

Parhae in Historiography and Archaeology: International Debate and Prospects for Resolution

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The history of the kingdom of Parhae (Ch. *Bohai*, J. *Bokkai*, 698–926) has been studied and debated in East Asia since the early twentieth century. Despite the scarcity of textual sources, over the past few decades, sophisticated analyses of a range of aspects of Parhae politics, society, and culture have been produced by scholars writing in Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Russian. Only very recently, however, have significant efforts—led by Korean scholars—been made to expand the history of Parhae into English-language scholarship. This article serves to place these more widely accessible contributions into the context of the international and multilingual negotiation over how the history of Parhae should be understood. Readers from other disciplines who encounter this scholarship are in effect hearing only a single speaker who in practice is engaged in a lively conversation with many participants. The present study is intended to address specifically the needs of such readers, and suggests that the emphasis on “multiculturalism” in contemporary Korean society may aid Korean scholars’ engagement with international audiences on the Parhae issue.

Keywords: Parhae, Bohai, archaeology, ethnicity, national identity

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