閤門祗侯
Kwŏn Kyŏngjung 權敬中
kwŏnnongsa (Royal Commissioner for the Promotion of Agriculture) 勸農使
Kwŏn Sik 權湜
Kwŏn Sin 權信
Kwŏn Sup'yŏng 權守平
Kwŏn Ŭnggyŏng 權應經
Kwŏn Wi 權韙
Kwŏn Yŏn 權衍
Kwŏn Yun 權允
Kyo 敎
Kyojŏng-byŏlgam 校定別監
Kyojŏng-dogam (Directorate General for Policy Formation) 校定都監
kyŏkku (polo) 擊毬
kyŏl 結
Kyŏng 暻
Kyŏnghoksa 景福寺
Kyŏng Chin 慶珍
Kyŏngju 慶州
Kyŏngsangdo 慶常道
Kyŏng Taesŭng 慶大升
Kyŏngwŏn 慶源
Kwŏng Yu 景瑜
Kyŏngnyongjae 慶龍齋
kyowi (lieutenant) 校尉
Mabyŏlch'o 馬別抄
Manjŏk 萬積
Manjŏn 萬全
Manjong 萬宗
Min Ch'ing 閔偁
Min Hŭi 閔曦
Min In'gyun 閔仁鈞
minjŏn (people's land) 民田
Min Konggyu 閔公珪
Min Kyŏngham 閔景咸
Min Sik 閔湜
Min Yŏngmo 閔令謨
Miryang 密陽
mok 牧
muban 武班
munban 文班
Mun Changp'il 文章弼
Mun Chŏk 文迪
Mun Chin 文振
mun'gaek (retainer) 門客
Mun Han'gyŏng 文漢卿
munhasijung (chancellor) 門下侍中
Mun Hongbi 文洪賓
Mun Hwang 文璜
Munjong 文宗
Mun Kongwŏn 文公元
Mun Kongyu 文公裕
Mun Kŭkkyŏm 文克謙
Mun Tŭngnyŏ 文得呂
Munŭng 武陵
Mun Yup'il 文惟弼
Myoch'ŏng 妙清
Myŏngjong 明宗
Naebu (Palace Treasury) 內府
naejang (royal estate residence) 內莊

naesi (palace attendant) 内侍
namban 南班
Namp'yŏng 南平
Namsalli 南山里
nangjang (junior colonel) 郎將
nangjung (office chief) 郎中
Na Tŭkhwang 羅得璜
nobi (slave) 奴婢
No Chijŏng 盧之正
No Hyodon 盧孝敦
No Hyojŏng 盧孝貞
No Inu 盧仁祐
No Inyu 盧仁綏
nokpong 祿俸
No Kwan 盧琯
No Sŏksung 盧碩崇
No Sŏng 盧成
No T'agyu 盧卓儒
No Wŏnsun 盧元純
No Yŏn 盧演
No Yŏngsun 盧永醇
O An'gu 吳安矩
O Ch'an 吳贊
O Ch'ŏnyu 吳闡猷
O Ch'ungjŏng 吳忠正
O Inyŏng 吳仁永
O Kwangch'ŏk 吳光陟
Ŏsadae (Censorate) 御史臺
O Sejae 吳世材
O Sugi 吳壽祺
O Sukpi 吳淑玭
O Sŭngjŏk 吳承績
O Susan 吳壽山
O Ŭngbu 吳應夫

Paeh Chadan 白子端
Pae Chin 裵縉
Paek Chonyu 白存儒
Paek Imji 白任至
Paek Kwangsin 白光臣
Paek Pugong 白富公
Paek Punhwa 白賁華
Paek Sŏnyŏn 白善淵
Paek Sujŏng 白守貞
Paek Ton'gwi 白敦貴
Paek Yangp'il 白良弼
Pae Wŏnu 裵元祐
Pae Yŏn 裵衍
Pae Yunjae 裵允才
Pak Changwŏn 朴長原
Pak Chinjae 朴晉材
Pak Chŏngbu 朴挺夫
Pak Chŏnggyu 朴廷揆
Pak Ch'ŏnsik 朴天湜
Pak Ch'ung 朴沖
Pak Hŭi 朴曦
Pak Hŭido 朴希道
Pak Hwŏn 朴暄
Pak Hyojin 朴孝縉
Pak Hyŏn'gyu 朴玄圭
Pak Insŏk 朴仁碩
Pak Kongsŭp 朴公襲
Pak Kyŏngsan 朴景山
Pak Munbi 朴文備
Pak Munsŏng 朴文成
Pak Munsu 朴文秀
Pak Munŭi 朴文檥
Pak Pogyun 朴甫均
Pak Pongsi 朴奉時

Pak Sŏ 朴犀
Pak So 朴紹
Pak Sŏn 朴瑄
Pak Songbi 朴松庇
Pak Su 朴倜
Pak Sunch'ung 朴純沖
Pak Sun'ga 朴純嘏
Pak Sŭngyu 朴承儒
Pak Sunp'il 朴純弼
Pak Tonbo 朴敦甫
Pak Tŭngmun 朴得文
Pak Tŭngnyŏng 朴得齡
Pak Ŭisin 朴義臣
Pak Yu 朴儒
Pak Yubo 朴惟甫
Pak Yukhwa 朴育和
Pak Yun'gong 朴允恭
P'algwan 八關
p'an... sa (Superintendent) 判...事
Pan Ch'wijŏng 潘就正
Pang Chasu 方資壽
Pang Ŭnggyo 房應喬
panhammunsa 判閤門事
panwŏnsa (Supreme Administrator) 判院事
Pijach'i 必者赤
Pohyŏnwŏn 普賢院
Pojesa 普齊寺
Pok Changhan 卜章漢
pon'gwan 本貫
Pongju 鳳州
P'ap'yŏng 坡平
Posŭng (infantry) 保勝
pu 府
pugok 部曲
Puinsa 符仁寺
p'um 品
p'umgun 品軍
Pusan 釜山
Puso 扶蘇
Pusŏksa 浮石寺
Pyŏlch'o (Special Patrol Troops) 別抄
pyŏlchang (Sub-colonel) 別將
pyŏlmuban (Special Military Corps) 別武班
pyŏlsajŏn (land for clergy) 別賦田
Pyŏngbu (Ministry of Military Affairs) 兵部
pyŏngmasa (military commisioner) 兵馬使
P'yŏngnyanggong Min 平凉公旼
P'yŏngyanggong 平壤公
P'yŏngsan 平山
Pyŏn Sik 邊軾
Sach'ŏndae (Institute of Astronomical Observation) 司天臺
Sa Hongjŏk 史弘績
Sa Honggi 史洪紀
Saja 捕師子
sajŏn 私田
Sa Kwangbo 史光補
sambo 三寶
Sambyŏlch'o (Three Patrols) 三別抄

Samsa (Finance Commission) 三司
sang-changgun (supreme general) 上將軍
sanggaek (lead retainer) 上客
sangsŏ (minister) 尚書
Sangsŏsŏng (Department of Ministries) 尚書省
sasimgwan (local inspector general) 事審官
se (tax) 税
sigūp (fief) 食邑
Silla 新羅
Simgyŏng 心鏡
Sinanhu Sŏng 信安侯城
Sin Chakchŏng 申作楨
Sin Chibo 申之甫
Sin Chipp'yŏng 愼執平
Sin Chŏ 申著
Sinho-wi (Second Combat Army) 神虎衛
Sinjong 神宗
Sin Kŏryong 申巨龍
Sin Kwanghan 申光漢
Sin Poji 申寶至
Sin Posun 申甫純
Sin Sŏnju 申宣胄
Sin Suk 申淑
Sinŭigun 神義軍
sirang (executive) 侍郎
so 所
Sŏbang (Chamber of Scholar Advisers) 書房
Sŏ Ch'u 徐諏
Sŏgyŏng 西京
sŏk 石
Sŏk Chun 石俊
Sŏk Ch'ung 石冲
Sŏk In 石磷
Sŏ Kong 徐恭
Sŏk Sŏngju 石城桂
Sŏl In'gŏm 薛仁儉
Sŏl Sin 薛愼
Sŏn 禪
Son Chungsu 孫仲秀
Song An'guk 宋安國
Song Chagong 宋自恭
Song Chŏ 宋訏
Song Ch'ŏng 宋清
Sŏng Ch'un 成春
Songgwang 松廣
Song Hongnyŏl 宋洪烈
sŏngjae 省宰
Song Kiryu 宋吉儒
Song Kukch'ŏm 宋國瞻
Song Kŭkhyŏn 宋克儇
Song Kyŏngin 宋景仁
sŏngnang 省郎
Song Munju 宋文冑
Song On'gi 宋彥琦
Song Onsang 宋彥庠
Song Paekkong 宋白恭
Songsaenghyŏh 松生縣
Song Sin'gyŏng 宋臣卿
Song Sŏ 宋惿
Song Sun 宋恂
Song Sŭngbu 宋勝夫
Song Wi 宋韙
Song Yuin 宋有仁
Song Yun 宋允

Son Hongyun 孫洪胤
Sŏn Innyŏl 宣仁烈
Son Pyŏn 孫抃
Son Sŏk 孫碩
Son Sŭpkyŏng 孫襲卿
Sŏ Nŭng 徐稜
sori (functionary) 庶吏
Son Ŭngsi 孫應時
Son Wan 孫琓
Son Yŏng 孫永
Sŏ Sun 徐淳
Ssangamsa 雙岩寺
Such'unhu Hang 壽春侯沆
Suhoeksa (tax collector) 收獲使
Sukpang 宿房
Sukchong 肅宗
sŭng 升
sŭngsŏn (transmitter) 承宣
Surisa 修理寺
Tabang (Royal Chamber of Recreation) 茶房
Taeansa 大安寺
Taebu (State Treasury) 大府
tae-changgun (grand general) 大將軍
Tae Chipsŏng 大集成
Taegan 臺諫
T'aejo 太祖
Taejŏng (sub-lieutenant) 隊正
Taeryŏnghu Kyŏng 大寧侯暻
Taesasŏng 大司成
Taji 多智
Tam 湛
T'amna 耽羅
Tarae 炟艾
Tobang (Private Guard Detachment) 都房
Togam 都監
Tongbungmyŏn 東北面
tongchiwŏnsa (Co-Administrator) 同知院事
T'ongdosa 通度寺
Tonggyŏng 東京
Tonghwa 桐花
Tongju 東州
Tongnae 東萊
ton'ojŏmsu 頓悟漸修
toryŏng (Commandant) 都領 都領
Tosŏng (Department of Ministries) 都省
tu 斗
Tu Kyŏngsŭng 杜景升
Tu Ŭngnyong 杜應龍
Ubon 于蕃
Ubong 牛峰
U Hagyu 于學儒
Ŭich'ŏn 義天
Ŭijong 毅宗
Ŭiju 義州
U Kwangyu 于光儒
ŭm 陰
Ŭm Chungin 陰仲寅
Ŭngyanggun (First Royal Guard) 鷹揚軍
Unmi 雲美
U Pangjae 于邦宰
U Suryu 于述儒

U Sŭnggyŏng 于承慶
wang (king) 王
Wang Ch'ung 王冲
Wang Chunmyŏng 王濬明
Wang Hae 王諧
Wang Ik 王翊
Wang Kŏn 王建
Wang Kwangch'wi 王光就
Wang Kyŏngŭi 王景儀
Wang Kyu 王珪
Wangnyunsa 王輪寺
wangsa (royal tutor) 王師
Wang Segyŏng 王世慶
Wang Sik 王軾
Wang Ŭi 王儀
Wang Yu 王猷
wi (army) 衛
Wŏn Ch'un 元傖
Wŏnjong 元宗
Wŏnsang 元尚
Wŏn Sŏ 元諝
Yabyŏlch'o (Night Patrol) 夜別抄
Yangbaek 梁伯
yangban 良班
yangsuch'ŏk (weaver) 楊水尺
Yank Suk 梁淑
Yang Sunjŏng 梁純精
Yang Wŏnjun 梁元俊
Yejong 睿宗
Yi Chagyŏm 李資謙
Yi Chajŏng 李自貞
Yi Chaksŭng 李綽升
Yi Chamun 李資文
Yi Ch'ang 李昌
Yi Changyong 李藏用
Yi Chasŏng 李子晟
Yi Chigwang 李之中
Yi Chihwa 李之和
Yi Chijung 李之中
Yi Chimu 李之茂
Yi Chimyŏng 李知命
Yi Chisim 李知深
Yi Chisun 李至純
Yi Chiyŏng 李至榮
Yi Chŏgyu 李迪儒
Yi Chŏk 李勣
Yi Chŏkchung 李勣中
Yi Chŏngsu 李貞壽
Yi Chonjang 李存章
Yi Chosŏn 李朝鮮
Yi Chu 李湊
Yi Chunch'ang 李俊昌
Yi Chungje 李仲齊
Yi Ch'ullo 李椿老
Yi Ch'unbu 李椿夫
Yi Chunŭi 李俊儀
Yi Chunyang 李俊陽
Yi Ham 李涵
Yi Hang 李抗
Yi Hyŏgyu 李奕蕤
Yi Hyŏn 李峴
Yi Hyŏnp'il 李賢弼
Yi I 李頤
Yi Illo 李仁老
Yi Im 李霖
Yi Inbo 李仁甫
Yi Insil 李仁實
Yi Insŏng 李仁成

Yi Inyŏng 李仁榮
Yi Ko 李高
Yi Kongjŏng 李公靖
Yi Kongju 李公主
Yi Kongno 李公老
Yi Kongsŭng 李公升
Yi Kongyun 李公允
Yi Kŭgin 李克仁
Yi Kŭksŏ 李克偁
Yi Kwangjin 李光縉
Yi Kwangjŏng 李光挺
Yi Kwangp'il 李光弼
Yi Kwangsil 李光實
Yi Kyejang 李桂長
Yi Kyŏng 李瓊
Yi Kyŏngbaek 李景伯
Yi Kyŏngyu 李景儒
YI Kyu 李珪
Yi Kyubo 李奎報
Yi Kyun 李昀
Yi Mugong 李茂功
Yi Munch'ung 李文沖
Yi Munjŏ 李文著
Yi Munjung 李文中
Yi Munt'aek 李文鐸
yinyang 陰陽
Yi Paekchŏn 李白全
Yi Paeksun 李百順
Yi Po 李輔
Yi Pokki 李復基
Yi Pu 李傅
Yi Pu 李孚
Yi Pun 李芬
Yi Sangdon 李尚敦
Yi Sangno 李商老
Yi Sebun 李世芬
Yi Sejae 李世材
Yi Sehwa 李世華
Yi Set'ong 李世通
Yi Sik 李軾
Yi Simji 李諶之
Yi Sirch'un 李實椿
Yi Sŏn 李僎
Yi Song 李松
Yi Sŏnggye 李成桂
Yi Sŏung 李紹寶
Yi Su 李需
Yi Sunjung 李淳中
Yi Sunmok 李淳牧
Yi Sunu 李純祐
Yi Tam 李聃
Yi Tamji 李湛之
Yi Tangjŏk 李唐績
Yi Tangju 李唐柱
Yi Tangmo 李唐髦
Yi Tallim 李端林
Yi Tŭkso 李得紹
Yi Tŭkkyo 李得喬
Yi Tŏksu 李德壽
Yi Ŭibang 李義方
Yi Ŭimin 李義旼
Yi Ŭngch'o 李應招
Yi Ŭnggu 李應球
Yi Ŭngjang 李應璋
Yi Wŏnmi 李元美
Yi Wŏnŭng 李元膺
Yi Yangsŭng 李陽升
Yi Yŏngjin 李英搢

Yi Yŏnso 李延紹
Yi Yŏnsu 李延壽
Yi Yu 李儒
Yi Yunbo 李允甫
Yi Yun'gong 李允恭
Yi Yunham 李允諴
Yi Yunsu 李允綏
Yi Yusŏng 李維城
yŏkchŏng (station attendant) 驛丁
Yŏm Kŭkkwŏn 廉克懃
Yŏm Kungmo 廉克髦
Yŏm Sinyak 廉信若
Yŏm Sujang 廉守臧
Yŏn 淵
Yŏn 淵
Yonghogun (Second Royald Division) 龍虎軍
Yŏng Ŭi 榮儀
Yu Charyang 庾資諒
Yu Chawŏn 柳子源
Yu Ch'ŏnu 俞千遇
Yu Ch'unggi 劉沖基
Yu Hong 庾弘
Yu Ikkyŏm 柳益謙
Yu Ikkyŏm 庾益謙
Yuju 儒州
Yu Konggwŏn 柳公權
Yu Kwang 俞光
Yu Kwangsik 柳光植
Yu Kyŏng 柳璥
Yu Kyŏnghyŏn 庾敬玄
Yu Kŏnsŏn 柳挺先
Yun Chiwŏn 尹至元
Yun Chongak 尹宗諤
Yun Chongham 尹宗諴
Yun Chonghoe 尹宗誨
Yun Chongyang 尹宗諹
Yun Ch'un 尹椿
Yun In 尹鏻
Yun Inch'ŏm 尹麟瞻
Yun Kŭngmin 尹克敏
Yun Ŏni 尹彥頤
Yun Ŏnmun 尹彥文
Yun Sanggye 尹商季
Yun Seyu 尹世儒
Yun Sunsin 尹惇信
Yun Tonsin 尹敦信
Yu Nŭng 柳能
Yu Ŏnch'im 柳彥琛
Yu Pangŭi 劉方義
Yu Pi 柳庇
Yu P'il 庾弼
Yu Po 俞甫
Yu Sambaek 柳森柏
Yu Segyŏm 庾世謙
Yu Sejŏk 庾世績
Yu So 柳韶
Yu Sŏk 劉碩
Yu Sŏk 庾碩
Yu Songjŏl 柳松節
Yu Sun 俞恂
Yu Sŭngdan 俞升旦
Yu T'ae 庾泰
Yu T'aek 庾澤
Yu Tonsik 柳敦植
Yu Tŭgŭi 柳得義
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