



Sourcebook of Korean Civilization, Vol. 1: From Early Times to the Sixteenth Century (Introduction to Asian Civilizations)

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This anthology is the most ambitious, comprehensive, and authoritative English-language sourcebook of Korean civilization ever assembled. Encompassing social intellectual, religious, and literary traditions from ancient times through World War II, this collection reveals the grand corpus of thought, beliefs, and customs unique to the Korean people. Volume I features three major periods of Korean history: the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla (57 B.C.--935), Koryo (918--1392), and Early Choson (1392-1600). Each section begins with a broad historical introduction to provide context and perspective, and contains representative writings from the era, with commentary, background, and analysis.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Despite their position between China and Japan, Koreans have developed a unique culture with a strong sense of national identity. While works in English on Korean art and history have been available for many years, Korean primary source materials in English have not. Lee (Korean and comparative literature, UCLA) and his colleagues have compiled the most extensive English-language anthology of Korean primary sources to date. The work has been produced in two volumes: Volume 1 (1993) covers the period up to the 16th century; Volume 2 covers materials from the 17th century to the modern period. The writings selected for translation include Buddhist scriptures, works of philosophy, contemporary histories, popular literature, critiques of European science and religion, works on music, and various proposals for reform. The introduction to Volume 2 gives an excellent overview of the history of the two eras covered—the late Choson and the modern period beginning after 1860 and ending in 1945. Recommended for academic libraries and larger public libraries with a readership interest in Korean studies. —Robert James Andrews, Duluth P.L., Minn.

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Review

"The Sourcebook of Korean Civilization" should go a long way toward remedying the lack of reliable source material translated into English. We are fortunate that Peter Lee and his colleagues have been willing to devote their great scholarly talents to the compiling of such a rich anthology, presenting a wide range of materials on Korean history, society, religion, and thought.

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About the Author

Peter H. Lee is Professor of Korean and Comparative Literature and Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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