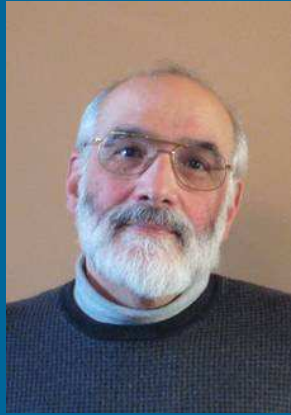




Hidden Histories

Evidence of a Marriage Alliance between the Silla and Japanese Ruling Houses in the Late Seventh Century

The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies,
University of Washington



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Tuesday May 24, 2011
1:30 – 3:00 PM
LAW 133

The twelfth-century *Samguk sagi*, and especially its chronicles of Silla and Paekche, abounds with entries that are manifestly chronologically anomalous. Yet in virtually all cases, the incongruous entries have the appearance of being reports of actual historical events that were re-dated after the fact to compensate for the apparent evidentiary voids in Silla history. An investigation of these anomalous accounts reveals a historically credible date for the formation of a marriage alliance between the ruling houses of Silla and Japan. This date is, moreover, strongly supported by evidence dated to the late seventh century from both the *Samguk sagi* and the *Nihon shoki*, evidence whose significance in this notable regard has hitherto remained unrecognized—and thus has remained in this sense, hidden.

Jonathan Best received his Ph.D from Harvard University in 1976; unusual for its time it was a joint degree from the Department of Fine Arts and the Department of East Asian Languages & Civilizations. Subsequently he has taught East Asian art history at the University of Virginia and Wesleyan University, but his research and publications—all focused on early Korea—have addressed religious history, diplomatic and political history, as well as art history. His current research centers on the critical historiographic analysis of the *Samguk sagi*, the oldest surviving history of Korea. Initiating what promises to be a long-term, multi-volume project is his monograph, *A History of the Early Korean Kingdom of Paekche—together with an annotated translation of the Paekche Annals of the Samguk sagi* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center Press, 2006).

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